

THE SET THE WORLD ON FIRE DUET BOOK ONE

A woman with voluminous, wavy red hair is shown in profile, looking towards the left. She is wearing a black, draped garment. The background is a dark city skyline at night, with numerous lit-up buildings and a prominent skyscraper on the right. The scene is filled with falling orange and red embers, creating a dramatic and fiery atmosphere.

Ignite

THE FIRE

E. MOLGAARD

Ignite the Fire

The Set the World on Fire Duet

Book One

By: E. Molgaard

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Note to Readers

This is a reverse harem romance which means the female main character has more than one love interest and she doesn't choose between them. There are dark themes in this book that can be triggering such as kidnapping, abuse, threats of rape, rape, child abuse, torture, and murder. Please feel free to message me directly if you have any concerns or questions.

My name is Riona Murphy and I'm the daughter of the Captain of the Murphy Clan. As a mafia princess I'm forced to have two faces. The fake innocent princess that everyone sees and the real ruthless killer that lurks in the dark.

At least that's the case until my best friend, Aisling, was taken. Now my mask is down and my daggers are clean. No one is going to stop me from tearing this city apart to find her.

My only problem, or should I say three problems, are the gorgeous Italians that have sworn to help me find her. With each day I spend with them, I find myself being pulled in by Enzo's sweet charm, Matteo's pure sex appeal, and Dante's dark stares.

When I let them into my bed, it was supposed to be just fun. Temporary.

I definitely wasn't supposed to fall for them. Now I'm caught between two families. Pulling toward one while being pulled by the other.

Who will win? Me or my Captain?

Prologue

Riona

Tonight is the annual Murphy Gala. A night that all allies and enemies within the top crime families in New York come together without any violence. Really, it's a night to show everyone how powerful you are and we, the Murphy's, are at the top. Which means my perfect princess face needs to be on point. I set my curling iron down, taking in the loose curls that fall across my shoulders, with my neutral makeup, showing off my pale skin, and making me look like an Irish Barbie.

God, I hate when I have to become this persona my father created. The innocent Irish princess that is perfect with a shy smile. It makes me look weak. And that's not me at all. I'm more of a straight hair, dark makeup and dark skin-tight clothes kind of girl, with a fiery attitude and a lust for bloody justice. But I can't be me. Why? Nobody looks twice at a quiet pure princess in my world, so their lips are always loose. And as the daughter to the head of the Murphy Clan, my power is knowledge. I collect everyone's secrets.

I start braiding my deep red waves in a loose side braid finalizing my good girl look. “Riona.”

“Yes, Father?” Through the mirror I watch my father, Lorcan Murphy, in his all-black tux that highlights his salt and pepper hair. For being almost 60 years old, his hair is the only thing that shows his age.

He walks into my bathroom and stands behind me. “You look very *pretty*.” I narrow my eyes at him because he knows I hate being called pretty. It’s so condescending when he says it. “I have a job tonight for you.”

My green eyes connect with his identical ones in the mirror and our father-daughter relationship immediately turns to business. “There’s supposed to be no violence tonight.”

His smirk from when he called me pretty disappears into a fierce glare. There is no talking him out of this. “It’s my party. I can do whatever I want. Are you telling me you won’t do it?”

“No. Who’s the mark?” My power might be knowledge, but it’s not my only one.

“Carl O’Brien. He’s a traitor and a snitch. I don’t want another day to come where he’s breathing.” Lorcan requires two things from everyone. Loyalty and keeping your mouth shut. You fail at one, you die. Carl failed at both.

I turn around, facing him, and lean back on the counter. “You want it done quietly?”

My father smiles at me with so much pride. “I knew you’d be the one for this.”

“I’m your only assassin.” Oh yeah. I’m my father’s assassin. Secret assassin. Nobody knows outside the family. Hence the princess cover. “Do you want him going down here or a delayed death?”

“Here. But near the end.”

“Yes sir.”

He gives me a nod and heads out of my bathroom. “Finish up getting ready and get what you need, then meet your brother and me in my office.”

I give him a nod. “I’ll be there in 15 minutes.”

Wrapping a tie around the end of my braid, I head into my closet. My closet has two sides. One side is filled with my true style: leather pants, ripped skinny jeans, crop tops, low cut tops, and short dresses. The other side is for my fake identity. It’s filled with evening gowns and conservative blouses and jeans.

Removing my robe, I grab tonight’s emerald green evening gown, my signature color, off the hanger and step into it, pulling it up my body. I zip it up, stopping halfway up my back, and hooking the top at the back of my neck, completing the high neckline, A-line gown. The dress has a silk underlay with the top layer covered in lace flowers. Looking at myself in my full-length mirror, I place a sweet smile across my face completing the image. I really do look like a princess, a Disney princess ready to find her prince. I chuckle to myself at that thought. I won’t be finding any princes tonight.

Turning away from the mirror, a genuine smile comes across my face as I open a secret door in the back of my closet,

revealing all my favorite weapons. Now these are the things that complete me. The first thing I grab are my favorite daggers and I strap them to my thigh. You always need to be prepared in this world. Then I pull open a drawer with my deadly jewelry to pick my green emerald ring that has a hidden needle in it. With careful hands, I let two drops of my choice of poison fall onto the needle and flip the stone over it before sliding it on my finger. My 15 minutes are coming to an end so I step into my heels and leave my closet.

Stepping out of my room, I come face-to-face with my bodyguard, Steve. I don't really need him, but father insists, since it helps keep the princess image and that is what Steve thinks I am. He has no idea of my secret exit from the house for my more deadly missions. "Hi Steve."

"Evening Miss Murphy." He smiles brightly as he stands from leaning against the wall and straightens his black suit jacket. "You look beautiful."

I give him a strained smile as I look him over. He's always well put together, his auburn hair cut close, his face clean shaven, and not a wrinkle on his suit. He dresses perfectly for his job to blend in and be forgotten. "Thank you."

We both head down the hall toward my father's office. "Tonight you can hang back. Watch from afar." In order to get what needs to be done tonight I can't have a shadow.

"I'm supposed to protect you." There's concern in his eyes but it's not needed.

"Tonight there's peace. There's no danger. Please stand in the corner. If I need you, I'll let you know. Plus, how am I going to be approached when I have a handsome man

shadowing me all night?” I sweeten my smile so he’ll believe my lie and he’ll give me space.

“Of course, Miss. I’ll keep an eye on you from a distance.”

“Thank you, Steve.” We stop outside my father’s office door. “You can go to the party now. I’m walking in with my father and brother.”

Steve gives me a nod and walks away. I give the door a single knock before pushing it open and walking in. My father and brother, Killian, are both sitting on the leather couch with a glass of whiskey in their hands. “You look beautiful, Riona. And I mean that.”

“Thank you, Father.”

“Yes, your princess face is fully in place.” Killian mocks my fake appearance because he knows how much I hate it. “One day you’ll be able to walk into these parties like the badass that you are.”

“Yeah right. That’s never going to happen. If anything is going to change, it’ll be me walking in with my husband because father has sold me off for an alliance,” I joke.

My father sets his drink down and stands up. “Well at least you know that’s a possibility.” He straightens his tux as he walks toward me. “But no matter who you marry, you’ll always be a Murphy. Now let’s go make our entrance. Show everyone how strong we are.” Killian stands from the couch and straightens his tux. He looks just like our father, with his dark hair styled back and stern face in place. I loop my arm

through my father's and Killian walks shoulder to shoulder with him on his other side as we head into our annual party.



My role as princess has been in full force tonight. I've smiled and spoken to all our guests. I've danced with all our allies and the sons of the other families in attendance. But my true mission for tonight hasn't had a chance to be planned out yet.

I'm currently dancing with Ivan Volkov's, the head of the Bratva, son, Maxim, and he is really driving me crazy. I've danced with him several times tonight and all he can talk about is how awesome he is at everything. And I mean everything. His not-so-subtle hints that he'd rock my world are absolutely disgusting and laughable. The word on the street is that he has a tiny cock and only lasts seconds inside a woman.

Finally, the song ends and I step out of his hold but he quickly grabs my wrist, stopping me from leaving. "Where are you going? I'm not done dancing with you."

"I'm sorry, but I'm done dancing with you." His grip tightens to almost painful and I hold back everything in me so I don't kill him for touching me like this. Instead, I have to play weak. Tears pool in my eyes as I blink at him timidly when I'm actually picturing his tall, lanky body hanging upside down and slitting his throat so his blood can stain his bleach blonde hair. "You're hurting me."

I try to pull away again but when I step back, I bump into someone. Turning, I find the one person I've been looking

for all night. Carl O'Brien. He smiles down at me and then eyes Maxim's hold on my wrist. "May I have this dance?"

Maxim lets go of my wrist, storming off and I smile up at the seventy-year-old man with gray hair and large belly. "Thank you."

He takes my hand, holding it in his and sets his other on my waist. I rotate my ring around as I place my hand on his shoulder. Looking past him, I see Steve making his way over. Our eyes lock and I give him a head shake telling him to step back. Following orders, he stops walking toward me and heads for the wall. With Steve handled, I focus on dancing with Carl. "Are you having fun at the party?"

"Yes. Especially now. I've never had the pleasure of dancing with the princess at any of the others."

I fake being bashful by dropping my eyes and giving him a coy smile. "I'm not special."

"That isn't true." Carl tightens his hold on me and moves us in a quick circle, giving me the perfect opportunity. I fake a joyous laugh and trip over his feet as I scrape his skin with the poisonous needle.

"Oh my. I'm so sorry. The adrenaline from earlier must be draining me. I should probably go sit down." I act like I'm dizzy as Carl holds me like he's truly concerned for me.

"Absolutely. Let me help you."

"Oh no..."

Steve shows up at that moment. "I'll help her."

I give him a small nod and turn to Carl. “Thank you for the dance, Mr. O’Brien.”

I step away from him and head to my father’s sitting area with Steve hovering by my side, making sure people move out of my way. When we get to the couch, I give my father a subtle nod telling him it’s done and sit down next to him. “Are you done dancing for the night, Riona?”

“Yes. It is quite exhausting.” A server comes by with a tray of champagne and I grab a glass.

His eyes scan over the crowd. “Find any suitable suitors.”

“Not the Bratva, Maxim. He grabbed my wrist when I wanted to stop dancing with him.” I lean in closer to him. “Can I please poison him too?”

He chuckles. “Not tonight Riona. But if he ever touches you again, kill him.”

“Thank you, Father.” We’ve always bonded over my darker side.

“Do you have enough energy to dance with your loving father?”

“Of course.” I smile at him.

He stands, reaching his hand out and I happily take it. My father walks me to the dance floor and we step into a familiar hold and start gliding across the floor. I’ve always loved dancing with him. It’s the only time I can truly let my walls down because he’s the only man to 100% have my back. My father twirls me in a circle and I let out a giggle. “What a beautiful sound. You should definitely laugh more often.”

“This world is too dark for laughter.”

“Your mother and I used to laugh all the time. When you find your person, you’ll find the joy in laughing.” The mention of my mother makes my heart hurt. She died fifteen years ago from an attack. Her and my father’s second, Drew, were murdered trying to protect me, Killian, and his daughter, Aisling. They locked us in a room and ran, trying to draw our enemies away from us. They were forced into oncoming traffic and hit an 18-wheeler head on.

“One day. Maybe.”

All of a sudden, a scream fills the room and all heads turn toward it. A lady I don’t know is kneeling down next to Carl, who is on the floor, clutching his chest. “Someone call 911!” someone else yells.

My father’s men all file into the room surrounding the body and I stand on the edge of the circle as Carl’s son moves next to his father’s body and tries to help him, but it’s too late. Everyone watches as Carl O’Brien takes his last breath and moments later the EMTs come running into our ballroom and try to restart his heart. They won’t be able to though.

People quickly start to disperse as the EMTs roll Carl’s body onto a stretcher. Killian appears next to me as father tries to comfort Carl’s family. “I guess the party’s over.”

Chapter One

Riona

“Riona!”

“Aisling!”

I can't help the smile that forms on my face as my best friend, my soul sister, calls out for me. “Where is that fine ass I've missed so much?”

I look over my shoulder as she steps into my closet, looking fantastic with her wavy strawberry blonde hair falling over her shoulders, her face void of makeup, showing off her freckles, and wearing a blue summer dress. Aisling and I grew up together and after her mother died when she was an infant and her father died with my mom, my father took her in and raised her. “You're in the wrong room if you're looking for the Murphy ass you've been missing.”

Lust fills her blue eyes as she thinks of my brother. While I had my best friend growing up, my brother had his lover, soulmate, future wife. They've been together for as long as I can remember and they're disgustingly cute together. “I'll see his ass later and it'll be naked along with the rest of him.”

I scrunch up my face, grossed out. “You know you can’t talk about my brother to me like that.”

She chuckles and nods her head toward the knife I’m cleaning. “As your new attorney, I can’t be a witness to this if you’re cleaning off blood from someone you killed.”

I look down at the knife and smile at my reflection on the blade. “It’s not. Just my training partners. It was a small scratch. But it did bleed a lot.” I give her a wicked grin as I set down the knife.

“So bad. How do you keep your training partners when you almost kill them?”

“I pay them well. And if they left, I’d have to actually kill them.”

I walk over to her and give her a hug. “I’ve missed you, Ash. Congratulations on finishing law school. Sorry we couldn’t be there for the ceremony.”

“I skipped the ceremony because a very handsome brother of yours gave me a surprise visit.” That explains where Killian disappeared to a couple of days ago.

“I’m sure he gave you more than one surprise.”

She closes her eyes like she’s reliving it. “Oh yes. All night long.”

“Okay.” I throw my cleaning cloth at her. “That is as much as I can take. Are you ready for a girls’ night of celebrating?”

“Hell yeah. I need to get drunk. And so do you. Killian has said you aren’t getting out as much.”

I shrug my shoulders. “I’ve been busy.”

“Well, you need to chill out. Killing takes a part of your soul. I don’t want it to consume you.”

I look away from her concerned face. “I know. Father is keeping something from me and every time I try to bring it up, he tells me to know my place like I’m not a part of this clan. Ever since the gala, he calls on me less and less. I’m getting bloodthirsty and killing slimeballs is the only thing that helps.”

“Then we’re going to let loose tonight and use your other favorite outlet.” She gives me a wicked grin telling me she’s going to get me into trouble.

“Don’t let Killian hear you say that.”

“Oh please. A little jealousy won’t kill him. Plus, I’ll just be dancing. You’re the one that needs to get laid.” She turns to the side of my closet that holds my favorite outfits and runs her hands over the dresses that hide nothing. “Now let’s find something that’ll make all the men tonight beg at your feet.”



Aisling holds up her shot. “To you finding a fine ass man tonight.”

“To you finally stepping over to the dark side.” I tap my shot to hers and, in sync, we tap the glasses to the bar and then take them.

“We grew up on the dark side.”

“True. Now you get to dirty your hands by bending the law.”

The bartender drops off two more shots and points to two guys down the bar. They raise their shots to us with hunger in their eyes. These two are a good start to the night. “Oh, tonight’s going to be fun.”

We both take the shots and then make our way to the middle of the dance floor. Within seconds, I lose myself in the music and the bodies surrounding us. I really did need a night where I can get out of my head for a while. Not be a mafia princess or assassin. Just a 23-year-old having a good time with her best friend.

I place both of my hands on Aisling shoulders as our bodies dance together. “Ohh... someone’s finally onboard with having some sexy fun.”

“Are you going to stop me?”

“Never. Wild Riona is one of my favorites.” She looks over my shoulder with an excited smile. “It looks like your first contestant is stepping up now. Let’s see if he is your lucky winner tonight.” I roll my eyes at her acting like this is a game show.

“Hello beautiful ladies! Can I be the meat to your sandwich?”

“No.” Aisling and I both say at the same time while I let him see how grossed out I am by his pickup line.

“Fucking bitches.” He glares at us before walking away.

“Contestant number one has been eliminated.” We both crack up laughing.

“Hopefully there are better options than that. If not, you’re going to warm my bed tonight.”

I pull her into a swaying hug and she pushes me off. “You wish.”

We both chuckle but movement along the wall near the VIP area has my smile falling as I watch Maxim Volkov walk past the security guard that is holding the rope open for him and his guys. God, I hope he doesn’t see me tonight. I can’t deal with him. Ever since the gala he’s been coming on strong, constantly making passes at me.

Aisling looks around trying to figure out what caught my attention. “What is it? Do you see contestant two?”

“No, I see an entitled Russian asshole.”

She rolls her eyes as she finds him in the crowd. “Ignore him. We’re not mafia tonight so mafia problems don’t exist.” The song changes to something with a deep bass and I pull Aisling to me and we dance in slow seductive movements. “I wish Killian could dance like this. It would be great foreplay.”

“Oh please. It’d be the fastest foreplay ever. He’d pull you into a dark corner within seconds.” They’re the cute high school sweethearts that are all over each other every second of the day, even if they gross out the people around them. Specifically me.

A cute boy-next-door-looking guy moves his way over to us with his eyes on Aisling. “It looks like you have your

first contestant.”

Aisling looks over to the guy just as he reaches us. “Hi. Do you mind if I join you?”

“I’m actually taken.” Aisling holds up her hand showing her engagement ring Killian gave her last summer.

The cute blonde holds up his hand showing a wedding band. “Me too.” He nods behind us and we both turn to see a muscular man standing on the edge of the dance floor at the railing. He smiles with a nod while raising his glass given his silent permission.

“Okay.” Aisling shrugs her shoulders and takes the blonde’s outreached hand.

I step back from them, pointing toward the bar. “I’m going to get us some drinks.” Aisling gives me a nod and I turn away from her.

I have to move through what feels like hundreds of people to get to the edge of the dance floor, but once I do, I’m greeted with a massive crowd surrounding the large bar. Well, this is going to take forever. Walking the length of the bar, I try to find an opening. I’m just about to give up and head back to the dance floor when two guys walk away, leaving a small opening. I quickly slide into the spot before it disappears and lean on the bar top. Standing up on my toes, I look up and down the bar for the bartender.

“It’s going to be awhile.” I turn toward the deep voice, wondering if he was talking to me and my breath catches at the tall dirty blonde hair and brown eyed man that is standing just inches away from me.

My skin tingles at his closeness and I fight myself not to lean into him. “Why do you say that?”

He leans on the bar next to me, brushing his arm against mine. A shiver runs through me as he leans across me to point to one of the bartenders. “That guy has only been working that end of the bar because of all the girls giggling over him.” He points to the other end of the bar. “She hasn’t left that end because she’s talking to that guy.”

Seeing exactly what he means, I lean back and take in this mystery guy that has me wondering if Aisling could be right about the trouble I could get into. “Well shouldn’t there be a third bartender?”

“You’d think.” A hint of disappointment flashes in his eyes like he’s filing my comment away.

“How long have you been standing here?”

He looks down at his watch. “A couple minutes.”

I move closer to him as I lean on the bar with my hip. “So how do we get our drinks?”

“I have an idea.” A wicked sexy smile forms on his face.

I think I’d agree to anything right now. “Okay?”

“*You* need to get his attention.” Or we could be taking advantage of the open bar top.

“Why me?”

His eyes roam up and down my body and I wish I was wearing a dress instead of this romper. Easier access for

whatever he wants to do to me. “Because he won’t be able to turn away from someone as beautiful as you.”

My cheeks flush picturing what he could do to me out here in the open. I shake my head wiping that thought away and focus on him and his plan. “How do you expect me to do that?”

“Make him think you’re interested.”

“Like this.” I step closer to him, placing my hand on his chest. I feel his chest expand as I raise up on my toes and skim my lips up his neck.

His hand goes to my hip, fisting my romper and pulling me closer. “I’m not sure you’ll be able to get this close to him.”

I chuckle. “Good, it’s not him I want to touch.”

I pull away, standing flat on my feet, and turn back toward the bar. My Mystery Man doesn’t remove his hand from my body, as he steps behind, pressing his body to mine so I can feel everything. I take a breath, forcing myself to watch the bartender, and not melt into the stranger behind me, as he finishes up a drink order. Before he could take another, I let out a whistle as I lean the top half of my body across the bar top, making sure my breasts look like they’re about to fall out.

His head turns my way and I give him a little finger wave with a sexy come to me smile. Hook, line...” The bartender’s eyes go directly to my breast and he gives me a cocky smirk before swaggering over to me. “and sinker.”

My Mystery Man whispers into my ear. “You’re a goddess, Beauty.”

I bite my bottom lip to stop a moan from escaping. The bartender thinks it’s for him and I play it up by running my finger along the edge of my romper down my chest, in between my breasts, to where my deep V stops. The bartender stops in front of me with his eyes zeroed in on my breasts. “What can I get you, dollface?” Ughh. Really. I have to fight myself not to scrunch up my face in disgust. “I’ll take three gin and tonics and…” I look to my Mystery Man.

“Three Eagle Rares.”

I cock my head to the side with a sweet smile. “You heard him.”

The bartender isn’t even fazed by my Mystery Man. He tries to show off by mixing my drinks and pouring the three bourbons but I’m not really paying attention to him. My attention is on the man behind me as I wait for his next touch. The bartender sets down our drinks and leans toward me. “What are you doing after this, cutie?” I lose my smile instantly and glare at him. Why don’t guys realize that word is demeaning? I’m not a little girl or a puppy.

So I don’t blow up on the bartender, I just turn away from him and walk away. But I do hear my Mystery Man say, “Not you, man.”

I chuckle as I look over my shoulder to my Mystery Man. He smirks at me as he raises one of his bourbons.

Looking away from him, I move through the crowd back to Aisling. She smiles at me as I break through the

crowd. “What took so long?”

I smile at her, excited to see how this night will end. “I might’ve found a true contestant.”

“Oh my god! Where?” I look back to the bar, ready to point him out but he’s nowhere to be seen.

Chapter Two

Riona

“Here is the next round.” Mike, Simon’s big buff husband, walks over with 4 drinks. With my previous drink long gone, I could really use this one.

“Are you finally done watching?” Simon steps up to his man, taking two drinks from him and handing them to us.

They don’t break eye contact as they instantly start dancing in sync with each other. “You know I love watching you.”

Mike slams his mouth to Simon’s. Oh shit. I look at Aisling and she is fanning herself. “That’s hot.” She looks at me. “Do you think I could get Killian to make out with a guy?”

I crack up laughing. “No. I don’t.”

Aisling pouts for a second then shrugs her shoulders. “I probably wouldn’t like it. I’d get jealous.”

I shake my head at her and take a sip of my new drink. Closing my eyes, I try to lose myself in the music and enjoy

being normal. Feeling eyes on me, I reopen them and scan the crowd, hoping it's my Mystery Man because I haven't seen him again.

Instead, my eyes connect to another tall and handsome man with dark features as he makes his way toward me. As he approaches, I run my eyes over him, taking in his gray slacks and white button-up with his sleeves rolled up and the top few buttons undone. God, he is sexy. And sexy in a different way than Mystery Man. Mystery Man had his light touches and sexy smirk. This guy is steaming hot, in-your-face, sex appeal.

Mr. Sex Appeal approaches our group and Aisling looks him up and down as the guy smiles down at me and extends his hand out. Aisling smiles at me from ear to ear as she gives me a thumbs up and mouths 'contestant two'.

I slide my hand into his and he pulls me into his body. We move together instantly and all I want to do is run my hands all over him. So that's what I do. Looking up at him, I watch his face as I run my hands up his arms, over his shoulders, and down his chest. He is all muscle. He also isn't shy about touching me either. His eyes flare with desire at my touch and as his hands run down my sides and rest just above my ass. "Do you know how beautiful you are?"

My body heats at his question because there is something about it that is about more than my looks. Mr. Sex Appeal takes one of my hands in his and turns me so my back is to his chest and our conjoined hands are across my stomach, holding me to him.

His scruff rubs against the edge of my ear as he whispers, "All these people can't keep their eyes off you. But

they can't touch. They all want to bow at your feet, Princess.” For the first time ever, someone calling me princess sends a shiver of desire through me.

I squeeze his hand as I melt into him, feeling how hard his muscles are. And I do mean *all of him*. I grind against his hardening length and he curses next to my ear. “God. You make me want to say fuck it.”

“So, say it. What’s so wrong with going after what you want?”

He growls next to my ear before kissing the spot right behind it. “So many things.” He unlinks our fingers. “Thanks for the dance, Princess.”

His body moves away from mine and when I turn to look for him, he’s gone. How did he disappear so fast?

I stand there looking through the crowd of people dancing to hopefully see his retreating body.

“Hey. Where did contestant two go?”

“I don’t know.” How have I let two gorgeous men vanish on me?

I look back to Aisling and she’s looking down at her phone. “Killian is here. He wants me to meet him outside.”

“Go. I’m going to head to the bathroom.” I point behind me to the back corner. “Meet you back here?”

She nods and we go in separate directions. I start my way through the dancing crowd for the second time tonight. Right as I get to the edge of the crowd, a guy bumps into my shoulder, knocking me off balance a little, but he grabs my

hand to steady me. Looking up at him, my breath catches at the sight of his bright blue eyes that contrast against the dark shadow over his face. But before I can say anything, he turns away and the crowd swallows him.

I shake my head, snapping myself out of another strange encounter with a sexy mysterious man. I'm heading in the direction of the bathroom again when I realize there is something in my hand. A piece of paper. I slowly open it and a shiver of worry runs through me.

Maxim is coming for you.

Looking up from the paper, I do a quick spin looking for Maxim or the guy who gave me the note. I can't find either of them and for the first time tonight I wish I had my weapons. At least Killian is here now. I just need to go to the bathroom and get back to them because he is definitely carrying.

The bathroom is surprisingly empty when I push the door in. So empty that I do a double check to make sure there isn't a sign on the door stating out of order. With the door empty of sign I take the blessing and choose the biggest stall. One thing I hate about rompers is that you have to completely undress to go to the bathroom. And since I can't wear a bra or panties with this outfit, I have to get completely naked.

I quickly go to the bathroom and redress because I'm feeling vulnerable right now. The state of undress, the quiet, the threat of Maxim is making me want to get around people again. Just as I get my romper back into place the bathroom door opens, letting in the sound of the club and then silence fills the room as the door closes again. A cold chill runs through my body at the sound of boots walking toward me.

Black boots appear under my door stall and I take a few steps back because I know they aren't going to wait for me to open the door and I don't want to be incapacitated by the door.

“Hello Princess.” Disgust rolls through me at the Russian accent.

“Maxim.” He must feel the hatred in my voice because he kicks the stall door in.

“I don't have to hurt you, Princess. Come with me willingly, be my wife, and I won't have to force the decision on you.” His almost black eyes rake over me as he runs his fingers through his blonde hair, a creepy smile on his face.

God, he's an idiot. “What, you're going to rape me to get me to say yes? I'm not a virgin. I don't have to marry the man I choose to sleep with.”

He takes a step closer to me as he undresses me with his eyes. “Would it be rape if you enjoyed it in the end?” Yes. Yes, it would.

“If you have to force women into sex then the answer is yes. Plus, would I enjoy it?” I hold up my pinky. “I bet your pinky dick can't make any women come.”

Maxim storms to me pushing me up against the wall with his hand around my neck. “Why can't you see that with you being the Clan princess and me being the Bratva prince that us together could give me so much power.”

“I'm never giving my power to anyone. Especially you.”

I take that moment to hit his hand away from my neck and throw my other fist into Maxim's face. He takes a couple

steps back, shaking off my punch and the shock on his face feels great. He has no idea who he's messing with. Not taking a second to breathe, I continue to go at him. He's not down yet, so I'm not leaving.

Maxim recovers faster than I thought and while I go for another face shot, he takes a swing at my ribs. There is a crunch of bone when our fists connect and my breath is knocked out of me as I stumble back, hoping the crunch wasn't my ribs. His hit had more power than I expected for a tall, skinny man that has never worked for anything in his life. Looking up at Maxim, I see him holding his nose as blood runs down his face. Good, I broke his nose. Tears start pooling in his eyes and I bet he's never broken his nose before. Such a pansy prince. He wants all this power but he's never worked for it.

Pride washes through me and I charge at him again with one last punch, knocking him out. Standing over his unconscious body, it takes everything in me not to kill him. Instead, I bend down next to him with disgust. "Next time I see you, I'll kill you."

Leaving him on the floor, I head for the sink. As I wash my hands, I look at myself in the mirror, making sure I don't look rattled. After drying my hands, I situate my romper and hair and leave Maxim for someone to find. Not caring who I piss off, I push my way through the dance floor to where our group is. When I finally get to Mike and Simon, I instantly look for Aisling and Killian but they aren't there. "Where's Aisling?" I ask Simon.

He shrugs his shoulders. “She hasn’t come back since going to find her man.”

Dread instantly sinks in my stomach. Something isn’t right. Pulling out my phone, I hit her name as I make my way to the front of the club. Aisling’s phone just rings without her voicemail picking up and I hang up and call again as I step outside. Looking left and right, I try to spot them. They better not be fucking in his car. When she doesn’t answer, I hang up and start calling out her name as I walk down the sidewalk.

Clicking my brother’s contact, I curse silently because something isn’t right. Killian answers on the second ring. “I know. I’m late. I’m just around the corner.”

“You mean you’re not here. Aisling isn’t with you?” I turn in a circle looking for her.

“What are you talking about? No, Aisling isn’t with me.”

“Killian. You texted that you were here like ten minutes ago. She came out to meet you.”

Worry fills his voice. “I haven’t texted her since before you left.”

“Killian, get here now.” I hang up on him and yell out for Aisling. I try her phone again but this time I hear her phone’s ringtone. “Aisling?” I run toward the sound of her ringtone. At the edge of the alley, a car comes to a screeching stop next to me and I brace myself for a fight, but then Killian steps out of the driver’s seat.

“Have you found her?”

I shake my head frantically. “Her phone was ringing down the alley.” Killian pulls a gun from behind his back and I point at it. “You got one for me?”

Killian hands me a gun as we meet in front of his car. His headlights light up the alley as we walk down it with our guns in front of us. Aisling’s ringtone echoes throughout the alley. With each step we take down the alley, my stomach sinks further. There is no way Aisling would willingly go into a dark alley by herself. “Killian.”

“I know. I’ve already called Father.”

We find her phone behind the third dumpster, with her clutch, but Aisling isn’t here. “Fuck.” Killian yells out and punches the side of the dumpster. “You were supposed to stay together, Riona. Why weren’t you with her?”

“She was coming to get you. Don’t blame me. I was being attacked by the Bratva asshole in the bathroom.”

“Kids, that’s enough.” Killian and I shut our mouths instantly at the sound of our father’s voice. We both turn to him and he looks me over. “What happened? Briefly.”

“Aisling received a text from Killian saying he was here and to meet him outside. She left to meet him while I went to the bathroom. Maxim attacked me in there. After I knocked him out, I went back to where we were supposed to meet and they weren’t there. I came out here to find her, while trying to call. When I didn’t reach her, I tried Killian.” No need to say anything else. Aisling isn’t here.

“Okay, I’ll handle this and Maxim. Go home, Riona.”

What? I’m not going. I can find her. “But...”

“Go home.” He orders with a glare, telling me to not question him right now. Bowing my head, I walk out of the alley, past my father’s men, to the waiting Mercedes with Steve holding the back door open. “Miss Murphy.”

“Steve.” I give him a nod and slide into the backseat.

I hate being dismissed but at least once I get home, I can start my search for Aisling. I’ll burn this city to the ground to find her and I know Killian will be at my side.

Chapter Three

Riona

“Riona, we’re back.” Killian walks up behind me, looking over me as I try to find something. “Find anything yet?”

“I’ve hacked the security feed of the club and surrounding streets. I’ve watched her get taken so many times now. I can’t tell who took her.”

I look up at my brother and the sadness in our eyes match. “Do you want to see?”

“Not now. Father wants to see you. We also have company.”

“Company that requires me to change?” He knows I’m asking if I need to put on my princess face.

“No.”

I follow my brother out of my room and toward my father’s office. “I’m following where the car that took her went. I lost it within a one block radius downtown. I’m now

going to backtrack for smaller cameras. There's a parking garage there."

When we reach my father's door, I grab his hand pulling him to a stop. "I'm going to find her."

"If anyone can, it's you. I'm worried what state she'll be in when we do find her." As he looks at me, I can tell he's tormented by the thoughts of what they could be doing to her. Women in our lives are never not touched when taken. I know this better than anyone. I push down all memories of my past because I need to be strong right now, for Aisling.

I knock once before opening the door. "Father..." I stop dead in my tracks. Standing across from my father is Mystery Man, Mr. Sex Appeal, and the guy who gave me the note. What the fuck? "Why are they here?"

"Riona, meet the Russo brothers."

I look at them with suspicion. It's too convenient that they were at the club and are here right now. "Italian mob." Mr. Sex Appeal gives me a smirk, next to Note Guy, with Mystery Man standing on the other side. I fix my stare on them before turning my back on them to face my father. "Why are they here?"

He leans against the front of his desk with his arms crossed. "You're going with them."

What? There's no way I heard him right? He can't be shipping me off. "I'm what?"

"You were attacked tonight and the pending threat on your life just tripled. They'll protect you."

I'm so confused. "Threat? What fucking threat?"

“Ever since you killed Carl O’Brien, someone has been happily letting me know how much they want to kill you.”

“How could you not tell me there was a credible threat against me. I went out unprotected tonight with Aisling. And those men...” I point to the brothers behind me. “were there tonight; how do you know they aren’t a part of this?”

He’s looking at me with no emotions, even though my life is in danger and Aisling, the girl he raised, has been taken. “You were in their club. And I asked them to keep an eye on you.”

Oh yeah. Just an eye. I look over my shoulder at Mr. Sex Appeal, remembering his hands on me hours ago. “If they were watching, why didn’t they stop this.”

“They were instructed to watch you.”

Realization sits in and I step away from my father. “How could you leave her unprotected?”

Killian steps up to our father, getting in his face, making him stand to his full height to glare down at his son. “You didn’t, right? Tell Riona you didn’t leave my fiancée unprotected without telling me.”

He looks past Killian like he’s not there, giving me a stern look. “Riona, you’re my daughter, my family.”

“Aisling is family.” For the first time in my life, I don’t recognize the man standing in front of me.

Killian clenches his hand into a fist and I quickly grab it. He looks at me and I shake my head once at him. He can’t punch the head of our clan, especially in front of others, even

if it's deserved. He'd be punished brutally. Killian jerks his hand out of mine and storms out of the room.

Looking back to my father, I shake my head. "You could've asked one of them to watch her."

Irritation flashes in his eyes that we're still on this subject. "Have you forgotten you were attacked tonight as well?"

I cross my arms over my chest. "And I handled it without them. I can protect myself. I don't need them for that."

"You will go with them." His order rings through the office before he takes a calm breath. "You can't stay here, because you're compromised here. Someone told them you'd be at that club and it had to come from within. While I figure out who, I need you off the grid. Go with them and search for Aisling."

"Fine. I'll go, but what about my other clients?" My father knows I'm talking about the hired hits I have lined up.

"I'm not stopping you. Take one of them with you. You're not to be out alone and don't bring attention to yourself."

I turn from my father and look at the three men that caught my attention with a stone face. "I'll be back down in a minute. I just need to pack a few things."

I head for the door but my father has one last thing to say, "Your exit has been locked down and is guarded."

Shit my escape plan from my hidden tunnel was just ruined. "Be down in thirty."

I leave the room and run upstairs to my room. Killian is sitting at my desk, watching the footage of Aisling being taken. “I should’ve been there. He told me you’d both be protected. I could kill him for sacrificing her.” He looks back at me with fire in his eyes.

“Killian, you can’t.” I walk over to him and place my hands on the back of my chair, watching the footage. “Our family needs to be whole for this.”

“How can we be whole without her?”

“We aren’t, but we can’t be at odds as well.”

“Lorcan is causing the cracks. I will never forgive him for this.”

“I’m going to find her and every injury she has, we’ll inflict on him for his betrayal.”

Killian gives me a wicked smile. “I like that idea.” He reaches into his pocket and pulls out his phone. “My phone was hacked to send those texts.” With two hands, he breaks the phone in half. “Don’t contact me on this line. I’ll send you my new number later.” Killian stands and gives me a hug. “I love you, Ri. Stay safe.”

“Love you too, Kill.”

Killian leaves me to pack and the first thing I pack are my weapons. All of them. Then I pack up my computer, clothes, and every other essential. My thirty minutes pass too quickly, but when there is a knock on the door, I know my time is up. Steve walks into the room and I give him a smile as I zip up my third bag. “Your father says times up.” I give him a nod and he moves to my bed to grab my bags.

“Thank you, Steve.”

“Of course, Miss Murphy.” I follow Steve down the stairs where I see the three Italians waiting for me and I take the opportunity to really look at them. The Note Guy was the only one I didn’t get a good look at in the club, so I take my time going down the stairs, soaking up every inch of him. He stands slightly taller than the other two, with a hint of authority about him and, with his dark hair and short beard, it’s almost like a shadow is across his face, his crystal blue eyes being the only light. But his eyes aren’t bright with emotions, instead they show his disinterest and impatience.

My Mystery Man stands to his right, looking completely opposite to his charming self a couple of hours ago. Now his lighter features are closed off, like we’re tonight’s flirting never happened.

Mr. Sex Appeal is even bigger than I remember as he stands with his arms crossed over his chest, showing off his muscular upper body, but it’s his brown eyes that hold my attention as he smirks at me taking in my leggings and oversize t-shirt I changed into. He steps forward taking the bags from Steve, and the other two flank me as we head out the door. I guess my father isn’t saying bye. As we approach their black sedan, we stop outside the backseat.

“Sorry Beauty, but you can’t know where we’re going.” Before I even get a chance to comprehend what he means, someone pushes a needle into my neck and my vision fills with black spots.

Chapter Four

Riona

Where am I? Why do I feel like I'm floating? I slowly try to peel my eyes open, but they will barely move and everything that I can see is blurry. "Don't fight it Riona." That voice sounds familiar. I feel like I'm falling and my stomach does a flip until I land on a nice fluffy cloud. Oh, this is so soft. I snuggle into the softness. "Sleep, Beauty. You'll feel better in a few hours." A blanket of warmth covers my body as I fall into a deep sleep.



"Riona!" Aisling screaming my name in fear jolts me out of my sleep and I sit up, breathing heavily. I cover my face with my hands, trying to calm myself from the terror coursing through my body. When my heart rate finally settles, I drop my hands from my face and I realize I'm not in my bed. Looking around, I'm in a room I don't recognize. I see my bags sitting off to the side and the faces of the Russo brothers pop into my head.

I must be in their house, but the question is, how did I get here? We were outside their SUV and I was going to climb in when...

They fucking drugged me.

I throw the covers off of me and walk to my weapons bag. How dare they? I'm going to show them who they're messing with. With two daggers in my hand and my gun tucked into the back of my leggings, I storm out of the room.

I might be stuck with them, but I'll teach them they aren't my handlers. No one takes my choices away. Their voices fill their hallway in a soft mumble that leads me straight to their kitchen. Like the fiery redhead that I am, I storm into the room. "Which one of you drugged me?"

They all stand there in a muted shock as I glare at each of them and open and close my fists. Mr. Sex Appeal is the first to break from his shock. "Princess, you can't know where we are." He steps forward timidly and my hand instinctively opens, hovering over my daggers. They're all eyeing me with intense focus as they see I'm armed.

"Which one of you drugged me?" I say again, enunciating each word.

Note Guy crosses his arms, looking annoyed, like I'm a toddler acting out. "Would you have rather us put a bag over your head?"

"I'd be okay with you knocking me out with a punch to the face rather than being drugged. Now answer me." I look at Mystery Man because I recognize his voice from the fog.

“I did.” With our eyes connected, he tells me what I assumed.

I relax my shoulders and bring my hands in front of me as I look him over as he leans against a wall. Perfect. “That’s what I thought. I just needed confirmation.” Within the next two seconds, I throw both my daggers at him and pull out my gun aiming it at the other two as they draw their guns.

Watching the other two in my peripheral, I walk to Mystery Man, eyeing where the daggers stick into the wall right at his shoulder and lower torso, attaching his shirt to the wall. It’s too bad I didn’t nick him, but I didn’t actually want to hurt him. When I’m standing right in front of him, I scan my eyes over his face as I tuck my gun away. His eyes don’t leave my face, even when I hear his brothers move behind me. “Don’t ever drug me again.”

Mystery Man nods. “I promise.” I’m not sure what he sees in my eyes, but his have sympathy in them. “I’m sorry.”

I pull the daggers from the wall and tuck them in my leg pocket. “He’s forgiven that easily?” Mr. Sex Appeal asks, looking between the two of us.

A wicked grin crosses my face. “Not quite.” Mystery Man goes stiff again right before I punch him in the gut. I smile down at him as he’s hunched over trying to catch his breath. “Now he’s forgiven.”

I turn my back to him and give the other two a sweet smile. Note Guy, which I might change to Stinkface because he is always scowling, glares at me but Mr. Sex Appeal looks me up and down like I’m his new toy. “Why not punch him in the face?”

“I didn’t want to mess up Mystery Man’s face.”

“Mystery Man?” The man himself asks.

I shrug my shoulders. “It seems to fit you. And you didn’t give me your name.”

“What’s my name?” Mr. Sex Appeal looks amused that I have nicknames for them.

“Mr. Sex Appeal.” Or contestant two, per Aisling.

“That’s right babe.” He looks me up and down. I give him a ‘really’ look. “What about this asshole?” He hits Stinkface on the chest.

“Originally it was Note Guy, but recently it’s changed to Stinkface.” Both Mr. Sex Appeal and Mystery Man crack up laughing and I can’t hide my smile as the grumpy asshole continues to glare at me like he’s hoping I’d drop dead.

“Oh, come now, Dante.” Dante is his name. It suits him. “It’s funny. Don’t be jealous. I’m the only sexy one.”

“I never said that. You just project sexual desire.” I point to Mystery Man. “And any woman would find mystery within a man sexy.” He gives me a smirk. Looking at Stinkface, I cock my head to the side. “Even a dark glare can be sexy. If it’s attached to a good personality.” But I’m not here to explore them. I’m here for Aisling.

I walk past them to the island where they have their laptops out and papers spread out about Aisling. “How far have you gotten? All I was able to get done before being called down to my father’s office was getting the club security cameras and getting street cameras. I track the car to this one-

block stretch.” I circle my finger over the area on the map. “I figure they went into the parking garage to change cars.”

Mystery Man steps up next to me, looking down at the map. “You’re right. We got that far as well. Killian and some guys went to this parking garage and found an abandoned van.”

“So, we’re back to square one?” My shoulders sag at that thought.

“Not quite. Based on the threat, Aisling has to be with the O’Brien’s or the Bratva.” Mr. Sex Appeal stands across the island from me.

“Let me go get my laptop. I need to check on some of my feelers I sent out to my contacts.”

“What kind of contacts does a princess have?” Dante spits out as a taunt.

“Political. International. Black market. Criminal. To name a few.”

He looks at me, skeptical. “How do you have those kinds of contacts?”

He’s really starting to irritate me. “Because I’m not just a pretty princess. It’s just an act. My father likes to keep his deadliest weapon a secret.”

“How so?” Mystery Man leans on the island next to me.

I grab a pen and flip a paper over and quickly draw out R-I-O-N-A where the letters overlap, forming my signature M.

“No shit.” Mr. Sex Appeal breathes out. He looks up at me with so much desire. “Marry me?”

I chuckle. “I don’t know your name; how can I marry you?”

“Matteo Russo. But you can call me anything you want. Marry me?”

I shake my head at him, secretly loving his silly personality. “Just because you can draw the M doesn’t mean you’re the assassin.” But of course, Stinkface has to ruin the moment.

I glare at him. “Well, Stinkface, I could give you all the names of my kills or you can just come with me. My father said I could keep my clients, so I have a kill planned in a couple of days.” His eyes narrow at me in irritation as I say his nickname.

“Mafia related?” Mystery Man asks.

“No. I was hired for this one.” I look away from Dante, softening my expression as I look at Mystery Man. “It’s actually multiple kills. A stepfather and his friends raped his stepdaughter. Her mother hired me. They have a poker night coming up.”

“You’re taking money for killing a rapist?” Dante criticizes.

“No, I’m hired with favors. Even favors I never plan on collecting. But after last night, I do plan to collect on this one. The mother is a Trauma Surgeon. With whatever Aisling is going through, she’s probably going to need a doctor.”

“You don’t already have a doctor on payroll?” He’s going to make this stay long and hard.

“Of course I do, but he’s a man and I can bet everything I have that she’s not going to want to be touched by any man for a while.”

I stare off with Dante until Mystery Man speaks, “I’ll go with you.” He then knocks my shoulder with his. “My name is Enzo.”

“I’m going too,” Matteo announces. “I’m not going to let Enzo swoop in on my future wife.”

I shake my head at them with a smile on my face. Living here with these two might not be too bad. Maybe even a little fun. Contestant one and two are still on the board.

I head up to my room to get my laptop. I need to find Aisling, and soon. The sound of her screaming my name earlier felt real and I can’t stand this awful feeling that they’re torturing her.

Chapter Five

Riona

I walk into a dark cold room and a shiver runs through me as I take in the cement walls with no windows. This place doesn't have happy memories. Why am I here? A small movement catches my eye to my right and I focus on a woman standing against the wall in nothing but her bra and panties. Her arms are stretched out to her sides, locked there by chains, and her head hangs low with her hair hanging down around her face. Is that me? I take slow quiet steps toward her. "Hello?"

The girl's head snaps up as she groans and her features become clearer. Looking at her face, I see her right eye is swollen and her lip is busted, but I recognize her immediately. Aisling? I run toward her, trying to unlock the chains, but my hands go right through them. "Aisling. Help me."

I look at her, but she's looking past me and a whimper escapes her. "Hello Aisling." A man walks up to her with a knife in his hand. "It's time for a new game."

He skims the knife across her belly and I try the chains again. "Nooo." Please don't cut her.

When my hands still won't wrap around the chains, I go for the guy. Trying to shove him away, but nothing happens. "Little One, I'm going to carve you with our mark. A mark that should have been branded on you when you were born. But you're a Murphy instead, so it'll instead scar your body so you'll always remember our time together."

"No. Don't touch her." I swing my fist at his face, but it does nothing.

I reach for Aisling, this time trying to block her, but I'm pulled away by an invisible rope. I scream her name as Aisling screams out in horror and pain.

I shoot up in bed, breathing hard in panic, gripping the sheets and looking around. "Riona." The sound of my name has me turning toward it and I see Enzo sitting on the edge of my bed. I'm unknowingly squeezing his hand; he squeezes back, and a feeling of warmth runs up my arm. "Riona. It was just a dream. You're safe."

I look back up to Enzo and tears fill my eyes. "It didn't feel like a dream. It feels like I was there with her. I could feel her pain." I let go of the sheet I was gripping and lift my shirt expecting to see cuts. But there aren't any. Tears form as I think of the pain she's going through and Enzo pulls me to him, wrapping his arms around me and letting me cry into his bare chest. "I can't lose her. I need to find her. I can't take another minute knowing they're hurting her."

He runs his hand down my back. "We will find her. She's probably sitting in a room untouched."

I look up at him and I realize we're laying down in bed. "Have you ever had a connection so strong that you can

feel them without being near them?”

He shakes his hand no. “Like twins?”

“Something like that. Aisling and I call each other our soul sister because we can sense each other. It’s not all the time and it’s mostly when the other is scared or in pain. We first realized it when I was thirteen and she was fourteen.” It’s normally just a feeling. I’ve never seen her like I was there before. “Earlier, when I woke up from the drugs, it was to her screaming my name, and now the dream. I’m not sure if what I saw is real but I do know they’re hurting her.”

I look up at him and he runs his thumb across my cheeks, wiping away my tears. “Do you want to tell me about the dream?”

I shake my head looking past him, staring at the black headboard, remembering the screams. “Not right now.” Looking back at him, I say, “Maybe in the morning.”

He nods in understanding and kisses my forehead. “Go back to sleep, Beauty.”

I snuggle into him loving the sound of his heartbeat. “You’re staying, right?”

He wraps his arms tighter around me and takes a relaxing breath. “I’m not going anywhere.”

Enzo’s heartbeat lolls me back to sleep but before I drift off, I wish for Aisling to get some sleep too.



I can't stop looking at him. Enzo looks so peaceful and handsome sleeping. I woke up a couple of minutes ago, surprised that he stayed and that I'm still curled against his side. I don't normally sleep next to anyone but last night it was what I needed. I'm not sure what it is about him, but he calms me. And I think that's the reason I haven't gotten up yet. Looking down at his bare chest, I run my finger in circles and swirls across his skin. Enzo takes a deep breath making his chest expand and I look up at his face seeing he's awake. "Good morning."

"Morning." I remove my hand from his chest but he grabs it, laying it back on his chest.

"You don't have to stop." He removes his hand from on top of mine and I start drawing on his chest again. "How did you sleep the rest of the night?"

"Good. You're a great pillow." He chuckles. "How did you sleep?"

"I slept great. I had a beautiful woman wrapped around me." I can't believe I'm blushing right now. "Did you have any more dreams or ... connections?"

I look at him, confused, because most people brush me off about Aisling and I's link. "You believe me?"

He shrugs his shoulders like why wouldn't I. "Were you lying?"

"No. My father and friends just brush it off as my imagination. Only Aisling and Killian actually believe it."

"I believe it. I saw how upset you were and that is real. How about you tell me about the dream? Maybe it'll give us a

clue.” He runs his fingers through my hair.

I nod and tell him every detail about the dream. Throughout the entire time, Enzo comforted me by running his fingers through my hair and moving his other hand slowly up and down my back. When I’m finished, I can’t look at him as my mind remembers her screams.

He places his finger under my chin, lifting it until I look him in the eyes. “I hope that wasn’t real because if it was, it sounds awful. But if it is, then we learned she’s being held in a basement and maybe the mark he was going to give her might lead to who has her. We’ll need to look into her parents’ history.”

A smile spreads across my face as he breaks down the information from my dream that we can try to use. “Why are you smiling at me?”

“Because you’re taking me seriously and actually care.”

He looks surprised. “Of course I care, Beauty. We all care. We know how important it is to find her as quickly as possible.”

He runs his fingers along the edge of my face and down the side of my neck. It’s such a simple gesture but it sends this buzz through my body. I look down to his lips and back up to his eyes, fighting myself not to kiss him. “Why do you call me Beauty?”

He shifts his body so we’re laying face to face. This really isn’t helping me resist kissing him. “Because you’re

beautiful. But mostly because you're a princess that doesn't cower at a beast. You accept him."

I really like that answer. "Are you my Beast?"

He gives me a wicked smile. "I'm definitely not Prince Charming."

Not being able to hold his stare, I look to my hand and watch it as I run it over his chest and down his arm. "I wouldn't peg you as a Disney fan."

"We all have our things that give us a break from our world. Your turn." I look back up to his face. "Why Mystery Man?"

"You were calculating when we met but not in a creepy way. It was like you were taking in everything at once and finding a way to get the best results. Plus..." I raise my hand and run my fingers over his lips. "Your smirk told me you have a lot of secrets."

I look in his eyes and I see the appreciation of my assessment and the desire. A desire that I know matches in mine. The next second, our lips meet together in a wild desperate kiss. The feeling of his lips on mine makes my whole body tingle with need. I run my fingers through his hair and grab on, holding his face to mine as I deepen the kiss.

Enzo's hands wrap around my lower back and he pulls me up against him so I can feel all of him. A moan escapes me as I hook my leg over his hip and grind against his hard length. His hands slip to my ass, holding me at the perfect angle for pleasure. My core sparks in the best way and I wish we weren't wearing any clothes. He breaks our kiss to kiss down

my neck and chest while pushing one of my tank's straps down my arm, exposing the top of my breast. Yes, please take it off.

But before he can fully expose my breast, my bedroom door opens. "Good morning. I brought..." Matteo doesn't finish his sentence as Enzo and I scramble to cover me.

"What the fuck man. Heard of knocking?" Enzo glares at his brother.

"You had a sleepover without me." Matteo, not even caring what Enzo said, comes marching into the room, setting a coffee mug on the bedside table and climbing into bed behind me. His arm wraps around my stomach, pulling him against his body and slightly away from Enzo. "If you needed to snuggle, you should have come to get me. I'm much better at it. Plus, I bring coffee."

I look back over my shoulder, giving him a playful grin as I run my hand over Enzo's exposed chest. "I don't know. Enzo is shirtless."

"Well shit, Princess. If you like that, I'd snuggle naked with you." Not being able to hold back my laughter anymore, I bury my face into Enzo's shoulder and let it out.

Both their holds on me tighten and for the first time I realize I'm lying in bed with two gorgeous men that are practically strangers and they're holding me intimately. And it doesn't feel weird. I lift my head from Enzo's shoulder and look up at his smiling face. I guess he's not upset that his brother interrupted us. Not removing my leg from around Enzo, I lean back into Matteo to look at his face and he looks

perfectly happy where he is. “So Princess, do you like to snuggle while sleeping?”

“Not normally, but I’m not complaining about last night.” Enzo squeezes my thigh and I move my hips against him.

“Well, I call dibs for tonight.”

I’d be okay with that but I have a busy night. “I’m not going to sleep much tonight.”

He runs his nose along my neck and whispers in my ear, “If that’s what you want, I’ll happily keep you up all night.”

I groan, wanting what he’s implying but I know I can’t. “Not what I meant. I don’t sleep very much before a kill. Tonight, I need to go through the man’s house, set up cameras, make sure no one innocent is in the house, and start my plan.”

“We’ll come with you.” Enzo runs his hand up my leg and just barely under the edge of my sleep shorts.

I want to tell them I don’t need them there, but I know it’ll be no use. They’re coming. But I’m not mad about it. I actually like being around them. I turn over on the bed, brushing my body against both of them before sitting up and straddling Matteo as I grab the coffee. “This is for me, right?”

He nods up at me, running his hands up my legs, but before he gets to my hips, I move off him and sit in between them facing them. They both sit up as well and lean against the headboard. “So, what are we doing today?”

“I thought we’d look into the details we discussed.” I give Enzo a smile, hoping he doesn’t mention the dream,

because I'm not sure if I could handle it if Matteo thought it was silly.

I nod. "Okay. I also have a guy that's working on getting the footage of the parking garage. I want to track the cars that leave."

"Well, I'm going to the club. I've got some business to handle since I have to hire new bartenders." Matteo gives me a knowing look, telling me they're hiring because I mentioned they needed a third the night at the club.

I take a sip of the coffee, trying to hide my curiosity. "Where's Dante?"

"He's out searching for Maxim. He wasn't in the bathroom when we went to collect him the other night. He's been silent ever since."

A fiery anger boils inside me at the mention of Maxim. I can't wait to get my hands on him. A flash of all the things I want to do to him has a spark of thrill run through me.

Enzo brings me from deadly thoughts as he leans forward and takes my coffee, bringing it to his lips, and taking a drink. I stare at him in shock as he smirks and hands me the cup back. "I'm going to make breakfast." He leans forward and presses a kiss to my lips, shocking me further as he walks out of the room.

"Hold up." I look back to Matteo hoping he's not mad about the kiss. "We're kissing now." I smile at his excitement. "Him and I are, apparently."

"Come here Princess, I need my lips on you now." He hooks his fingers beckoning me.

I lean forward and he captures my lips with his, kissing the hell out of me. When we pull back from each other, I'm dizzy and tingly. Oh, these guys are definitely going to be trouble for me.

Chapter Six

Riona

“Ugh I can’t look at these screens anymore. I feel like my eyes are crossing.” I lean back from the computer screens and my back muscles scream in protest. “I feel like I’m looking for a needle in a city-block-wide haystack.”

Enzo lifts his head from his laptop. “Haven’t found anything?”

I shake my head no. “I’ve only looked into the cars that left after the van went in. I still need to check cars that left right before Killian showed up. I’m thinking they either left right after switching cars or waited until right before Killian got there. If Father was right that someone in his group gave info about what club we were at, then that person could’ve notified them when Killian was coming.”

“That’s brilliant.” He gives me an encouraging smile.

“Thanks.” My cheeks heat and I can’t believe I’m blushing right now. “How about you?”

He shrugs with slight disappointment. “Nothing much yet. Only that her mom has to be the connection, but the

problem is I can't find anything about her prior to her marrying Drew. It's like she was a ghost before then. No birth records. No school records. No DMV records. No criminal records. No court records. Nothing."

I look at him confused. "How is that possible?"

He shakes his head like it's a mystery. "I don't know but whoever wiped her did a great job."

"What's the first record you have?" I move over to him looking at his screen.

"Their marriage certificate." He clicks on a tab and the certificate pulls up.

I point to the screen. "Look, it lists her as only Anna. No last name."

"I noticed that too. Do you want to know my theory?" He looks up at me.

I nod. "Please."

"I think either her family disowned her or she left them because she loved Drew. And since he was highly ranked next to your father, they had her past destroyed. To protect her family." His eyes stay on my face, watching for my reaction.

It still doesn't all fit. "That would mean they were outside our world. How does her family now connect to it?"

He let out a heavy sigh. "I don't know."

I think over everything he just said. "We need to talk to my father. He's the only one that can possibly give us information." But that means I need to speak to him. We still

haven't spoken since that night and I'm not ready to forgive him for not protecting Aisling.

I pick up my phone ready to call my father but Enzo places his hand over mine. "You don't have to call him. I know things aren't good between you two."

I shake my head and slide my hand out from under his. "I need to do this for Aisling. He has to know something right? They went to high school together."

Enzo gives me a hopeful nod and I press on the call button. I take a deep breath and hold it as the ringing sounds out. With each passing ring, my heart sinks and the air slowly leaves my lungs. My father has never not answered my call. He's even answered during a shootout once.

I have to fight back tears and force myself to breathe as my father's voicemail picks up. "Hi Father. We're doing research into Aisling's parents' past and I wanted your help. Please call me back." The call ends and I look up at Enzo and the sadness in his eyes makes me mad. I'm not someone who wants to be pitied.

I clench my phone in my hand, wanting to throw it. "I can't believe he didn't fucking answer me. It's his fault she's in this mess. The least he could do is answer."

"He's probably in a meeting." Enzo tries and fails to calm me.

"He's not and I'm going to find him." I turn on my heels and walk away. I hear Enzo push back his chair as I leave the dining room, our makeshift work area, and head to the front door. Right as I reach for the handle the door opens,

making me step back so it doesn't hit me and I collide with Enzo.

Dante steps in through the front door in wrinkly clothes and a tired expression. "Where do you think you're going?"

"To find my father. He needs to answer some questions." I try to walk by him but he wraps his arm around my center pulling me away from the door and kicking it shut.

"You're not going anywhere." I'm not in the mood for him right now.

"I'm not your prisoner. Watch me." I swing my elbow back against his ribs and quickly turn, taking a swing at his face but he easily blocks it.

He chuckles with a wicked grin on his face. "Do you really think you can take me?"

Fuming, I clench my hands into fists. "Hell yeah, I can. Do you think you can take a hit from a girl?" Not waiting for his answer, I throw a punch right at his face again but that was a mistake. Instead of making contact with his cheek, he catches my wrist midair and pulls me toward him, throwing me off balance. He takes advantage of that and bends down, throwing me across his shoulder and standing. I rage against his back, screaming threats at him as he carries me to god knows where.

We enter a dark room at the back of the house that I haven't explored yet and Dante throws me down on the ground. But instead of a hard surface my back hits padded floor mats. The lights flick on that second and I take in the massive gym space, complete with a boxing ring. After taking

in the room, I focus back on Dante and Enzo. Enzo is standing in the doorway with an amused smile on his face and Dante is standing over me, looking more pissed than me.

He throws something down at me and when I catch it, I see they're boxing gloves. "You want to fight me because you're having a temper tantrum? Fine. But we aren't going to hurt ourselves doing it."

I throw the gloves down and push off the ground, standing up. Pissed, I glare at him, closing the distance between us. "Don't talk to me like I'm a child."

"Not a child. Just a spoiled princess." A low growl tumbles through me as I tighten my fist to the point my nails dig into my palm. A hand softly wrapping around my fist has me jerking away. I relax when I see Enzo there with the gloves I left on the floor. Dante disappears from my mind as I allow Enzo to put the gloves on and lace them up.

The calmness he surrounds me with is nice but not what I want. I just can't make myself move away from him. "You're ruining my vibe. Being all calm and helpful. Angry is how I like to fight."

"Oh, I think Dante will piss you off plenty." He holds my wrists together when he finishes and leans closer. "He leaves himself open after he punches with his left." He whispers into my ear before kissing my cheek. I give him a nod, letting him know I heard him and he taps my gloves and steps back.

We both look at Dante who has taken off his shoes and shirt and is standing outside the ring. I run my eyes over his

exposed chest and abs and he is sexy as hell standing there in just jeans. “Take a picture, it’ll last longer.”

I bring my eyes up to his face and give him a cheeky grin. “Enzo, do you mind grabbing my phone and taking a picture for me.”

Enzo chuckles, reaching into my legging pocket and pulling out my phone. “I’ll hold onto this.” He smacks my ass. “Now go kick his ass.”

I wink at Enzo as I walk to the ring. “Oh, I plan too.” Dante holds the ropes open for me and I climb in, with him following right behind me. We meet face-to-face in the middle like we’re about to fight for the championship belt. “Are there any rules?”

“No hitting the face.”

I nod. “No serious injuries.”

He nods and holds his gloves out in front of him. “Everything else goes?”

“Yep.” I give him a wicked grin and bump my gloves to his. He just gave me free rein because while I’ve been trained in boxing, I prefer a combination of jiu-jitsu and Krav Maga. It allows me to use my whole body instead of just my fists.

We both raise our gloves in a defensive position as we move around the ring. This time I’m not throwing the first punch. I need to see how he moves before I strike. Dante throws a lazy punch at me that I easily duck and he quickly throws a left punch at my ribs. I block it, seeing the opening

that Enzo mentioned. “What did your daddy do that pissed you off so much?”

“None of your business.” I step forward, testing his movement, and he steps back.

“Aww, did he pull your allowance?” He throws another weak punch that grazes my shoulder.

I tilt my head side to side, acting like my neck is tight. “I haven’t taken money from my father since I was eighteen.”

“Did he yell at you? Ground you?” He throws two more punches for each question.

“Fuck you.” I throw my first punch in anger at him patronizing me. My right hook misses its target as he jumps back.

“Oh, that hit a sore spot. Which is it? Did he yell at you again? Tell you that you’re more important than Aisling, again?” He throws a left hook and I take the opening, throwing a punch into his ribs, and then I hook my right leg behind his and force him back so we’re both falling to the ground. Using the momentum, I throw punches at his sides until he yells my name.

I stop punching, breathing hard and I realize I’ve been screaming the whole time. Looking up from his abdomen to his face and for the first time I don’t see the stern glare. Instead, he looks at me concerned. “What is it?”

“He didn’t answer my call. And before you make fun about that, he’s never missed one of my calls. And this call was an important one that could help find Aisling.” I take a deep breath and slump my shoulders.

He sits up on his elbows. “What did you need from him?”

“Information about Aisling’s mother.” I move off Dante and stand up and he sits up fully.

“About the mark from your dream?” I stare down at him, shocked that he asks without a hint of teasing. “Enzo texted me about it earlier.” He stands up as well and I look back at Enzo who is leaning on the ropes. He shrugs his shoulders like it’s to be expected that he told him.

“Riona.” I look back at Dante. “He’ll call.”

I nod weakly because I’m not sure he will. He walks over to the ropes and opens them for me. “How about we go back to the dining room and you can show me what you’ve been working on today while Enzo has been looking into her parents.”

I climb through the ropes and pull on the laces of my gloves with my teeth. Enzo walks to me to help get mine off and then we head out of the gym to the dining room. When we get there, we find Matteo with three pizza boxes open and already one slice from each box is gone. He looks at us as we walk in. “Ahh, there you are. I brought pizza for dinner.”

Enzo walks over to him and grabs a slice. “We were in the gym; you mustn’t have looked too hard for us.”

He shrugs his shoulders. “I was hungry.”

We all grab a slice and while we eat, I show Dante the footage of the parking garage and my plan to track the cars coming out. After we’re all done eating, Dante goes to bed

since he was out all day and night looking for Maxim, while I go over my plan for tonight with Enzo and Matteo.

Chapter Seven

Riona

“Can I take this stupid blindfold off now?” We left ten minutes ago to get everything set up for tomorrow night and the guys insisted that I wear a blindfold. I’m not sure why. I’ve tracked all our turns and I’m pretty sure I could find the house if I had to.

“Yeah, you can take it off.” I untie the blindfold and my eyes instantly connect to Enzo’s in the rearview mirror. He gives me a smile before looking ahead to the road. I watch through the window as we drive through the Upper East Side and into the Bronx. We eventually drive past the house I’m breaking into tonight and I’m happy to see the house is dark, with only one car in the driveway. “Drive two streets over and park.”

When Enzo parks, I pull my hood on and open the door. “Thanks. I won’t be more than thirty minutes.”

“Oh no. That’s not how this works.” Matteo protests as he and Enzo open their doors as well.

“We’re going with you.” Enzo stands in front of me as he closes his door in all black. How they’re dressed should’ve told me they weren’t waiting in the car.

“I don’t need any help. Plus, three people make more noise than one.”

“We’re quiet,” Enzo says confidently.

“Oh, so you’ve broken into someone’s house and snuck around while they were inside?” I look at him, skeptical. He’s definitely more of an IT, behind-the-scenes type of guy, instead of doing the actual dirty work.

“A time or two,” Matteo says right behind me, making me jump a little bit. He gives me a cocky smile and I playfully hit his chest.

“Okay. Let’s go.” With all of us dressed in complete black, we move through the shadows back toward Raymond Swartz’s house. We’re quiet as we stand next to each other across the street from my mark’s house and everything around us is silent. I feel like even a bird chirping would set off some type of alarm, so I whisper. “I don’t need you following me around in there, so while I’m setting up my devices and getting the dining room set up, will you check the rest of the house?”

They both nod. “Raymond is in the house currently so don’t wake him. I just need to know that no one else is in the house. That there will be no collateral damage.”

Enzo turns on my right to face us. “Who do you think will be in there?”

I shrug my shoulders. “Hopefully no one but I want to make sure he hasn’t tricked another mother and daughter or somehow kidnapped or lured an innocent kid in his house. He’s a disgusting man and only his friends and him need to die tomorrow.”

Matteo has fire burning in his eyes from the hate he has for Raymond. I told them the awful things he’s done when we were planning and they’re happy to help eliminate him. “We’ll look through the rest of the house.”

“Great. Can one of you lift me up for a second?” I turn toward the building next to us. “I need to attach this camera...”

Matteo quickly places his arm around my waist and pulls me against him. “I got you.” I chuckle at his eagerness and at the glare Enzo is giving him. “Don’t pout. You got to sleep with her last night.” The next thing I know, I’m sitting on Matteo’s shoulder. “Where do you want the camera?”

“Rain gutter.” I point to the specific one and when I reach up to attach the mini wireless camera, four hands touch my body, giving me support, and those four hands don’t leave my body until my feet touch the ground again. “Thanks. Let’s go around back. I need to put up another camera and we can go in through the back.”

After making sure the street is empty, we head around the back of the house. Enzo unlocks the backdoor as I place a camera on the tree in the backyard, facing the backdoor. I walk up behind Matteo and Enzo just as he opens the door. The three of us walk into the house silently and they split off,

clearing the small bungalow as I head straight down the hallway to the kitchen and dining room.

Dr. Gibbons said her ex-husband would come back to his old bungalow every Thursday to play poker with his five buddies at this very dining room table. This is also the house that they raped fifteen-year-old Tiffany when she went to bed during a poker night as her mother was in an emergency surgery.

I'm so disgusted by this house. I can't wait to see it burn down tomorrow. Getting to work, I quietly pull out the gas oven to cut the gas line, making sure it's not a clean cut. I had the gas line shut off earlier so I could cut the line without the house filling with smelly gas. I can't have Raymond knowing something is wrong. Instead, the cut line will make the fire department think it was a freak accident when really, I'm going to blow up this house with them in it.

I push the oven back against the wall and I make my way over to the table and pull out a microphone. Turning it on, I slide my AirPods into my ears and tap the microphone, making sure it works. With it working, I connect it to the bottom of the table and pocket my AirPods.

Matteo walks into the kitchen and gives me a thumbs up. I smile at him and point to the top of the cabinets. Matteo gives me a smile as he walks over to me. A second later I'm on his shoulder for the second time tonight and he walks to where I pointed, allowing me to attach the final camera. When I'm finished, I point to the dining chest next to the table. Matteo walks me over to it as Enzo walks into the kitchen

giving us a thumb up as well. Good. With everything clear, I set up my gas device.

This device will release an odorless gas at my activation and after an hour of the gas being released, a spark will ignite, blowing everything up. When everything is set, Matteo sets me back down on the ground and we quietly make it back through the house and out the back door, locking it. We don't speak until we're back at the car. "Let me just turn on the cameras."

Pulling out my phone, I pull the app up that the microphone and cameras are linked too. All three camera images pull up and I smile as everything is coming together.

"All good. Let's go." We climb into the car and Enzo starts driving down the road. "So how did the rest of the house look?"

Matteo looks back at me from the passenger seat. "The rooms were all completely empty except for his room which just had him in the bed."

"I took the basement and it's a scary scene." Enzo takes a hand off the steering wheel and pulls out his phone. Pulling up his photos, he hands me the phone. "It was empty but this is what was down there."

I slide through the photos of dog cages, a workbench with leather cuffs attached to it, a wooden cross on the wall with more cuffs, and a table filled with knives, whips, clamps, large dildos, and other extreme sex toys. "This is disgusting."

I pass the phone to Matteo and he growls at the images. "I'm so glad these men are dying tomorrow. The horror that

has been experienced down there makes me sick.”

“I can’t wait to watch it all burn.” Enzo takes back his phone. We’re quiet as our rage boils from the despicable men that are dying tomorrow. They should have been killed long ago.

“Hey Riona.” I look at Matteo who is turned looking at me with hesitation.

“Huhh?” Why does he look nervous?

“Can you put the blindfold on again?”

Oh, come on. “Really?”

“I’m sorry, but yes.”

I grab the blindfold from the seat and tie it on securely. “Why do I have to wear this again?”

Enzo answers. “We don’t like people knowing where we live. We have a lot of enemies and them not knowing where we let our guards down is something we take very seriously.”

“But I’m at your house. I’m in your sanctuary.”

“It’s a first for us. I guess that makes you pretty special.” I want to roll my eyes at Matteo’s answer but instead I can’t help my smile.

I truly don’t know how to even act with all his continuous flirting. He makes me feel more seen than anyone has ever done before. “You’ve really got to stop flattering a girl or she might think you have alternative motives.”

“Oh, I definitely do.” I can picture his wickedly cocky smile. “Several actually. Isn’t that right Enzo?”

“I can think of a few.” His soothing deep voice has my body warming.

“Care to share? I need some entertainment until we get to the house. Maybe we can have some fun with them.” Oh, I’m definitely getting myself into trouble.

Even though I can’t see anything I can feel their eyes running over my body. “I’m hoping you’d throw your knives at me like you did Enzo. It was so hot watching it, but I want to experience it.”

That wasn’t what I thought he was going to say. “I can definitely do that.”

“Naked?” There you go. I can picture us both naked with him standing in front of me. Maybe that wouldn’t be safe. I’d definitely be distracted.

“How about in lingerie instead?”

“Hell yeah. But I get to pick your lingerie.”

I chuckle. “What about you Enzo?”

“I definitely have dirtier motives that I’d love to whisper into your ear as your body is pressed against mine but my PG motive is you showing me how you got through the club’s firewall to access the cameras. And I wouldn’t stop you from sitting in my lap only wearing lingerie while doing it.”

I shift in my seat, thinking about Enzo’s hands on me as I bend over his desk. “Oh, that was easy. I can give you something better. How about I install my firewall instead?”

The car accelerates faster and I chuckle as I lean my head back thinking about the different lingerie sets I packed. I

didn't pack much because I definitely didn't think I'd like these guys, but while I'm linked with them, there is nothing wrong with having fun with them.

A hand runs up the inside of my thigh, stopping mid-thigh with a light squeeze, bringing me back to the present. "We're here." I feel the car slow to a stop as I remove the blindfold. I run my eyes from the hand on my thigh up the arm to Matteo's smiling face. "Come on Princess. We have plans to get to." He gives my thigh another squeeze before removing his hand and climbing out of the car. I give Enzo a wink as I slide across the backseat to the door where Matteo stands.

When I open the door Matteo quickly grabs me from the seat and slings me over his shoulder. He smacks my ass as he carries me inside. "You better have packed some sexy pieces."

"Anything I put on my body is sexy." I smack his ass.

"True." As we step inside and head upstairs, I look up to see if Enzo is following and the dirty smile that is across his face as he walks behind us has me tingling in anticipation.

Chapter Eight

Matteo

“Fuck me.” I say under my breath as I adjust myself in my jeans as Riona walks out of her bathroom in black heels with black stockings that run up her amazing legs to her thighs, where the stockings connect to a black lace garter belt and black lace cheeky panties. But what really takes my breath away is her full breasts, barely covered in a lace bra. God, I need to buy her some more lingerie and demand that she only wears them while in this house.

She walks over to me with confidence as she pulls her dark red hair down from her messy bun. “How do I look? Do I meet all your fantasies?”

“Oh, you have no idea. You were born to only wear lingerie. Every man’s wet dream.” I want to reach out and run my hands all over her curves.

“Wait until you see me naked.” Well damn.

“Okay.” Let’s do that now.

She chuckles. “Where’d Enzo go?”

I wave my hand toward her door, not looking away from her. “He went to change and get our training room ready.”

“Training room?” She tilts her head to the side probably wondering where that is but she hasn’t explored half the house yet.

“Come on. I’ll show you.” I stand up from the bed and hold out my hand.

“One second.” She turns from me and I finally get a view of that fine ass on full display. I really need to check myself before I come in my pants like a virgin. “I need to grab a robe and my knives.”

I don’t want her to cover up. “No robe and you can use our knives.”

“Yes to the robe.” She steps into her closet quickly and steps out covering her body in a dark green silk robe. “I’m not walking around your house basically naked.”

“Why not, it’s just us. Enzo is about to see you anyway.”

“And Dante isn’t. He doesn’t want to see me like this.”

I crack up laughing. “Yes, he does. He’d probably kill both Enzo and myself to get you like this alone.”

“Yeah, Stinkface wants something more from me than to glare at me.” She takes my hand as she rolls her eyes at me in disbelief and I walk her out into the hallway.

Enzo is walking out of his room next door at the same time, in only a pair of basketball shorts and his eyes instantly

go to Riona. “Wow.”

“I know right and you haven’t even seen what’s underneath the robe.” I pat his shoulder as we pass. “Meet you down there, I just need to change.”

Enzo reaches out and pulls Riona back against his body and out of my hold. “Then I’ll make sure she finds the training room.” His hand disappears under her robe and for the first time, I might actually be jealous of my brother.

Riona playful swats his hand away. “No touching. I need to practice with your knives before I throw them at Matteo. I don’t want to hurt him.”

She pulls Enzo down the hall toward the stairs, but looks back at me. “Hurry up.”

The smile she gives me has me quickly heading to my room and removing my clothes because there was something dirty behind it. After I pull on my sweatpants, I rush down to the basement that is as big as the entire house.

This is our training room. Our weapons, shooting range, and targets are down here. This is also where Enzo’s office and our cells are where we hold people that we need information from. Not my torture room though. That’s in a different location.

Thudding sounds echo through the space as I walk to where our wood targets are. I find Riona throwing knives alone. “Where’s Enzo?”

She points a knife toward Enzo’s office door. “He said something about giving us alone time.”

I look up at the camera above the door giving him a nod. Alone time, sure. He's going to be watching every second of this. "Are you practicing?"

She gives me a wicked smile as she quickly turns and throws a knife hitting the bullseye right next to three other knives. "I think I'm good."

I walk past her and go to collect the knives. When I walk back to her, I catch her eyes running over my naked chest. "Like what you see?"

"Just thinking how dangerous it is for you to expose all those muscles. I could get distracted." She might be talking about my upper body but her eyes are on my pants where they're definitely tenting.

"I'd happily die at your hands knowing it's because you couldn't get enough of me."

She takes the knives from me and sets them on the table. "Go stand in front of the target, hands flat against the wall next to your sides."

I follow her instructions leaning back against the wall with my hands flat against the wood. Riona picks up a knife and flips it in her hand. "Don't move and this won't hurt too much."

"You better remove that robe before throwing that knife." She rolls her eyes at me but sets the knife down and unties her robe. "Do it slowly. Put on a show for us."

Confusion flashes across her face and I nod to the camera behind her and look up to the one above me in the corner. Her smile brightens realizing Enzo is watching as she

opens her robe with her eyes connected to the camera. She runs her finger up her stomach at the opening of her robe as her eyes connect back with mine giving me her full attention. The robe slips from her shoulders and pools on the floor at her feet as I groan at the vision in front of me. She's perfect.

Slowly she picks up a knife and runs it across her thigh. "Ready?"

I give her a nod and she throws the first knife. The knife sticks into the wood right against my side. It's so close I felt the blade slide against my skin. I look down, shocked I don't see blood. "Matteo, don't move. I'm going to throw the rest really fast so I need you to stay very still."

"Sorry." I lean my head back against the wall and take a breath, calming myself. I don't know why this is turning me on, but having her eyeing me and taking my life in her hands has me wanting to bury myself in between her beautiful thighs.

Before I can even continue that thought, five knives fly at me within seconds. I don't even realize until it's done where all the knives landed. One is to the right of my hip. Another is on the inside of my left thigh. The third one is between my middle and ring finger on my right hand and the fourth is right next to my left wrist. But the one that has my attention is the one at my right shoulder because it cut me. A slight burn comes from the shallow cut as a few drops of blood run down my chest. "You cut me."

The sound of her heels against the floor has me looking up at her. Her hips sway a little more as she runs her hands down the curve of her hips. "Oops." She stands right in front

of me and grips the knife. "I'll kiss it better." She pulls the knife from the wall and drops it to the floor.

Riona's lips touch my skin over the cut and her tongue runs over my skin, licking up my blood. She continues to kiss across my chest as her hands slide down my arms and she pulls out the knives at my wrist and hand. With those knives gone, I thread my fingers through her hair tilting her face up so I can kiss her. She moans against my lips and deepens our kiss. Her hands move over my chest and to my side removing that knife.

She pulls her lips from mine and smiles up at me. "Is this what you imagined?" She kisses down my chest as one of her hands goes to my hip, pulling out that knife, while the other rubs over my sweatpants along my hard length.

Before I can pull her back to my lips, she goes down on her knees and the last knife falls to the floor. Her hand goes into my pants and I groan at the feeling of her hand wrapped around my hard length. "Is this what you fantasize about when you pictured me throwing my knives at you?"

"One of them. Although it'd be a lot better if my pants were off."

She smiles up at me as she continues to pump me. "And you don't mind Enzo seeing you naked and me sucking your cock."

I thrust into her hand at the thought of the scene she talks about. Enzo and I aren't strangers on sharing a woman and even Dante gets in on the fun sometimes. It's always a rush to see lust fill the eyes of the women, knowing my brothers want them to. But Riona has me frantic. I want

whatever she's willing to give. Just me. Me and Enzo. Or all three of us. "Princess, Enzo can join us if it gets your lips wrapped around my cock."

Desire flames in her eyes as she rubs her thighs together. She's turned on by the thought of Enzo joining us. We'll definitely need to bring that to truth but right now I'm loving all her attention on me. She leans forward and places kisses along my abs until her lips reach the top of my sweatpants. With her free hand, she tugs my pants down, freeing my erection.

With my pants around my ankles, she continues kissing down to my cock and then she places a final kiss to my tip. I groan in pleasure. It's the best feeling in the world. That is until she licks up my length and then wraps her lips around the tip. "Oh fuck, Princess. You're amazing."

She takes me all the way to the back of her throat and sucks as she moves back to the tip. "So many compliments. You must really want this."

I grip the back of her head as she flicks her tongue over my tip. "I want everything from you."

She smirks at me. "You haven't given me enough compliments for everything yet." Her warm mouth surrounds me again as her hand wraps around my base, working my long length that her mouth can't cover.

I tighten my grip in her hair and she moans around me as I start to control her pace. Her eyes connect with mine as she takes me all the way into her mouth and I almost come just from the look of pure, hot desire and want in her eyes. She wants this. She wants me.

Her teeth graze against the underside of my cock and my hips involuntarily thrust forward, pushing myself deeper into her mouth, making her gag. I try to pull out of her mouth to apologize but her hand goes to my ass pushing me further into her and she swallows around me. “Oh fuck.” Riona picks up her pace, sucking me harder.

My balls draw up and I hold her head in place as I thrust into her mouth chasing my orgasm. “I’m coming. Fuck. If you don’t want me to come in your mouth, tell me now.”

Instead of pulling away she sucks me harder and swallows me down her throat again. I come hard down her throat and she moans around me, taking all of it.

She licks up every drop and I pull her off the ground by her hair and slam my mouth to hers. I don’t care that I can taste myself on her lips, all I want to do is get her naked. I run my hands down her sides to the edge of her panties but as I go to push them down, she’s pulled out of my hold.

Enzo gives me a cocky smile as he holds her against his chest and runs his nose up her neck where he nips her earlobe.

“Are you done watching?” I give him an excited smile, ready for this to continue.

“You had your time. It’s my turn now.” He picks her up and carries her away to his office.

“Don’t worry Princess. We can finish what we started later. You can find me naked in your bed.”

She looks over Enzo’s shoulder with a pleased smile and gives me a wink. “Can’t wait.”

Chapter Nine

Enzo

Riona is radiant! Absolutely breathtaking. I lean back in my chair watching her on my center screens. Her eyes connect with one of my cameras and the smile she gives me has me hardening in my pants. Her robe slips off her shoulders as her eyes connect back to Matteo. When it hits the floor, revealing her gorgeous body in black lace lingerie, I lean forward wanting a closer look. God, she's perfect.

When I first saw Riona at the Gala, it was her beauty that I noticed but as I watched her throughout the night, she seemed so innocent and out of place. She didn't belong in a room full of criminals. She didn't belong in this dangerous life. But when I saw her at the club, I knew my judgment about her was wrong. She wasn't as innocent and sheltered as she looked at the Gala. Seeing her now in only a lace bra and panties with stockings running up her legs as she throws knives at Matteo, I know she's made for this world. And she's going to rule over it one day.

Within a blink of an eye, all the knives are in the wall, holding Matteo in place but it's not him that draws my

attention. It's the sway of Riona's hips as she walks to him saying something. The cameras don't pick up sound but based on her smile as she reaches Matteo, things are about to get interesting.

I can't take my eyes off her as she kneels in front of Matteo and runs her tongue along his length. As she wraps her lips around him, I lean back in my chair and adjust myself in my shorts. She's intoxicating. I could watch her like this all day.

The only thing I would change is to have her kneeling in front of me. Her eyes look up at Matteo with so much fire that I can't resist sliding my hand into my shorts and wrapping my hand around my painfully hard erection. As she sucks my brother's cock, I slowly pump myself, giving myself some pleasure but not enough for a release. I don't want to come without her wrapped around me in some way. When Matteo comes, I'm out of my seat and heading out of the office. It's my turn.

Walking up behind Riona as she kisses Matteo, I softly wrap my arms around her middle, pulling her back. I run my nose along her neck, making her shiver and I can't help my cocky smile at her reaction to me. I nip at her earlobe as I grind my erection against her ass and she melts into me with a quiet moan.

"Are you done watching?" Matteo gives me an excited smile thinking we're going to have her together, but I have other plans.

"You had your time. It's my turn now." I place a kiss behind her ear and whisper so she can only hear me, "Are you

okay with that?”

She gives me a single nod and I pick her up honeymoon style and carry her into my office. Matteo says something to Riona but I don't hear it because I only have one focus.

The door shuts behind us and I take a seat in my computer chair with her in my lap. Her back is against my chest and I hook her legs over mine, keeping them open for me. I kiss up her neck as I lightly run my hands all over her upper half. She sucks in a breath as I skim my fingers across her stomach and lets out a moan when I push her bra straps down her shoulders, freeing her breasts. When I just lightly brush my fingers over her nipples, she just lets out a frustrated groan. “Please Enzo... stop teasing me.”

I cup her breasts in my hands and roll her nipples between my fingers. She arches into my hands with a satisfied moan. “What do you want, Beauty?”

“Touch me. Make me come.” Her head falls back on my shoulder.

I turn her face toward me and press my lips to hers. She opens for me and I deepen our kiss, showing her how desperate I am for her. Not wanting to ignore her pleas, I slide my hand down her stomach and underneath her panties where I rub a tentative circle over her clit. She bucks up against my hand as she hums in approval. I slide my fingers further into her panties and sink two fingers inside her. As I push them in and out of her, the heel of my hand rubs against her clit, making her squeeze around me. She breaks our kiss and lays

her head on my shoulder panting. “Yes... Oh god... I’m so close.”

Her nails dig into my chair’s armrest and she clenches around my fingers. “God, you feel amazing squeezing around my fingers. I can’t wait for you to squeeze my cock like this.”

“Yes.” She reaches behind her to my shorts. “Please Enzo. Fuck me.”

Who would ever say no to her when she begs like that. Within seconds, my shorts are pushed down just enough to free my erection and her panties are pushed to the side with my erection at her entrance. She holds me at her entrance, giving me a few pumps until she slides herself on me. God, it’s the most beautiful feeling.

When she’s seated fully on me, I wrap my arm around her waist, pulling her back against my chest and flexing my hips up. I don’t have a whole lot of motion in this position but I make sure my thrusts are powerful, hitting just where she needs to be brought back to the edge. I slide my free hand back underneath her panties and find her clit.

I rub rough circles over it and she bucks against me, sending me further inside her as she squeezes around me. Oh shit. I’m not going to last long if she keeps doing that. She rides my cock as she gets closer to coming and her moans grow louder and louder. “Fuck Enzo. I’m so close.”

“I can feel it. You feel so amazing riding my cock. Come for me, Beauty. Scream for me.” I pick up my pace, thrusting hard into her as I pinch her clit and she comes screaming my name and squeezing me so tight that I come with a loud groan.

Our bodies are covered in a mist of sweat as we both catch our breath, lounging in my chair. I slide out of her and adjust her in my lap so she's sitting on one thigh and her legs draped over my other. I run my fingers through her hair as she looks at me with a pleased smile. The space between us is eliminated as our lips move toward each other and collide in a slow, passionate kiss. When our kiss breaks, I run my eyes over her face, taking in everything because she looks breathtaking. Something inside me warms with her in my arms and her light smile directed at me. I don't want this to end.

No words are spoken between us as we look at each other, but they don't need to be. After a while, Riona leans forward and places a quick kiss on my lips. "Show me your security system so we can go to bed." She runs her fingers through my hair. "You've worn me out."

She gives me a cheeky grin and I chuckle. "Alright." I slide us toward the desk and we quickly adjust ourselves so our clothes are back in place and her back is against my chest again.

After I log in, I just sit back and watch her get to work. She quickly pulls up my security program without even having to ask where it is, which confirms we need a stronger firewall. With the club and house using the same security, I can't have just anyone being able to get access. Especially with her here.

A black screen pulls up and she starts typing in code before looking over her shoulder at me. "You sure about this? With it being my code, it'll give me full access to your security anytime I want."

I run my hands down her stocking covered thighs and back up. “Are you going to use it against us?”

She shrugs her shoulders and gives me a mischievous smile. “Who knows? Maybe. It might be fun sneaking into your house and into your bed.”

An image of her sneaking into my bed naked pops in my head and that seems like the best surprise. “I’d be okay with that as long as you’re not there to kill me.”

“No promises.” She smirks.

I chuckle and lean forward, kissing her shoulder. After a second of her watching me making sure I’m not going to object, she turns back to the monitors and continues typing in her code. Several minutes later she hits a button on the keyboard and the code starts to scroll until it disappears. She leans back against my chest and lets out a long breath. I nuzzle my nose into her neck as I wrap my arms around her. “You ready for bed?”

She nods and I loosen my hold on her so we can both stand and I lock the computer. Riona has her hand outreached to me and I take it in mine. She leads me out of my office, up the stairs, through the main level, and up to the second floor. We both enter her room to find a sleeping Matteo. She heads to her closet to change as I take a seat at the end of the bed, waiting for her.

She walks out minutes later in a long nightshirt and heads straight for the bed. As she passes me, her hand runs across my chest and I follow after. I pull back the covers and she slips in and slides all the way to Matteo’s back. She places a kiss on his cheek and I climb into bed next to her. She curls

into my side and lets out a long breath. I place a kiss on her forehead as I wrap my arms around and whisper, “Goodnight, Beauty.”

“Goodnight, Beast.” She places a kiss on my chest and almost immediately her breaths even out in sleep. Beast. I like the sound of that. She connected us and I hope she means it, even though she didn’t say the words exactly. I don’t think I’ll be able to let her go.

Chapter Ten

Riona

No. Not again. Concrete and darkness surround me and right in front of me is Aisling, curled up on a dirty cot with a thin blanket partially laying over her. "Aisling." I whisper hoping to have some sort of connection to her. She doesn't stir so I walk to the side of her cot with her facing away from me toward the wall and reach out to touch her. I try to move the hair from her face but nothing happens.

Wanting her to know I'm here somehow, I lay down in the small space at the edge of the bed and curl around her. I whisper to her how much I miss her and I'm going to save her as I run my fingers through her hair and rub my hand up and down her arm even though I can't actually touch her. I'm not sure how long I lay with her but I get into a dream like trance until I'm jolted from it suddenly by two men standing over me and Aisling screaming, "No."

The men move in on her, tightening the chain around her wrists that I didn't notice before, so her arms are held above her head and her blanket is pulled from her body exposing her in a dirty shirt and shorts. Her legs thrash

around, trying to keep the other guy away from her but he grabs her legs holding them against the bed spread apart. He keeps her spread with his legs as he unbuttons his pants. She tries to fight against her chains and their holds as she screams.

My screams fill the air as well as I try to help but nothing I do touches them. The two of them chuckle as the man in between her legs bends over her with a wicked grin. “Your fight and your screams turn me on.”

He pumps his erection looking over her and a shiver of disgust through me. I try to focus on his face but it’s blurry. All I can see is his awful smile. I watch, laying there, unable to do anything as he rips her shorts and she screams.

Her screams quickly turn into mine and instead of us being in the concrete room, I’m now in the room of my tortured past. And instead of the blurry face over me, Tony DeAngelo’s face is there as he chuckles. Pain shoots through me as the man I know is dead rapes me. “You’re so perfect, my pretty Princess. Your pain is so arousing. Look at all this blood. You’re going to be my new favorite toy. I’m never going to let you go.”

I scream in terror as he continues to rip me open. Tony continues to draw pain from me as he uses me for pleasure. My name being yelled breaks through my screams and I’m pulled from my torture.

I wake with a start to find someone holding my wrists in front of me and my body held back against someone. Panic takes over and I pull against the hold on me while screaming, “Let go of me.”

Instantly all holds are gone and I quickly jump off the bed and back up into a corner. Now that I have space, I realize that it was Enzo and Matteo holding me and that I'm not in that awful room. I slouch against the wall and slide down it until I'm sitting on the floor with my knees to my chest and I wrap my arms around them.

Not taking my eyes off them, I watch them climb out of the bed and Enzo softly calls out my name as Matteo pulls on his boxers. Even though I watch them come over to me, I don't quite register it until Enzo reaches out and touches my shoulder. I jerk away from him with a small whimper and they both step back.

"Please don't touch me." My breath starts to pick up as the room starts to grow smaller.

Worry and concern takes over their faces. "We won't touch you, Princess."

The nickname has me tightening my hold on my knees as I think about the name Tony called me during the two awful weeks I was held by him. Memories assault me and I bury my face in my knees trying to get a grip on reality. I can feel Matteo and Enzo's eyes on me and it feels too weighted. "Can you leave? I need space."

"Of course." Enzo's calming voice washes over me and I have to fight back my sobs because I need them gone before I break down.

The second the door clicks shut I let out a gasp, trying to suck in air as I fall apart. It's been a while since my memories of those awful weeks have caused so much havoc. Normally they're just nightmares and don't feel so real. It was

like I was back in that room. A room I haven't been in for eleven years. I feel like I relived every horrible minute of the torture by the time I'm able to surface from my panic.

When my tears stop and I'm able to breath without the feeling of a hundred-pound weight sitting on my chest, I lean my head back against the wall. Rape is a torture that's both physical and mental and to go through it over and over again isn't something I'd wish on most people. And the fact that Aisling is going though it makes me sick. I need to find her.

I stand from my huddled position and my whole body aches. How long was I like that? I head into my bathroom and directly go to the shower and turn it on. As the water warms, I pull my night shirt over my head. Stepping under the hot water, my aches slowly start to dissipate and I quickly move through my shower routine, making sure to spend extra time washing my body. I have to wash away those memories.

When I finish, I turn off the shower and dry off, heading into my connected closet. Needing to get out of the house and search for Aisling, I grab my favorite skinny jeans, a black tank top, and my black Converse. Once I'm dressed, I leave my room and head downstairs to find one of the guys. As much as I'm ready to get out of here, I'm not stupid enough to leave without one of them. They're hired to keep me safe and have my back. I can't help Aisling if I'm taken or killed.

I hear their voices coming from the living room so I head in that direction. When I enter the room, all three of them turn to me. "Hey, Princess." Matteo says hesitantly.

I give him a soft smile as I walk toward him, still getting a sickening feeling when he calls me that. “Hey. Sorry for my freak out.” I sit down on the couch between him and Enzo.

Enzo moves closer to me but doesn’t touch me. “You don’t need to apologize. How are you doing?”

“I’m doing better now.” Enzo sets his arm across the back of the couch, behind my head and I can tell it’s killing him not to touch me. I lean my head back to rest it against his arm and he lets out a breath as his arm goes around my shoulders. Matteo must’ve been wanting to touch and comfort me too because his hand goes to my knee when I don’t freak out about Enzo’s touch.

“Did you have another dream about Aisling?” Dante brings my attention away from Enzo and Matteo’s touch, back to the conversation.

“Yes and no. But I don’t want to talk about it.” He nods and leans back in his chair. “I actually came down to see if one of you would come out with me. I need to be out searching for Aisling. I’m not going to find her sitting behind my computer.”

“I’ll go out with you,” Dante volunteers. “I need to follow up with some merchants that owe us some money and you can ask around.”

I nod, feeling relieved that they aren’t going to fight me on this. “What about Enzo and Matteo?”

Matteo squeezes my knee, drawing my attention. “We have other business to deal with. Unfortunately, Dante will

need to go with you tonight as well.”

I shrug my shoulders, trying to act like I’m not disappointed about them not spending the day with me. This is probably for the best. I can’t get too attached. It’ll help with me putting my walls back up around them. “Okay.” I stand from the couch, removing myself from their touch. “I’ll go grab my weapons. Are we leaving soon?”

Dante nods. “I’ll meet you at the front door.”

I leave the guys in the living room to head back to my room to grab my gun and knives. I need to find some information about who took Aisling today. It’s been days and I’m still not any closer to finding her.

Chapter Eleven

Dante

Riona comes down the stairs with a gun holstered to her hip and a dagger strapped to each of her thighs. Man, she's a goddess. A perfect woman. She smiles at me as she loops her arms through the straps of a black backpack. "Are you ready to go?"

I step to the side and signal for her to go past. "After you."

She walks past me and we leave the house through the front door. "So, what's the bookbag for?"

"Oh, it has stuff I might need for tonight. I wasn't sure if we'd be coming back before then."

"We don't have to come back." I grab the car door for her. "Is what I'm wearing appropriate enough for what you have planned?"

She stands in front of me, looking me up and down. "You're wearing dark enough colors. We hopefully won't have to do too much if everything goes as planned."

She climbs into the car and I walk around the front to get into my black Audi Q7. When I get into the driver seat Riona holds out her hand. I look at her hand and then her face, confused. “Do you need something?”

“The blindfold.”

“Oh.” I reach across the console and in between her legs to open the glove compartment. Riona squirms in her seat and I lean over further so my arm rubs against her thigh. Her breath catches and I smile up at her. “Do you not like me between your legs, Rose?”

Shocked, she smiles at me. “Are you flirting with me, Dante?”

“Maybe. You didn’t answer my question.” I pull the blindfold out and close the compartment, resting my hand on her thigh.

Her eyes darken with lust. “I’m not against it. I’m just surprised.”

“Why? You’re a beautiful and strong woman, why wouldn’t I flirt with you?” I slide my hand higher up her thigh.

“I don’t know. Enzo and Matteo were so open with their flirting from the beginning. You just seem irritated by my presence and forced to protect me and find Aisling.”

“Openly flirting isn’t really my style but watching you with them earlier made me jealous. I wanted you to come sit with me.” I close the distance between us and kiss her. It takes her a second to kiss me back but when she does, she deepens the kiss, trying to fight for control. Not giving it up, I bite

down on her bottom lip making her moan and she gives in. I pull back from our kiss to find her breathless.

She chuckles quietly as she leans back in her chair. “So, you’re just going to take what you want now?”

I smile at her. “Yep. You don’t have a problem with that, do you?”

She shakes her head. “And you don’t have a problem with me sleeping with your brothers?”

Not at all. This won’t be the first time we’ve shared a woman but it’s the first time we want something more than just sex. Closing the distance between us again, I kiss her showing her just how much I don’t mind she’s with my brothers.

Desire burns in her eyes as we separate. “I’m going to take that as a no. But I wonder would you join us?”

I give her a knowing smile as I lean back in my seat not answering her question. “Put the blindfold on, Riona.”

She gives me an excited smile as she takes the blindfold and pulls it over her eyes. “Just so you know, I like that you didn’t answer my question. Now I get to imagine all the possible ways I can have all of you.”

I bite back a groan as I adjust myself, thinking of her in between all of us naked. Whatever fantasies she has I’ll happily participate, but I also want her to myself as well. I put the car in drive and make my way off our property. “Just so you know, I wouldn’t have made you wear the blindfold if you didn’t mention it.”

She looks at me without seeing me. “What?! Then why am I wearing it?”

I chuckle. “You’re the one who asked for it.”

“That’s okay.” She leans back and links her fingers on her lap. “I don’t mind being blindfolded. I’m also open to being tied up.”

I groan and grip the steering wheel tighter so I don’t reach for her. “We need to change the subject or I’m going to pull over and see how far I can push your limits.”

She chuckles. “You’re no fun. If we can’t talk about sex then you need to entertain me somehow. Tell me about what the Russo family does. I pride myself in knowing all the families, but I don’t know anything about you guys.”

I merge onto the highway, taking us back into the city. “Well, we moved into the New York area about a year ago. We took over from another underboss that had been dormant for a while.”

“I still never remember the Russo name ever.”

“Well, thanks.” I chuckle.

“Oh, I didn’t mean it in a bad way.”

“I’m just messing with you. We’re a small organization here in New York. Our main organization is in Italy. We don’t want waves here against your father.” Our parents have history; while they aren’t friends, my father doesn’t want us to make waves. We don’t need New York.

“It’s best not to piss off my father or you would’ve met me a lot sooner.”

I quickly look over to her. “Is that what you do for your father? Eliminate any threats?”

“Mostly. I also gather information at his meetings and parties since I’m invisible to all powerful men.” Not to us. She shined the moment she walked in on her father’s arm. Only idiots wouldn’t notice her in a room.

“You aren’t invisible. We saw you at the Gala with your fake smile and dancing with all the eligible men.” I reach over and remove the blindfold.

She blinks rapidly until she focuses on me. “I don’t remember dancing with any of you. I actually don’t remember you there at all.”

I know. We stayed out of sight all night. “We like to stay in the shadows. It helps with what we do.”

“And that is?” Curiosity is all over her face.

“We mainly deal with money laundering through the club, information, and security. We help find people, follow people, and merchants pay us to protect their stores. That’s what I need to do today. I have to follow up with some merchants that haven’t paid and check on a few that were having problems to make sure it’s all good now. We also have a small involvement in drugs and weapons but that is mainly just roll over from my father.” I take the exit for Little Italy.

“How many people do you have underneath you guys?”

“About 75. Our people pretty much stay in Little Italy working as security. We have a few guys that work at the club as well.”

“Wow you’re a lot bigger than I thought.”

“We like to stay under the radar. Worry about ourselves. At least that’s how we want to run our leadership.”

“Past leadership ran differently?” She asks.

“Yeah, they got too big for their britches. I think the saying is.”

She chuckles. “So did you grow up in Italy?”

“Yes. We were there until high school then we were shipped off to California for boarding school. We needed to be here to be ready to take over the American chapter. It’s tradition. Only the oldest stay in Italy, so Armando is there ready to take over when my father is ready to step down and we run the American groups.”

“What other cities are you in?” Her eyes are on the side of my face.

“Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Dallas, and a small organization in Miami and New Orleans.”

“You’re bigger than the Murphy organization, why don’t you overthrow us?”

“Because we don’t need to. We have a partnership with your father.”

We pull into an alley just inside Little Italy’s borders and I park the car. I look over to her to find her looking at me with such curiosity. “What?”

“I’m just shocked. You could easily take power over the city but you don’t. If my father had that kind of power,

he'd take over the whole country." She looks confused because she'd only ever watched her father take.

"And your father's need to always get more power will eventually be his downfall." I can tell she wants to fight me on that but I can also see that she understands what I mean as well. I turn off the car and lean on the center console, looking at her. "I didn't mean that your father would be killed. It could be his people who force him out so Killian could take over."

"I know. Power is a deadly thing. Not just for the people seeking it." I know exactly what she means, but how she says it, I can tell she has experienced the bad part of power. I reach over for her hand but she pulls back from me. "We should probably get out."

She grabs the door handle and opens the door. I climb out of the car as well and walk around to her side. She's messing with something in her bag as I walk up behind her. "I know you want to ask around today but can you please try to lay low while doing it. We still don't know who took Aisling for sure, but Maxim is still trying to find you, along with the O'Brien threats. We can't let them know you're on the streets."

She stands, removing her gun holster and tucking the gun in the back of her pants. "I'll be smart about it. I'm just going to talk to the guys I know."

"Okay. These are the list of merchants I'm visiting. Will you please stay in contact with me as you move around?"

"You're not coming with me?" She looks at me confused because she knows what her father told us.

“Your guys aren’t going to talk with me being your shadow. You’re more than capable of protecting yourself.”

She smiles at me with appreciation and nods. “I’ll stay in contact, letting you know where I am.”

Riona pulls a hat out of her bag and she pulls it on her head and then places sunglasses over her eyes. “Do you think this is low key enough?”

I chuckle. “Rose, you can never be low key. Your red hair is a beacon drawing everyone’s attention.”

She throws her hands up in the air. “Well, I can’t change that.”

“You definitely shouldn’t.” I reach forward and twist a strand of her hair around my finger. “I like your red hair.”

She grabs my hand, stopping me from twirling her hair. “You’re getting distracted. Let’s go.”

She steps closer to me to close her door and I drop my hand from her hair. We both walk out of the alley, but when we’re about to go separate ways, I grab her hand stopping her. “Keep your eyes open. Your father still hasn’t found out who released your location that night.”

She gives me a nod, understanding that she needs to be careful and walks away from me down the street. I watch her until she turns a corner and then I turn and walk the opposite direction to handle my business.

Chapter Twelve

Riona

I feel like I've spoken to everyone in Little Italy today and haven't learned anything. No one has seen Aisling, Maxim, or Craig O'Brien. Or if they have, they aren't saying. Since it's getting later in the day and I need to start heading to Swartz's house, I send Dante a text letting him know I'm heading back to the car.

Blending into the dinner crowd, I walk down Mulberry Street trying to get to the car as quickly as possible. I turn down a small side street getting further from the crowd when the hairs on the back of my neck stand up.

Without drawing attention to myself, I scan the street in front of me trying to see if anyone looks suspicious. Nothing looks out of place and the few people that are on the street aren't paying any attention to me.

Ahead of me is a large storefront window so I keep my pace the same as I discreetly use the window as a mirror. I walk the length of the window not finding anything that has put me on edge. I'm about to just chalk it up to everything

going on when I see a man dressed in all black walking behind me and he's definitely watching me.

I pull out my phone and hit Dante's contact. Placing my phone to my ear, I wait for Dante to answer. "Riona?"

"Hi D! I know I'm late but I promise I'm just around the corner. Will you go ahead and order me a drink? I really need it."

"Riona, what's going on? Where are you?" Come on Dante, catch on.

"I'm a few blocks away on Bayard Street. Oh, I forgot to tell you my special friend is coming too?"

Dante is quiet for a second and I pray he gets it. "Is someone following you?"

"Yes, that friend." I see the alley we parked in up ahead and I breathe a sigh of relief.

"I'm coming."

"No, that's okay. He can order when he gets there. I don't know what he wants. I'm actually turning into the alley now across from the bar. See you in a few."

I hang up the phone as I round the corner and Dante is there standing in a dark corner. I give him a smile as I pull out my gun from the back of my pants and move to hide behind the car for the guy.

Seconds later my follower walks into the alley and I step out from behind the car as Dante steps out of his dark corner, slamming him into the wall. I raise my gun, aiming for the stranger as Dante holds the man against the wall. Seeing

the two together, Dante is at least six inches taller and has a hundred pounds on him. When Dante pulls back the guy's hood, I see why. It's just a kid, probably no older than sixteen. "Please don't hurt me. I just wanted to give you information, Miss Murphy."

I almost chuckle at being called Miss Murphy by a kid, like I'm an old person or something. I step up in front of him and I see he is scared shitless. Lowering my gun, I touch Dante's shoulder, getting him to loosen his hold. Dante drops his arm that holds the kid to the wall and quickly pats the kid down before stepping back next to me. "What's your name kid?"

"Leo."

I cross my arms and step forward a little. "It was stupid of you to follow me like that. We could've killed you."

Leo's eyes widened. "I'm sorry... I just heard you were looking for information on Maxim."

Interesting. "I am."

The kid frantically looks between the two of us. "My family owns Bella Amor and last night I delivered dinner to Maxim. I can tell you where he is."

I look back at Dante to see if he thinks it's legit. He shrugs his shoulders silently saying 'what can it hurt?' Turning back at Leo, I ask. "What do you want for this information?"

The kid shakes his head. "Nothing." I nod for him to continue. "He's staying at 5001 Hicks Street in Brooklyn."

"Thanks Leo." I pull out one of my cards that I always have on me. I only give these cards to people I feel might need

my help one day. “This is my card. If you or your family ever need anything, give me a call.”

The kid looks shocked, nodding while looking at the card. He knows this isn't just any ordinary business card. “Thank you, Miss Murphy.”

“Riona. Now go on.” Leo slowly walks toward the entrance of the alley, still looking at the tiny card. “Hey Leo.” He turns. “Never follow anyone into a dark alley again. You never know what people's monsters look like.” He stands up straighter, knowing we don't live in a pretty world and nods before leaving Dante and me in the alley.

When I know we're alone, I turn to Dante. “We need to go.”

He smiles at me and holds his arm out for me to pass. “After you, Miss Murphy.”

I flip him off as I pass. “Shut up.”

He chuckles as we both climb into the car and head across town. “I already sent guys to the address the kid gave us. They'll watch for Maxim and once we get eyes on him, we'll move in.”

“When did you do that?” Shocked, I look over at him.

“When you were giving the kid your card and a solid life lesson. By the way, why did you give him your card?”

“Because he is a kid and is bound to get into trouble, needing help.”

He looks over at me. “Do you give out those cards a lot?”

“No, I don’t.” It’s a feeling I get when I look at someone. It’s like I can tell they’re going to need help in the future.

“He could sell it. Your number for a favor is a high price.” He doesn’t understand.

“He won’t. Plus, I know who I give these cards to.”

“All of them.”

I nod. “I know which ones are outstanding. Most people I give them to call me pretty quickly.” Typically, they’re people I remove from one bad situation and willingly go back home to another.

Since we’re running a little behind, I pull out my laptop and start going over the footage from the outside cameras, making sure nothing happened today. On fast forward, I watch the back door first, seeing nothing all day and then switch to the front of the house. Other than Swartz going to work and coming back, there is nothing, which is perfect.

Darkness surrounds us as Dante parks the car a couple streets over and he leans over the console to watch the video feed with me. I have all three cameras up and the microphone on from under the table as John Marshall steps out of his car. Two out of the six targets have arrived.

“Riona, that’s the Chief of Police.”

“I know.”

“You can’t kill the Chief of Police. He’s in everyone’s pocket. He allows us to do what we all do. I’m surprised your father is allowing this.”

“First of all, my father has no say on what jobs I take. Second, I don’t give a shit who it is. All I care about is what a disgusting piece of shit he is. Do I need to give you the full story of what they did to Tiffany so you can realize how much he deserves to die?”

“No.” He looks away but I can see the conflict on his face.

“And she wasn’t the only one. You saw the pictures of the basement in that house. That setup is from experience.”

He turns back to me with a look that says he doesn’t need further reasoning. “How do you plan to get away with this and every other illegal thing we all do from here on out.”

“I don’t get caught. For this job, I have the Captain of the Fire Department and the new Chief of Police in my pocket.”

“You already have the new Chief of Police in your pocket?” He’s impressed.

“Yes. I’m not stupid enough to kill the men keeping me and my family off the radar without having his replacement willing to do the same.”

He smirks. “I’m sorry for even questioning you. Who else will be here tonight?”

“The DA, Lieutenant Governor, a Wall Street guy, and a social worker for the foster care system.” People of power shouldn’t be as despicable as they are.

“This is going to rock a lot of boats with all these guys being murdered.” He shakes his head in disbelief at how much

this will change our city, as the people next in line are forced into their new positions.

“Which is why it’s going to look like an accident. A gas leak.”

Another car pulls up and Carter Winters and Zach Hanes, the DA and Lt. Governor step out. With the four of them inside I turn on the gas and set a timer for an hour. “We have an hour.”

Dante sets a timer too. “What if the rest don’t show?”

“Then I’ll go to their houses and kill them in their sleep.” I have at least three plans for this execution. None of them will make it to morning.

“How will that look like an accident?”

I lean down and pull out a vile. “Poison.”

He reaches for the vile and tilts it back and forth. “Non-detectable?”

I nod with an evil smile. “It simulates a brain aneurysm.”

“Very handy.” He looks impressed as he hands the vile back.

“Yes, it is. I normally always have some sort of poison on me. It’s my preferred choice for killing.”

“You aren’t known for your poisons. You’re known for your brutal, messy kills.”

Yeah, I love sending a message in blood. “Those are only a small portion of my kills. The ones I want to hit the

news. Other than poison, I'm very handy with a sniper rifle. But that is only about a handful of my skills."

"How many kills do you have?"

I shrug my shoulders. "Over a hundred. Not all are jobs. Some came from threats against my father."

"Wow. You would've had to start killing as a kid to have those kinds of numbers."

"14 actually."

"Why would your father start you so early? Even my father waited until I was 18."

"It wasn't his choice." I look at him with a blank expression because he doesn't need to know my trauma.

"What made you choose to be an assassin?"

"I learned you can't be weak in this life. So, I made myself strong." Another car pulls up at the house and Warren Lowe steps out. That means only one left. Looking at the clock, I see that it is just past seven. "Only the social worker is left."

"How much longer..." Dante is cut off by Warren Lowe bursting into the house loudly. "I've been waiting for tonight all week. It's been a while since we've had our fun." The guys sitting around the table chuckle. Raymond pushes an open chair back. "Grab a beer and have a seat. Thomas isn't here yet. He wanted it dark before he brought us our treat. He'll be here in a few."

I look to Dante as a sickening feeling fills my stomach. Their treat is going to be someone. And my guess is an

unwilling someone. Dante has the same look that I do. “That isn’t part of your plan, is it?”

I shake my head. “No, it’s not.”

“Are you going to stop the gas?” His panic is starting to match mine.

“No. They die tonight. Either before the fire or during.”

As the guys discuss who they think Thomas Oz is bringing, I start digging in my bag for all my daggers and my poison accessories.

I wrap my hair into a bun and thread two hairpins filled with poison through it. “What’s with the knitting needles and rings?”

I smile at him as I slip on two rings. “I think you know the answer to that.”

He looks between all the accessories. “More poison?”

“I told you it was my favorite.” He reaches his hand out to the needles and I move away from him. “I wouldn’t do that. I don’t have the antidote with me.”

“You didn’t poison yourself by putting it in your hair, how will a touch poison me?” His hand still hovers near my head.

“It’s dried on the tip of the pin. If you break skin, you die. I didn’t break my skin and I’ve been using these pins for years. I’ve learned not to poison myself.”

His eyes widened in shock. “You’ve poisoned yourself before.”

I strap my leg and waist holsters on. “Oh yeah. Multiple times. I had to learn. Plus, they were minor poisons. Making you tell the truth or sleep.”

He chuckles. “I would’ve loved to see that.”

“There might be videos...” Wait, I shouldn’t have said that.

“Oh, I’m definitely getting my hands on them.” He starts typing away on his phone.

“Who are you texting?” I lean over the console to see his phone but I can’t see the screen.

“Your brother.”

“Oh no, you don’t.” I reach over trying to grab his phone but he moves out of the way. We chuckle as we wrestle each other for the phone. One second we’re laughing and the next Dante turns to me and kisses me. I lean into him, deepening our kiss before I pull away from him at the sound of a scream.

Looking at the camera feed, I see a little girl probably around fourteen cowering on the floor as six men surround her. Fuck. When did they get here? Their voices filter through the speaker on my laptop as they openly talk about how pretty she is and what they want to do to her. I’m not going to let them touch her.

Handing the laptop to Dante, I throw open my door ready to bust in there and kill them when Dante grabs my arm. “Wait. Look.” He shows me the screen. “Only Thomas is taking her downstairs.”

With us both quiet I hear Raymond say, “Lock her up in the basement for now. No one touches until we’re done playing. You know the rules. Winner gets first dibs.”

Disgusting. At least they’re going to be dead before the night is over. Thomas appears back on the camera. “She’s locked in the cage, crying.”

“Fuck, now my dick is hard. I can’t wait to capture her tears and use them as I jerk off.” John Marshall moves in his seat as he adjusts himself.

“What the fuck kind of kink is that?” Dante looks disgusted.

“One he’ll never get off on again. I need to get her out.” I look down at the stopwatch on my phone and see I have 25 minutes until the house blows. “Shit, I need to go.”

I start switching out my poison weapons for my gun. “From the pictures Enzo took, there are windows in the basement that I can get in and out of without detection.”

I grab my AirPods out of my bag. “I need you to stay here and watch them. Let me know if they head to the basement.” Without waiting for him to agree, I step away from the car and close the door. As I walk down the street, I call Dante as I put one of the buds in my ear. “Fuck Riona, you don’t have to do this alone.”

“I’m not. You’re on lookout duty. A very important job.” I pass the camera looking at the outside of the house and smile at Dante, knowing he’s not happy at being told to stay in the car.

“Don’t mock me Ri.”

“I’m not.”

“I don’t believe you.” I make it to the side of the house and I bend down next to the windows. I can’t see anything inside which means there is some sort of covering on them that I didn’t notice in the photos.

Pulling out my blade, I push the tip into the seal where the lock should be and slide the blade until the lock slides, unlocking the window. Soundlessly, I push the window up and the basement comes into full view. Right in the middle of the basement is the girl curled in a ball, crying.

Before climbing in, I tap on the window, getting the girls attention and whisper, “Hey.” The girl’s head shoots up and she starts to whimper. “Shh. It’s okay. Please don’t scream.”

“Help. Please help me.” She cries quietly.

“I am. I promise. I’m going to climb in now.” The girl nods.

Flipping onto my stomach, I slide in through the window feet first. When I’m hanging by my hands, I drop the final few feet, landing without a sound. Now that I’m standing in front of the girl, she looks me up and down hesitantly. I make sure not to make any sudden movements as I look over the cage seeing a heavy-duty lock. “Shit.”

Dante’s worried voice rings in my ear. “What? What’s wrong?”

“There’s a lock on the cage and I don’t have my kit with me.”

“You don’t have time for that anyways. There’s only ten minutes until the house blows.”

“Fuck.” Time is moving too fast. I look around the room. “There has to be a key down here.”

I scan the walls looking for a hook of some sort. It’s so dark down here that I can’t really see anything more than a few feet in front of me. Walking along the edge of the room, I head closer to the door because that is where I’d keep the key.

“You’re going the wrong way. The key is by the table.” The girl whispers.

I quickly walk over to the table with all the sex toys and tools laid out. Scanning the table, I find the key laying right in the middle. You know this actually is a shitty place to hold someone. They leave keys laying around. There weren’t secure locks on the windows. And there isn’t even a top to her cage. Anyone could climb the chain linked fence. Man, these guys are idiots.

Grabbing the key, I walk over to the cage and quickly unlock it. The girl stands to her feet as I quietly set down the lock and key on the ground. The noise upstairs grows larger as a man cheers and I use the noise to mask the sound of opening the gate. A loud squeak rings through the basement and the girl and I both freeze as everything goes quiet. “Dante?”

“You need to move. Three minutes.” I wave my hand motioning for the girl to move.

“Did they hear?” I’m more worried about them coming down here right now.

“Yes. But they thought it was her screaming.”

I grab the stool at the table and place it along the wall under the window. Looking over at the girl, I see how thin she is and how shaky. She's not going to be able to pull herself up. "I'm going to get myself through the window and pull you up, okay?"

She gives me a timid nod and I boost myself up on the stool and push and crawl my way through the window. As soon as I'm out, I quickly turn over, place my feet on the wall for leverage and reach as far as I can into the window. With one hand I barely reach her hand, but I grab onto what I can and pull. Once I've got her a little bit higher, I grab her wrist and pull. It's not a pretty or graceful rescue as the two of us squirm and wiggle her out, but once she is, I'm on the move.

Pulling her to her feet, I take off running, dragging her with me. We just pass the back of the house next door when Swartz's house explodes, sending both the girl and me to the ground. Dante screams my name in my ear. "God damn it Ri. You better have been out of that house."

I chuckle. "We're out. Come get us." I look at the girl lying next to me. "Let's get you safe." We both stand up and I help the girl to Dante's car. Leaving her in the backseat, I get into the passenger seat and we don't say a word as Dante drives us past the burning house. Rot in hell, fuckers.

I pull out my phone and text Dr. Gibbons one word. Done. Letting her know she and her daughter don't need to live in fear of Raymond Swartz and his sick friends anymore.

Chapter Thirteen

Riona

Firetrucks pass us and I turn in my seat, watching them fly down the road. All they're going to be able to do is stop the fire from spreading to the other houses. I can't help the smile on my face as we turn and the house goes out of sight. Looking at the girl curled up in the backseat, I grab my backpack and pull out a hoodie. "Would you like to wear this?"

She nods and grabs the hoodie from me. "Where are you taking me?"

"If it's okay with you, I was thinking we could go get something to eat. I could use a cheeseburger."

She nods timidly. "Yeah, that's okay."

I nod and look at Dante. "Do you know where Sally's is?"

He nods and turns on his blinker, heading to my favorite diner.

I look back at the girl. "What's your name, sweetheart?"

“Daisy.”

“It’s nice to meet you, Daisy. My name is Riona and this is Dante. We’re going to keep you safe. Can you tell me how you ended up with Thomas Oz and in that house?”

“Mr. Oz is my social worker. He was supposed to take me to a new home.”

“Are you in foster care?” She nods. “Do you have any family?”

She shakes her head no. “I’ve been in foster care my whole life. I don’t have any family.”

Dante pulls into the parking lot of Sally’s and I’m happy to see it’s not busy. “I have a change of clothes; do you want it?”

Daisy shakes her head. “I’m okay.”

“Okay. Let’s go inside. This is the best place to get a cheeseburger. I hope you’re hungry.” Daisy opens the door and I look at Dante. “How about you? You want a cheeseburger?”

“Yeah ...” He looks at me with desire burning in his eyes. “and something else.” I chuckle at him. “Well, I’ll make sure Sally puts a little extra special sauce on your burger.” I open my door and step out joining Daisy.

She looks over at Dante, hesitantly. “Is that your boyfriend?”

Daisy walks beside me toward the diner and when we’re far enough away, I whisper, “He wishes.” She chuckles and I lean into her. “Do you want to know a secret?”

Her smile brightens. “Yes!”

“He’s not the only one. His two brothers want me too.”

Her eyes widen. “No way.”

I open the door to the diner and signal for her to go in.
“Yes way. And they’re all hot.”

“Lucky. I can’t even get my crush to notice me.”

“Maybe he’s not worth it then.” I smile at her as an older woman in a yellow waitress uniform walks toward us.

“Miss Riona, is that you?” I smile at Sally. “Oh, bless my heart it is. It’s been forever Sweetie.”

Sally pulls me into a hug and I welcome her comfort.
“It’s only been a couple of months. You know I can’t go long without your cheeseburgers.”

She holds me at arm’s length. “By the looks of you, you need more cheeseburgers in your life.” I roll my eyes at her and she looks over my shoulder. “Who do you have with you? Where’s Aisling?”

My smile drops a little at the mention of Aisling and I feel Dante stepping closer behind me. “I’m Dante, this is Daisy.” I’m thankful he steps in because I don’t think I could lie to Sally.

“Well, it’s nice to meet you both. Come on, let me show you to the best booth.” Sally turns and walks to the back of the diner. I signal for Daisy to go ahead of us and I give Dante a quick smile. Dante’s hand lightly sits on my back as we follow Sally and Daisy. I slide into the booth with my back against the wall and I’m facing the door and Dante slides in next me.

Daisy smiles across from us as she watches Dante slide over until he's touching me and his arm rests behind my shoulders. "He is pretty hot, now that I've seen him in the light."

I crack up laughing and look at Dante's shocked face. Sally chuckles quietly as she watches all of us. "I'm going to put your burger orders in. Waters okay for everyone?"

We all nod and Dante turns to me. "You think I'm hot?"

I smile at him. "Technically I said you and your brothers were hot."

He gives me a cocky grin and shrugs his shoulders. "I'm okay with that."

I roll my eyes at him and look at Daisy. "Daisy, I have an idea I want to run by you. Is that okay?" She looks up at me and nods as she sucks down her water Sally just dropped off. "First, I need to know, do you want to go back into foster care?"

She looks confused by my question. "Don't I have to? I can't live on the streets."

"Well, I have a different idea."

Daisy sits back in her chair and gives me her full attention. "Daisy, you aren't the girl only I have saved. Most of these girls are like you, they don't have any families and were in bad situations. I have a home with a trusted friend where these girls stay and we help them finish school, find jobs, and go to college. I want to know if you would be interested in staying at this house. You would still be in the foster system, but with my connections you'd never be moved

from this house and all the money the foster care system pays goes into an account in your name for college.”

Tears run down Daisy’s face. “You’d really do that for me? Why?”

I nod. “I do it because I have experienced what dirty, disgusting men can do to girls and I know the support you need afterwards. I hope one day I won’t have to save anyone from it but until then, I want there to be a place where you and them can feel safe.” I feel Dante stiffen next to me and I adjust in the seat, feeling uncomfortable that he heard that.

She nods frantically. “Yes, I want to go there. Please.”

I smile at her. “Before you agree, let me take you to the house so you can see it and you can meet Miss Claus.”

There is a spark in her eyes as she thinks of the fictional character. “Like Santa Claus?”

I chuckle. “Yes, but no relation.”

We both chuckle. “Okay. Can we still eat before we go?”

“Absolutely. I’m going to make a call really quick so Miss Claus knows we’re coming.” I look at Dante to move, but he is looking at me like he’s still trying to figure out everything that I just said. Before he opens his mouth to ask questions, I shake my head no, telling him I’m not talking about it. He keeps his mouth shut but gives me a look saying he’s going to ask later. We have a stare off for a second before he moves out of the booth for me to get out.

I slide out of the booth and Daisy is there in a hot second giving me a big hug. “Thank you so much.”

I wrap my arms around her, hugging her back. She has obviously been through more than tonight to be this happy about getting out of the system.

Daisy eventually lets go of me and I give her a smile as I walk outside, pulling out my phone and hitting Sandra's number.

She answers in the first ring. "Hello Riona."

I smile when I hear her voice. We haven't spoken in a while. I try to keep my distance from them. "Hi Sandra. How are you tonight?"

"I'm doing good. The girls just finished dinner."

"Good." I don't know how she deals with so many girls.

"You have another one, don't you?"

"Yes, I do. Do you have room?"

"God, why does our world have to be so dark and shitty? Yes, of course I have room. This house of yours has like twenty rooms."

When we started this, I bought the biggest property on the market. It used to be a rehab facility before we made it into a home. "My question is more for you and if you can handle another girl."

"Yes, I can. You know I love these girls. How old is she?"

She's a saint. "I don't know specifically but she looks about fourteen. Her name is Daisy."

Her thoughts are spinning as she plans for the new arrival. “Okay. When can I expect you?”

“An hour okay? We’re about to eat.”

“That’s perfect.”

“Okay. See you then.” I hang up and turn to look inside. Dante’s eyes connect with mine instantly and a sense of safety washes over me knowing he’s watching out for me.

Sally is dropping off the burgers as I’m arriving back at the table and Dante stands, letting me back in. Daisy doesn’t take a breath as she digs into her burger and fries. It looks like she’s not even chewing before stuffing more food in her mouth.

When he sits back down, he leans into me and whispers, “I’m learning a lot about you today. You won’t be able to get away from answering my questions later.”

I ignore him because there isn’t a chance in hell that I’m talking to him about my past. I dig into my burger after pushing my fries to Daisy. God, this is a good burger.

Chapter Fourteen

Dante

When we arrived at the mansion where Daisy will be staying, Riona asked me to wait outside since there are still some girls that aren't comfortable with men. So now I'm standing outside this saving grace Riona has set up for girls and all I can think about is what she told Daisy at the diner. She spoke like she's experienced what Daisy was about to go through. Has she been held captive? Has she been raped? Was she abused? Who the hell touched her?

I know she's not going to tell me and it's probably not my business, but I'm starting to care for her and there's something big in her past that's still affecting her. If this morning with Enzo and Matteo doesn't show that, I don't know what does.

Knowing I'm going to need backup to get her to open up, I call my brother. "Hey man. How's Riona? I heard about the fire. I can't believe it really exploded." Matteo, of course, sounds excited about the destruction.

"Yeah, it did. We had a little hiccup though. They brought a little girl to the house."

“What!?! Please tell me you didn’t blow up a house with a girl in it.”

“Of course not, Matteo. Riona saved her and is getting her set up at a house she owns for girls that she’s saved. But we can get into that later. I need your help when we get back. Riona is going to try to get out of talking to me and I need your help in getting her to talk.”

“About what?” I can hear his hesitation about making her tell us something she’s not open to discuss.

“I think she’s been hurt in her past. When she was talking to this girl earlier, it was from experience, without saying exactly what happened.”

“Who the fuck touched her?” This is why I called him. I knew he’d want to know as much as me.

“I don’t know. That’s why I need your help.”

“We’ll be there. She’s not getting out of it.”

“Thanks, man. Will you tell Enzo?” Enzo won’t be so gung-ho about this.

“Yeah. We’re finishing here and will be waiting at home.”

“Alright, see you soon.” I hang up the phone and lean against my car, looking up at the house. This girl is so much more than she lets people see. Yes, she’s beautiful and a true mafia princess, but she’s so much more. The more we spend time with her, the more she shows us who she truly is and I want to know every side of her. I want to know what makes her the amazing, strong, woman that she is.

Riona walks out of the house with a smile on her face.
“Daisy all set?”

She nods and I open the passenger side door for her.
“Yeah. She’s really excited. I’m so glad those assholes haven’t brought her down. She’s going to be okay after tonight. Not all of them are.”

I climb into the driver’s seat. “Do you come here often?”

She shakes her head as she looks at the house. “No. I don’t want to put these girls in danger because of their association with me. My name isn’t even on the house.”

I pull out of the driveway and start heading back to the house. “So where do the boys stay?”

“Fortunately, I haven’t come across a lot of boys being abused. But the ones that I have, I’ve been able to place them with good families.”

“And you can’t do that with the girls?” That seems weird. I would think girls would be easier.

“The younger girls sure. High school girls are harder to place. That’s why I found Miss Claus and started this house.”

“So, who is Miss Claus to you?”

She looks at me. “She was an old teacher of mine in high school. Me and Aisling got close to her after her husband passed. She had always wanted kids and when we needed someone to take in these girls, we called her and she agreed instantly. Now she has tons of daughters that call her house their home.”

She's a savior but doesn't even realize it. "So, you're helping out more than the girls."

"Something like that." Riona looks out the window and I know she's done talking. That's fine, at least until we get home.

Chapter Fifteen

Riona

I know where his questions are leading, so I end the conversation by looking out the window. I'm not going to tell him about my past. He doesn't need to know. With me distancing myself, we don't say another word on the way back to the house.

As we pull into the driveway, I realize that he didn't make me put the blindfold on but I was too much in my head to even pay attention to what was going on outside.

What I do notice is Matteo pacing outside the front door and Enzo sitting on the stairs. I sit up straighter in my seat and look at Dante. "Is something wrong? Have you heard something about Aisling?"

He shakes his head. "It's not about Aisling."

"Then what's it about?" Before he even gets a chance to respond, my door is ripped open and Matteo is pulling me out of the car. "Matteo. What the hell? Put me down."

He throws me over his shoulder and heads for the house. "Nope."

I hit his back. “What the fuck is this all about?”

“Oh, you’re going to find out.” He walks in through the front door.

I hit his back again. “Put me down and we can talk about what’s got you acting like a fucking caveman.”

“Oh, we’re talking.” He sets me down in the living room, turns me to face Dante and Enzo, who are walking in behind us, wraps his arms around my middle, and sits down on the couch taking me with him.

He traps my arms and legs with his as I squirm against him trying to get free. “Why are you holding me?”

He growls. “Because you’re going to fight us.”

“I’m going to fight you anyways now.” I try to pull my arms out of his hold as I buck upwards trying to break out of his arms.

“Ri, stop.” I freeze in Matteo’s arms at the sound of Dante’s voice. When I look at him, my whole body turns to ice because I know what this is about.

“No.” I shake my head. “No. I’m not talking about it. It’s none of your business.”

“Everything to do with you is our business.” Matteo growls behind me.

I shake my head. “Not this.”

“Everything.”

“No.” I buck against his hold again. “I’m not telling you about the darkest time in my life. You don’t deserve to know that. You don’t ever share anything about yourselves and

everyday I'm telling you something about me. I'm not telling you this. We're only together because my father is paying you to protect me. And when we have Aisling back and that threat is gone, my father is going to pull me back home."

I raise my hips up again and purposely slam them down hard on Matteo dick making him groan and lean forward. When I have his hold loose enough, I bring my arm forward to slam my elbow back into his ribs but Enzo finally speaking has me stopping. "I'm not really their brother."

I freeze in Matteo's hold as I look at Enzo who's leaning forward in his seat with his elbows on his knees. Enzo looks at me and all I can see is understanding and sadness. He's about to share something that hurts him. "I'm not really their brother. I'm their cousin." Knowing Enzo isn't finished, I relax into Matteo's hold, wanting to know this part of Enzo.

"My mother was their father's sister." He pauses and I have about a hundred questions, but I keep quiet. "When my mother was in college here in the States, she was raped by a football player after a party where she got wasted."

He takes a deep breath and rushes out the rest. "I'm a product of that rape. My mother couldn't stand the sight of me because her family wouldn't let her abort me, so she killed herself a week after I was born."

Dante finishes off the story. "My father adopted Enzo. We might not have the same biological parents but he is our brother."

"What happened to the football player?" I ask, knowing Enzo was done.

“I think you can guess.” Enzo looks me right in the eyes and I know the guy was killed for what he did. Probably tortured beforehand.

With my eyes locked on Enzo’s I give him a slight nod, silently telling him thank you for opening up to me. With him sharing such an awful story about himself, I feel my walls breaking. Just thinking about telling them my story and having to relive it has my hands shaking, so I close them in a fist and close my eyes to try to keep myself from breaking. I touch Matteo’s arms and try to remove them but he just squeezes me tighter.

“I can’t tell you this story trapped in your arms.” I look back at him, pleading with him to release me.

Matteo’s face softens as he looks into my eyes and he releases his hold. I stand up and I watch all of them tense like they think I’m going to run. “I just need space.” I walk past Enzo and touch his shoulder. “When you woke me up this morning, I was in the middle of a nightmare of when I was kidnapped. And just like this morning, I need space while reliving it.”

I walk to the chair in the corner of the room and sit down. All their eyes are on me. “Once I tell you this, you won’t bring it up again. You won’t ask for more details or ask questions. Okay?”

Enzo is the first to nod and then Matteo. Dante takes a second to agree and I know he doesn’t like not being able to ask questions. When he does eventually nod, I lean in the chair and close my eyes. “When I was twelve, I was grabbed while walking home from school, as a power play against my father.

They wanted him to step down in exchange for me. I was held captive for three weeks and they were the worst weeks of my life. The first two weeks my captor, Tony, took my virginity and raped me continuously. He used to call me his pretty princess while holding me down and raping me. He loved my screams and cries. He would talk about never letting me go so he could have me all to himself.

Eventually, after days of this, I broke. I stopped fighting, stopped screaming, and stopped crying. I just laid there, not taking my eyes off the hole in the wallpaper. Tony got bored of my zombie state and allowed his men to take me. From that day, I was rarely alone or without some disgusting man using me for their pleasure. But you see, the guys didn't like the zombie state either so they started shooting me up with different things. Speed, Ecstasy, cocaine, roofies. You name it they tried it. Some made me responsive to them, others made me pass out, so I don't remember what they did to me. I just remember the pain and the marks on my body.”

I take a breath and open my eyes to look at them now that the worst part of the story is over. They all look concerned and upset at what I've been through, but surprisingly, there is no pity there. “At one point, one of the guys gave me speed in order to get me to fight him but he was called away before he could finish. He left the room, leaving me alone, unchained, and very awake. I took the opportunity and escaped out of the bedroom window. I ran as far as I could and then I knocked on the front door of someone's house and begged them for help. I called my father and he came and got me. But by the time my father got to the house I was held in, it was empty.”

Matteo stands up from the couch and starts heading for the door. “You’re telling me those fuckers are still alive? Don’t worry, I’ll find them and bring them back so we can kill them.”

I jump up from my seat and run to stop him from leaving. I step in front of him blocking his exit. “You’ll be searching for a long time. So why don’t you sit down so I can finish the story.”

He looks like a bull ready to charge. “They better be dead at the end of this story.”

“Well, come sit down and see.” I reach for his hand timidly, hoping to not freak out from his touch, after reliving the horrible weeks of unwanted touches. When his hand slides across mine and I don’t go into a panic, I grab it and pull him back to the couch. We sit next to each other and I notice Enzo and Dante staring at our joined hands.

I unwrap my fingers from Matteo’s and lean forward with my hands out for them to touch. I could see the jealousy in their eyes that I was willing to touch Matteo. They each reach for my hands and interlock our fingers. After a few seconds, I pull my hands from them because it’s uncomfortable to sit with my arms stretched out.

Sitting back on the couch I continue. “It took me a while after getting home to recover and eventually I pushed myself to leave my bed and I got into learning how to protect myself so I’d never be a victim again. After two years of training, I became the assassin I am today. And my first kills were Tony and his men. My father found them and captured

them for me so I could torture them the way they tortured me. Well, not exactly the same.”

I look to Matteo to make sure he’s relaxed now and then I look to Dante because he’s going to still want to know about the girls’ home. “With what I’ve been through, I couldn’t stand to think of others going through that. So, I killed men and women who took that choice away from someone. But with those kills, I found that a lot of the men, women, and children were being held captive and didn’t have anywhere to go after they were rescued, so Aisling and I started a foundation to open homes for them. Dante saw the house the girls go to and the boys are adopted out. But we also have an apartment building the adults stay in. Some work for us in my burlesque club, at their choice. Some we’ve paid for them to go to college. But they’re all there to get on their feet and to recover from their traumas.”

“That’s pretty impressive that you guys help these people build their lives again. Most people wouldn’t care.” Enzo moves over to me on the couch.

“Most people don’t understand what I and these people have been through. I know the torture it is and I was lucky to have a family to help me through it. All I’m giving them is a safe place and a family that understands.”

“It’s still amazing what you do.” Matteo rests his arm behind me on the back of the couch. “Thank you for telling us.”

“Thanks for listening and not judging.” I stand from the couch. “It’s been a long day. I’m going to bed.” I give them all a smile before walking out of the living room and

heading to my room. I need a moment alone to push those memories away, because I can't have them rule my mind again. I jump into the shower to wash the day away.

When I'm done and I've changed into some pajamas, I find Dante sitting on the edge of my bed. Not saying a word, I feel his blue eyes tracking me as I walk to my side of the bed and climb in. Once I get comfortable, I look over to him and silently ask if he's getting in. Dante stands, removes his shirt and pants and climbs into bed so he's curled around me.

“My mother died in my arms. I wanted to go to a specific Blues soccer game when I was eight and I don't even know why now, but my mom took me. I can't remember why but for some reason we had to leave early and as we were walking through the parking lot, a man tried to rob us. We fought back and I got pushed, making me fall and hit my head. My mom turned her back to the guy to help me but he pulled out a gun and shot her once, right in the back of her head. I held her in my arms as I screamed for help. It felt like hours before someone finally heard, but my mom was already gone.”

I look back over my shoulder at him as I squeeze his arms around me tighter. “I'm so sorry. It's absolutely awful to lose your mom, but in that way, I can't imagine.”

“We all have trauma, Rose. Just know that we'll always be there for you to fight it.”

I nod and he leans forward to place a soft kiss to my lips. We sink into each other arms pulling what we need in silence and I find myself slipping off to sleep, feeling at home in his arms. As my eyes grow heavy his voice breaks the quiet holding me awake. “I have someone following the video

footage from the parking lot. They're working on it 24/7, so we'll find where they took her soon." My body stiffens at mentioning Aisling and guilt fills me because I'm finding comfort in these men while she's alone and living a nightmare.

"Then what are we going to do?" That was our only lead.

"Follow her mom's past and we're going to show you our business."

I look back at him. "Why show me your life?"

"Because you've pushed yourself into our lives and we might not let you go when your father calls you back." He traces his finger along my jaw and across my chin.

"That statement could call for a war between you and my father." And I might be willing to start that war.

"Not if you stay willingly."

"We'll see." I smile at him because I think he knows I'm hooked on them.

"Yes, we will." He kisses my shoulder and I relax into his hold, falling asleep quickly.

Chapter Sixteen

Riona

“Riona.”

“Aisling?”

“Riona.” I swear it’s her.

“Aisling?” Darkness is all I see.

“Ri. Save me.”

“Aisling. Where are you?”

“Ri.”

“I can’t last much longer.”

“Rose.”

“Hide within yourself. You can survive this.”

“Hurry.”

“Ri. Wake up.”

My eyes flutter open and I see Dante leaning over me, rubbing my arm. “Was I screaming again?” I feel really dazed, like I’m not fully awake but I don’t feel like I’ve woken from a nightmare. I feel like I was actually sleeping deeply.

“No. I just got a call. There’s movement in the house the kid delivered food to for Maxim. We’re going in. Do you want to come?” He gives me a confident smile because he knows I’m coming.

“I wouldn’t miss it.”

“Thought so. Come on, get out of bed. We leave in ten.” Both of us get out of bed and I go to my closet as Dante leaves my room, but before he does, he stops at the door and looks back at me. “You might want to put a dress in that backpack of goodies because we have club business tonight and who knows if we’ll have time to come back.”

My smile matches his suggestive one. Maxim and a night out with my three men, this is going to be a good day. Wait? My men? I shake my head, pushing away that thought for another time. I quickly throw on some leggings and a tank top and head to the bathroom to get ready. Before leaving my room, I listen to Dante’s advice and grab one of my favorite dresses and heels and put them in my bag.

The guys are waiting for me at the bottom of the stairs and they’re each watching me. Dante runs his eyes over me like he can’t wait to rip my clothes off. Enzo has a concerned look on his face as he checks me over and when he sees my smile, his pulls across his face. I guess he is used to me being a mess after being woken up.

Matteo has a wicked but excited smile, like he can’t wait to get his hands on Maxim and have a little fun. He steps forward and holds out his hand. “Come on, Princess. We have a Russian to catch.” I place my hand in his and he pulls me to

him and wraps his arm around my shoulders. With his mouth right next to my ear, he whispers, “And maybe even torture.”

The spark in his eye is wicked and I can't help but chuckle. “As long as I get to partake.”

He leads me out of the house with Dante and Enzo behind us. “I'd never think to exclude you. I can't wait to see you make him scream. Be covered in his blood and end his miserable life. I'm getting hard thinking about it.” He steps behind me to open my door and rub his erection against my ass.

I turn to face him and run my hands up his chest and skim my lips over his neck. “Maybe after he's dead, I'll let you fuck me next to his body.”

He growls and I can feel it all the way to my core. “Deal.”

I turn and climb into Dante's SUV and Matteo smacks my ass, making me gasp. Once seated, I glare at him but he chuckles, closing the door and climbing into the passenger seat. Enzo, who's sitting next to me, reaches for my hand and pulls me next to him. I happily slide over so my side is pressed against his and with our fingers laced, I lay my head on his shoulder. He kisses the top of my head. “How did you sleep?”

He cares that I'm rested, but what he's really asking is did I see Aisling or have nightmares. “Pretty good. I was really tired. No nightmares but I heard Aisling.”

He rubs his free hand up my arm. “What did she say?”

“To hurry up and save her. I think they're going to break her.” I lift my head and look at him.

“We’re going to find her. Our hacker is looking over the parking footage and should be done soon.”

I nod my head on his shoulder. “I feel like I should be doing more.”

He places his hand on my neck and runs his thumb across my cheek. “I don’t think there is anything else we can do at this point. They need to reach out for us to work on any other leads.”

I shake my head, making his hand drop because there has to be something. “What about her mom’s family?”

“Well, we’re pretty sure the O’Brien’s have her, so I’ve been working on their family tree, trying to find something. But without names, I could’ve already found them but wouldn’t know it because her mother was wiped from their family. I did find out that Craig is adopted.”

“Wow, that’s interesting. Maybe I should try my father again so we can get names.” I can’t believe he hasn’t called me back yet.

Dante looks back at me through the rearview mirror. “Killian is meeting us at the house. You should get him to look into their names or at least ask your father.”

My brother will be there? I’ve missed him so much. We haven’t spoken since I left, so I have no idea where his head is at or how things have been at home.

Like Dante did yesterday, he parks his car in a dead-end alley in Little Italy, but what’s different today is my brother’s car is there as well. Not waiting for the guys to get out, I jump out of the car and run to Killian who is leaning

against his hood. He stands as I get to him and throw my arms around his neck. His arms instantly go around my waist, hugging me to him. “Hi Kill.”

“Hi Ri. It’s good to see you.”

We break apart and look at each other. “It’s good to see you too. How’s everything?”

He shakes his head with a solemn expression. “Not good. The house is different without you both there. Dad is almost never there and when he is, he’s yelling at me or someone else. He’s pissed about us arguing with him in front of his men about Aisling. He’s keeping me in the dark on something and I don’t think it’s going to be good. I’ve tried asking some of my guys, but they’re in the dark too.”

I squeeze his arm. “He must be keeping it close. I wouldn’t continue to ask around because anyone you ask now can’t be trusted. Once we have Aisling back and I’m home, we can work on figuring it out.”

“It’s a problem for another time. Let’s go get the Russian that should’ve never put a hand on you.”

I smile up at him and Dante says, “Yes. Let’s.”

Turning, I see Dante, Enzo, and Matteo standing in a line in full gear. They look sexy as hell with bullet proof vests on, guns hanging off their hips and a rifle across their backs. They’re not messing around. I feel really unprepared right now.

Kill moves next to me. “Wow. A little much, Russo’s. Don’t you think?”

“We don’t take chances anymore. Once you’ve taken a bullet to the stomach it’s not something you want to experience again.” Dante crosses his arms over his chest, looking even more bad-ass as he glares at my brother.

I look at all three of them, trying to figure out which of them has been shot. I’ve seen them all shirtless but I didn’t see any scars. My guess is Dante because I didn’t get a chance to really take in his muscular upper body when we were in the boxing ring. I wish I knew the story but it’s not the time for that. I step toward them but I’m looking at Dante. “You got an extra one for me?”

Enzo raises his arm and I’m just realizing he’s been holding one for me the whole time. I give him a smile and quickly, slip it over my head. Dante comes up to my side and starts making sure it’s tight enough and secured properly as Matteo walks back to the car and quickly returns with my backpack. He holds it open for me and I quickly pull out my harnesses for my guns and knives.

With them strapped to my hips and thighs, I holster my two guns and strap on my six knives. When I’m done, I look up to see all of them looking at me. Dante, Matteo, and Enzo look turned on, but my brother looks shocked, but it’s not just at me. It’s at me and the guys.

Not wanting him to ask what’s going on with us, I look at him. “Are you going to load up?”

“Already am.” He lifts his shirt and turns, showing two guns in the waistband of his jeans.

“Low key.” I nod, accepting it because Killian is never going to be armed like me or apparently my guys. “How are

we doing this? I think Killian should go to the front to cover it since he looks unarmed, while we go in through the back.”

Killian nods along with Matteo and Enzo but Dante just stares at me and I know he’s having a hard time not being in control.

I lean my head to the side and smile at Dante “You okay with that?”

One side of his lips turns up slightly and I know he’s fighting a smile. “It’s not how I’d do it. Someone will need to go with Killian.”

I shrug. “Okay. I’ll go with him. Are we busting in or going in quietly.”

“It’s Bratva property, so I say let’s bust in.” Matteo and Killian chuckle as Dante gives me a wicked grin. I shrug my shoulders like why not.

“Okay.” Enzo steps up with his tablet open to a map. “Here is the house. Killian and Riona, you’ll turn right out of the alley, go two blocks, cross the street and walk up one block and the house will be right in front of you.” I nod and I can see Killian nod as well. “We’re going straight out of the alley, up three blocks and then over so we can get to the back yard.”

Dante and Matteo nod in understanding. “Beauty, here is an earpiece so you know when we’re in the back.” I take the earpiece from Enzo and put it in my ear.

Killian, Dante, and Matteo all step away from our circle. Matteo takes the tablet, putting it in the SUV as Killian and Dante lock their cars. I’m watching all of them when Enzo’s voice rings in my ear. “Can you hear me, Beauty?”

Looking at Enzo, I see him smiling at me, with a finger pressed into his earpiece.

I reach to mine trying to find how to talk back to him. Enzo steps forward and guides my finger to the button. I press down on it and smile at Enzo. “We should’ve used these the other night while you were watching Matteo and I.”

Enzo runs his fingers down my arm as he whispers without using the earpiece. “Would you have liked for me to talk dirty to you as you sucked my brother’s cock? Or told you how I’d like my cock sucked?”

I moan thinking about Enzo’s sexy voice ringing in my ear as I pleasure Matteo. “I wouldn’t have said no to either. Would Matteo have a problem with you controlling what I did?”

“He hasn’t had a problem in the past.”

Shocked, I look over to Matteo and I find him smirking at me and giving a quick nod. “Can he hear me?”

Him and Dante nod as Enzo answers. “Yeah. The button turned on the mic. It’s so you don’t have to continuously touch your ear.”

Oh god. I look to Killian just to make sure they didn’t give him one too. Killian isn’t paying attention to us as he is taping something on his phone. “He doesn’t have one.”

“Thank god for that.” I give Enzo a small shove back from me. “You could’ve told me.”

“Oh, come on Princess. Don’t be mad. I love hearing all your dirty thoughts.”

I roll my eyes and step away from Enzo. “Are we ready?”

Dante chuckles. “Yeah, let’s go.”

The brothers walk down the alley in front of me and Killian. They give us a nod as Killian and I turn right onto the sidewalk.

We’re quiet for a little bit, trying to not draw attention to ourselves but once we’re a block down Killian breaks the silence. “You seem to have had a change of heart about staying with the Russo’s.”

I look at him, trying to act confused. “What are you talking about? I went willingly. They’re hired to help with Aisling and to protect me. I wouldn’t fight that.”

He gives me a look, telling me he’s not buying it. “I meant you don’t seem to have a very professional relationship.”

“What are you asking?” He’ll need to ask it out right.

“Which one are you with?” He cringes with each word and I hold back my laugh. One thing Killian hates more than anything is talking about my sex life.

“That is none of your business.”

Matteo’s voice rings in my ear. “Oh, say me. Please say me. I’m the one who proposed.”

The sound of a groan and then Dante saying, “Shut up.” I can only guess he hit Matteo.

“So, you’re with one of them.” Killian gives me a side smirk.

“I didn’t say that.” I can’t force my smile down.

“I think it’s Dante.” Killian just calls it out so matter of fact.

“What?!” comes from Matteo.

A growl comes from Enzo as Dante happily chuckles.

“He was really worried about the vest and you were challenging him when the plan was set.” Killian talks out his reasoning, but I can tell he’s uncomfortable so I change the subject.

“Killian, can we focus? Who I’m with or not isn’t your business and not what’s important right now.”

Killian nods and we cross the street as the house comes into view. “I’m going to show him who you belong to, Princess.” I groan at Matteo’s comment because if he does anything that clues Killian into what my relationship is with all of them, I’ll kill him. We pass a car that has a guy sitting in it and I assume that’s their guy. “We’re across the street now. Just passed your lookout.”

“We’re climbing over the fence now,” Enzo calls out.

I signal to Killian that we’re good and cross the street. As we’re walking up to the front door, I start looking around to make sure everything is clear and we haven’t drawn attention to ourselves.

Seeing the street is empty, I turn to the door, waiting right off the front porch. “We’re at the back door.” Enzo’s voice is in my ear again.

“We’re at the front.”

“Okay. On the count of three.”

I nod to Killian to get ready and then Enzo and I count out together. “3... 2...1”

I watch as Killian brings his foot up and kicks the door in. The front door bursts open and I follow Killian in with my gun in hand. Immediately I hear the guys yelling and I raise my gun just in time to see a guy run around the corner.

At the sight of Killian and I, he comes to a skidding stop. “Oh shit.”

“Damn right.” Matteo comes around the corner behind the guy with his gun raised. Killian and I don’t lower our guns until Matteo kicks the guy’s knees in, making him fall to the ground. Matteo places his foot on the guy’s back, holding him face down to the floor.

Dante and Enzo come up behind me. “He’s the only one here.”

“That sucks for you, man. Guess you’re going to have to give us our answers.” Matteo grabs both of the guy’s hands and pulls them behind his back and then he picks the guy up by his wrists and shirt. Once the guy is on his feet again, Matteo pushes him the way he came. When I turn the corner, I see he was coming from the kitchen. And by the looks of it, he was cleaning.

I stand back as I watch Matteo and Enzo strap this guy onto one of the kitchen chairs and really look at him. The guy is dressed in high end jeans and a button-up with messy brown hair and when his brown eyes connect with mine, he has tears in them. “Please help me.”

Matteo just chuckles. “She’s the deadliest of us all. She’s not helping you.”

At that, the guy’s face hardens and he glares at me. “Oh, I know who she is. She’s Maxim’s girl.” He isn’t some low-level soldier.

Matteo punches the guy in the face. “She’s not his.”

The guy chuckles. “Not now. But just you wait. One day, he’s going to get his hands on you and you’ll never escape.”

Matteo reaches back to punch him again, but I step forward and grab his arm. “Let me. He’s trying to get a rise out of me. So, let’s see if he can.”

Matteo matches my wicked smile and steps back. “I’d like to see him try.”

Turning back to the guy, I pull out a knife from my thigh holster and twirl it on my finger. “I like to know the names of the men I torture and kill.”

“You can call me Daddy. That way you can get used to it for when I’m balls deep inside...” Growls come from behind me, but I’m only focused on the guy in front of me as I slam my knife into his thigh.

His scream fills the room and I can’t help my smile as I pull the knife back out. “So, Dickwad, how about you tell me where Maxim is so I don’t have to cover this kitchen in your blood.”

“Oh, I guess Russo dick isn’t that good if you’re already wanting in Maxim’s bed.”

I chuckle. “Does any girl ever willingly go into Pencil Dick’s bed?”

He gives me a suggestive smile. “No, they don’t. That’s why they crawl into mine afterwards.”

Gotcha. “Oh, so then you must be Victor. Maxim’s best friend.” His face drops and I chuckle. “You really need to learn to keep your mouth shut.” I look back at Enzo. “Find his phone. It might have info in it.” Enzo leaves the room in search of it and I look to Matteo. “You ready to have some fun?”

Matteo rolls his shoulders. “Oh, I’m ready.”

“Hold on a second.” Killian walks around the kitchen and grabs the hand towel. He walks over and shoves it into Victor’s mouth. “His screams are a little loud and we’re not in your torture room.” I give him a nod in thanks, because he’s right. We’ll be doing a lot of damage before we’ll ask any other questions.

“You have a torture room, Princess?” Matteo gives me a giddy smile.

My smile matched his. “Of course I do. I’ll show you mine, if you show me yours one day.”

“I’ll show you anything if I get to see any of you.” His eyes scan over me and I can’t help but want whatever he is thinking.

“Okay. I don’t need to hear any of this. I’ll go help Enzo.” Killian leaves the kitchen.

“I bet he thinks I’m the one you’re with now.” I chuckle at his satisfied smile and turn to face Victor. It’s time

to get some answers.

After an hour of Matteo and I taking turns inflicting pain, Victor finally gave us the information we need about Maxim. Or at least what he knows. Maxim has been moving between the different Bratva properties in the city. Only staying for a day or two. Nobody in the Bratva knows where he is. He only texts Victor his last day at a place so he can come and clean the place so Maxim's father doesn't know he was there. Such a good best friend. Too bad he's going to die because of that. But first, I have one more question to ask.

Standing in front of Victor, I grab his hair and pull so his beaten and bloody face is tilted up toward mine. "I've got one more question before we end this. What was the Bratva's involvement in Aisling's kidnapping?"

Victor's eyes widen just a little. "Nothing. That was the O'Brien's. We didn't even know they were at the club that night. Maxim just wanted you." Something crashes in the other room and I turn to see Killian is no longer in the kitchen. Another crash comes from the living room and I look to Matteo to end this as I let go of Victor's hair and walk out of the kitchen.

As I walk into the living room, I see Killian pick up a side table and raise it over his head to smash it. "Killian." I move so I stand in front of him. "What are you doing?"

Anger is radiating off him as he breathes heavily. "What was the point of all this? You just spent an hour torturing this guy and he doesn't know anything about Aisling?"

I hold my hands out at my sides, confused because he knew why we were here. “We’re here looking for Maxim because he attacked me and to see if he was involved with Aisling.”

“Who cares about him attacking you?” I step back as his words hurt. “Aisling is still missing. Going through god knows what. You were supposed to have found her by now. Instead, you’re playing house with those boys and goofing off. Do you even care?” He takes a step toward me but I don’t back up.

“Of course I care. I know what she’s going through and we’re doing everything we can. What are you doing to find her?”

“You’re not doing enough,” Killian yells in my face. I slap him across his cheek and when he turns his face back toward me there is hatred in his eyes. But before he can do or say anything he’s pulled away from me and Dante is standing between us. “That’s enough Killian. You should go.”

Killian doesn’t look away from me until he turns and storms out of the house. I stare at the door, still hurt and shocked at what Killian said. How can he think that I don’t care? How can he say I’m not doing anything? I guess maybe he’s right. For the last day, I haven’t been looking. Someone else has. I should be looking for new leads. Putting out more feelers to my contacts to see if they’ve heard anything. Have more of my people on the streets. Maybe some of my dancers would start asking questions.

My face is turned from the door and I see Dante looking down at me with concern. “Ri, don’t listen to him.

You're doing everything you can." I just stare at him because I'm not sure I believe him. When I don't answer, he looks to his left and I see Enzo standing there. "Go with Enzo. He'll get you cleaned up enough that we can leave the house."

Enzo reaches out his hand and I willingly place mine in his. He leads me out of the room and to a small bathroom. "Let me get this off of you and then you can wash the blood off your face and arms." As Enzo takes off the vest, I stare at myself in the mirror. I have splatters of blood all over my arms and face. My shirt would be covered too if it wasn't for the vest.

I can see Enzo watching me through the mirror. He has a worried expression on his face. Needing to look away, I bend down and splash water on my face and wipe away the blood. When I stand, Enzo is next to me with a wet rag. He reaches for my arm and I let him clean the blood away. "He didn't mean what he said, Beauty. He's just upset."

"I know." I don't fully believe that though. Sure, he's upset. He misses Aisling. But he also meant what he said.

He reaches for my other arm and I turn toward him so he can clean it. "He's hurting and is just lashing out at the closest person to him. Deep down, he knows you're doing everything you can."

When he's done, I give him a weak smile. "Thanks."

I leave Enzo in the bathroom and head to the kitchen. But right as I pass the back door it opens and Dante is walking in. "I went and got the car. Our clean-up crew will be here in a few minutes." I nod and instead of going to the kitchen, I walk past Dante and head outside.

“I’ll be in the car.” I can feel Dante’s eyes on my back as I walk to the car. Once inside, I take a deep breath and pull out my phone to follow up with my contacts.

Chapter Seventeen

Dante

I don't like the look Killian put on her face. She's taking all the blame for everything. Which is why I made sure he knew I didn't like how he spoke to her. After a few choice words and a punch to the gut, I left him in the alley to drive back to his house.

Leaving her with Enzo I was hoping he'd cheer her up but she still had the sad and deflated look about her as she walked out of the house. I watch her until she's in the car and then I walk into the house. "Alright let's go. Clean up will be here in a few. They'll make it look like no one was here." I walk into the kitchen where Matteo is washing his hands and Ri's knife. He looks back and nods to the now dead Victor. He didn't live much longer after Ri left the kitchen. Matteo immediately took her knife and slit his throat. "Are we taking him with us?"

I shake my head. "They'll take him and dispose of him."

Matteo nods. "Okay let's go."

Enzo meets us at the back door with Ri's vest and we head to the car. I can see Ri's silhouette through the window and she seems to be looking out the window in a daze. I bump into Enzo and Matteo as they stop, looking worried for her. Matteo puts a giddy smile on his face and walks over to her window and knocks. When the window starts to roll down, he seems to perk up. "I brought you your knife." He holds it out to her with his head bowed like he's presenting a sword to royalty.

"Thank you, Matteo." There is a light spark in her voice but when Matteo looks at us with a sad expression, I know he didn't get her to smile.

I toss the keys to Enzo. "You drive." Without waiting for him to respond I walk to the backseat and climb in. In one swift movement I grab Ri's hips, lifting her and placing her on my lap so she's straddling my legs.

"What the hell, Dante?" She glares at me, but I'm mad too. She doesn't get to take all the guilt.

"You need to cut this moping shit off."

She tries to climb off me, but I grab her hips, holding her in place. "You don't tell me what to do. If I want to sit here and pout about what my brother said, then I can."

"No, you can't."

"Yes, I can." She hits my chest in frustration.

I grab her hand and link our fingers. "Why then? What did he say that was accurate?"

"I should be doing more. I haven't been looking for her in the last 24 hours." She's deflating, but that's not what I

want.

“Bullshit.”

“What?!” Fire sparks in her eyes, but she’s not fully back yet.

I tilt her chin up so she’s forced to look in my eyes. “Bullshit. You haven’t done anything for her in the last day. Yesterday you were out all day talking to people, trying to get information on her and O’Brien. Last night, you had a job that gave you access to a doctor for when you do find her. And today, you eliminated someone who could have been a part of it. Now we know it’s the O’Brien’s.”

She holds my stare. “But none of that got me any closer to her and I’m not sure how much longer she can last.”

“What else should you be doing?”

“I should be looking over the footage of...”

I cut her off. “Nope. I already have someone on it, working all day.”

“I should’ve followed up with...”

I interrupt again. “Nope. Your contacts know to reach out to you once they hear something.”

Oh, she’s getting pissed. “I should’ve been out...”

“Absolutely not, you’re...”

“Stop interrupting...,” she practically yells at me.

“I will when...”

Ri lets out a frustrated groan and slams her mouth to mine, kissing me deeply. “Would you just shut up?” She

mumbles against my mouth.

“Never. Not when you’re doubting yourself.” With one hand in her hair and the other around her waist, I pull her closer to me and deepen the kiss, making her moan against my lips. When we finally break our kiss, we’re both breathless and the spark is back in her eyes. I tuck her hair that has fallen out from her ponytail behind her ear. “Killian will be calling to apologize later.”

“What did you do?” She smirks.

I give her a cocky smile. “I might have punched him back in the alley and told him what a dick he was.”

A grin forms on her face and a chuckle comes out of her, but Matteo is the one to say something. “Well shit. Now he probably thinks you’re with Dante again.”

She cracks up laughing and it’s a beautiful sound. “He’s not stupid. He knows I’m with all of you. He just doesn’t want to accept it yet.”

“All of us, huh?” I run my hands down her sides.

“Yes.” She leans forward and presses her lips to mine. “Thank you.” She whispers against my lips, but before I get to deepen our kiss, she pulls away from me and climbs off my lap, facing to the front with her ass in my face. Not being able to help myself I rub my hand up her thigh to her ass but she quickly swats my hand away. “Stop it.”

She readjusts herself so she’s sitting on the seat. Matteo is turned in his seat looking at her and she reaches out and runs her finger through his hair. “Sorry my brother ruined our fun. Next time he won’t be invited.”

“If I can help it, these two won’t be invited either.” Matteo points to Enzo and I and our protests ring out. She just chuckles and leans forward kissing him. Their kiss is short as well and Matteo groans in disappointment. “Do you mind switching seats with me?”

“Absolutely not.”

They both get out of the car and I’m a little disappointed she doesn’t want to sit with me, but I also get that she pulls comfort from Enzo. Matteo holds the door open for her but it’s just to slap her ass as she climbs in. This time though she’s quick enough to backhand him across his chest. Without a second look at him and his dramatic gasp, she focuses her attention on Enzo.

Leaning over the center console, she whispers into Enzo’s ear and I wish I knew what she was saying. Her lips are still moving when Enzo grabs her by the back of her neck and kisses her. When they break apart, they stare into each other’s eyes for a few seconds until Ri backs off and settles in her seat. Enzo drives us to the club with their hands linked together.

Okay, I might be a little jealous right now. As if she can read my mind, she looks back at me and gives me the biggest smile. Okay, a little less jealous now.

“Are we going to the club?”

I nod. “Are you ready to dive deep into the Russo business?”

“Hell yes.” She looks like she’s ready to take on anything.



“This is your office?” I can’t help my smile as Riona takes in our large office, with two large black desks, wood floors that match the club’s, and the two couches set off to one corner.

“It’s nice, isn’t it?” I lean back against the front of my desk and watch her slowly turn in a circle. “When we bought this place, we spent a lot of money to add this level.”

“It shows.” She finishes circling and smiles at me. “What’s through those doors?”

“The conference room. That’s where we’ll hold our meeting later.” She nods and points to the door on the right. “Closet.” and then the left. “Bathroom.”

“A bathroom?” She moves over to the door and automatically the lights of the full bath turn on, illuminating the white walls.

“A full bath, really? How often do you use that shower?” She looks back at me questioning.

“More often than you think. This is our main office and sometimes things can get messy.” Matteo and Enzo walk into the office carrying all of our bags.

“Very messy, Princess.” Matteo lays our suit bags across the back of one of the couches and falls down on the other as Enzo walks to Riona and hands her book bag to her.

She smiles at him in thanks before looking back at Matteo. “I don’t believe you. There is no way you kill people

up here on a regular basis. It'd bring too much attention to the club." She slowly starts walking to him. "I think you bring girls that you meet in the club up here to fuck and that bathroom is just to clean up afterwards."

She is standing in front of him and he leans forward and runs a hand up the back of her thigh slowly. "Like I said, messy. Those girls are always dripping wet for us." Riona swats his hand away, but he's quicker and grabs her wrists. "You jealous, Princess?"

"Hardly." He gives her a cheeky smile like he doesn't believe her. Riona rotates her wrist he's holding and interlocks their fingers as she leans forward. "There's no need to be jealous of those girls, because they were before me. You're mine now."

"Hell yes I am." Matteo leans forward to kiss her but she stands up. "Come on, you can help me cleanup for this meeting."

She pulls Matteo from the couch. "Does that mean you're wet for me?"

"I guess you'll have to find out." As she walks to the bathroom with Matteo happily following, her eyes connect with mine and I see desire burning in them. With that look, I wish I was the one following her into the bathroom. Matteo is one lucky guy. And the smile that he gives Enzo and I as he closes the door tells me he knows it. With the door closed, I look at Enzo who's sitting at the other desk with his laptop open. "What are you doing?"

"Watching." He gives me a smile that is up to no good.

“You shouldn’t do that if she doesn’t know.” I walk around the desk not taking my own advice.

“Oh, she knows.” Just as he says that she blows a kiss to the camera in the top corner of the bathroom above the sink.

“Okay then. Have fun.”

I walk away from him and grab my suit bag from the couch. “You don’t want to watch?”

I shake my head. “The first time I see her naked won’t be through a camera lens. She’ll be laid out in front of me.”

I leave the office for the downstairs bathroom just as the shower turns on. I need to be focused for this meeting tonight and listening to her moans through the bathroom door will be way too distracting.

Chapter Eighteen

Riona

Matteo's breath fans across the back of my neck as his hands slide up my sides. "Enzo was pulling up his laptop."

I lean back against him and hum as Matteo kneads my breasts in his hands. "Does it turn you on knowing he's watching?"

Realizing what he's implying, I look around for the camera until I see it in the corner above the mirror I'm standing in front of. With my eyes locked on the lens, I grind back against Matteo's erection and blow the camera a kiss.

"Yes, it really does." I grab one of his hands and run it down my body. Matteo knows exactly what I want and takes over, pushing his hand into my leggings and panties. His fingers find me wet and needy and I moan as he rubs circles over my clit.

"You're so wet for us. Do you want to see, bro?"

Matteo pushes a finger inside me and my knees go weak. "Hold on, Princess. Let me show him how much you want us." He removes his finger from inside me and pulls his

hand out of my leggings, showing the camera his glistening fingers. With our eyes locked in the mirror, he brings his fingers to his lips and sucks them clean. “You taste amazing, Princess.”

I moan in response as I rub my thighs together. “Would you like another taste?” I hook my fingers into the sides of my leggings and panties and push them down my legs. Once they’re off, my shirt and bra are gone next.

Matteo stands there for a second, mesmerized as he takes in my naked body. “You’re gorgeous, Princess.”

He reaches out to touch me but I hold up my hand. “No, you don’t get to touch me until you’re naked.” Matteo moves into gear, ripping off his clothes and I reach into the shower and turn it on.

Facing the camera so Enzo can see all of me, I pull my hair up in a high bun so I don’t get it wet. “Touch yourself, Enzo. Will you come watching Matteo touching me, kissing me, and fucking me?” It’s a question that I won’t hear him answer and I really wish we still had those earpieces.

“Oh, his dick is already out and in his hand.” Matteo steps in front of me, naked and my hands instantly reach out and run over his broad chest and tight abs.

“Maybe we should always be naked.”

He chuckles. “I’m not going to say no to that. If you’re always naked, it’ll make tasting you so much easier.” Matteo picks me up and places me on the counter.

“Just think about all the positions we could get into.” He smiles up at me as he goes down on his knees and pushes

my thighs open.

“Now let me get my second taste.” Matteo dives in and takes one long lick before sucking my clit between his lips. His scruff rubs against my sensitive skin sending goosebumps up my body.

“Oh fuck.” I buck up against him and he chuckles, sending vibrations right through me. I tangle my hands in his hair, holding him to me as I let my head fall back against the mirror. Matteo’s tongue moves from my clit and pushes it inside me, sucking up my wetness. “Oh god... Matteo.” I ride his face as he switches between fucking me with his tongue and sucking on my clit. I’m so close my body is vibrating.

“Open your eyes, Princess. Let Enzo see you fall apart on my tongue.” My eyes instantly go to the camera and when Matteo nips my clit, I fall apart screaming Matteo’s name.

Matteo sucks and licks me clean, until I’m jelly and I have to push him away. I pull him up my body and crash my lips to his, tasting myself on them. He deepens the kiss as I wrap my arms and legs around him. “You ready to shower?”

I nod and Matteo lifts me off the counter and his erection runs over my sensitive clit, making me squirm in his arms. “Don’t get my hair wet.”

Matteo chuckles. “I got you. But we’re not quite ready to wash up yet.”

Matteo carries me into the shower making sure to block all the water. His lips meet mine again as my back hits the back wall of the shower. I grind against him needing him inside me. “Matteo... please.”

“What do you want, Princess? My dick buried deep inside you?” He kisses down my neck.

“Yes... please... yes!”

He raises his head with a heated smile. “Should we make a show of it for Enzo?”

“Oh god. Matteo, get your dick inside me now.” I give him a challenging smile that he steps right up to.

He thrusts into me in one swift move and I moan out from the amazing feeling of being so full. Matteo doesn't wait for me to adjust as he pulls back and thrusts back into me. I tighten my hold on him and capture his mouth in a desperate kiss. Matteo's thrusts are hard and deep, hitting me in the perfect spot.

Not being able to hold back my moans any longer, I break our kiss, leaning my head back against the wall. “Fuck Matteo. You feel so good.”

“Not as good as you feel squeezing around me.” Matteo kisses down my neck as his hand slides up my stomach to my breast. “I've been dying to have these in my hands and mouth.”

His tongue comes out and licks my nipple and I arch off the wall, pushing my breasts further into his hand and mouth. “How sensitive are they, Riona?” He bites down on one and pinches the other and I moan, squeezing around him.

“Oh, you like a little pain. I can definitely work with that.” A wicked, needy grin spreads across his face as his eyes lock to my breasts. He descends on them with his mouth and

hand drawing all the pleasure from my body until I come, screaming his name.

“Oh fuck, Princess. You’re so tight I can’t hold out.” Matteo’s thrusts become erratic until he comes, holding onto my thighs so tight I’m going to have finger bruises.

After a few moments of us just holding each other, Matteo starts placing kisses all over my face, neck, and shoulders. “You’re so perfect. You were made for me. For us”

I bring his lips to mine and kiss him. “You’re perfect for me too.”

Matteo kisses me silly until I’m breathless and then he pulls back. “I think you’re dirty enough now.”

“I definitely need a good washing now. Do you want to help?” I unwrap myself from him and he holds me until I’m steady on my feet.

“It’s tempting but I can’t be late for the meeting. Raincheck, Princess.” He gives me a quick kiss before stepping back and under the water.

Knowing he’s right, I keep my hands to myself as I clean myself. But it didn’t stop us from watching each other rub soap all over our bodies. I can feel his eyes travel down my body, following my hands. My breath quickens throughout the shower as the desire between us builds and it takes everything in me not to reach out for him. A deep growl comes from him as he turns off the shower and I know he’s contemplating being late. Not a word is spoken between us as we dry ourselves.

My eyes lock with his as I wrap my towel around my body and take a step toward him. The tension grows with each step but instead of giving in I just give him a quick kiss. “Can I have the bathroom to finish getting ready?”

“Absolutely.” Matteo gives me another quick kiss before leaving me in the bathroom.

I look up at the camera and blow Enzo a kiss. “No more watching.” I give Enzo a second and then I grab my bag, pulling out everything I need. It’s time to look hot for my guys.

Chapter Nineteen

Riona

I give myself one last look in the mirror, fluffing my hair. I have to say I look pretty hot, even though I didn't have any of my makeup. Running my hand down my short, high-neck and long-sleeved black metallic dress, I turn from side to side. The guys are going to love this. Especially the full open back. I really hope this makes their mouths water and they won't be able to keep their hands off me.

Stepping into my favorite black stilettos, I grab my bag and open the door. All three of the guys are in their massive office, wearing suits. Matteo is lounging on the couch messing with his phone and he's really living up to his Mr. Sex Appeal name in a tailored black suit with a white button-down and black tie.

Dante is talking to someone on the phone as he stares out the floor-to-ceiling window overlooking the club. He looks all-business in his black suit, black button-up, and black tie. A dark god that I crave to ruin me.

I take a breath, taking my eyes off him to see Enzo smiling at me from behind his desk. I shouldn't be surprised

he's the only one to notice I'm out of the bathroom. He stands from behind his desk and I take a second looking over my Mystery Man, my Beast. He looks hotter than sin in his dark gray suit with a blue button-up and he's not wearing a tie, leaving his top two buttons undone.

“Beauty...” He pauses just long enough, grabbing Matteo and Dante's attention. “You look amazing.” Enzo walks around the desk and heads straight to me. He reaches his hand out to me and I lightly place mine in his. He brings my hand to his lips, where he places a kiss to the back of my fingers. “Let's see all of this dress.” He spins me slowly and I know the moment each of them notices my back.

“Damn,” comes from Matteo.

A whistle from Enzo.

And a growl from Dante.

“You're going to turn heads tonight, Beauty.” Enzo pulls me up against him and kisses me.

Matteo jumps up from the couch and walks over to us and pulls me from Enzo. “You look gorgeous, Princess. But if any other guy looks at you, they're dead.”

I wrap my arms around his neck and lean into him, loving being in his arms. It's like being hugged by a teddy bear. “Then you're going to be killing all night. When will you have time to dance with me?”

Matteo runs his hand down my back and I shiver at his touch. “I'll make time.”

I lean forward to whisper next to his ear. “How about you kill anyone who touches me tonight? I like people's

attention. For them to wish they could have me but can't."

I can feel Matteo hardening against my stomach. "Fine, but don't test me tonight. I'll kill anyone who touches you."

Looking in his eyes, I nod. "No teasing. Got it." I lean up and he closes the distance between us, kissing me silly.

A growl comes from behind me, making us separate and I know it's Dante. Just to piss him off a little, I stay in Matteo's arms and run my fingers over his lips acting like I'm wiping off smeared lipstick that I'm not wearing.

Dante's not having any of it. Instead of waiting, his hand goes into my hair and he turns my head so I'm looking back at him. I give him an amused smile because I love testing his patience and making him jealous. Moving away from Matteo, I turn and face Dante, running my hands under his jacket, up his chest. "Do you need something, Boss Man?"

His lips turn up at my nickname for him. "I'm not Stinkface anymore?"

I shake my head. "Nope but I'm still trying to find the right one."

"I like Boss Man."

"I don't know." I wrap my arms around his lower back, feeling his gun, and lean into him. "Tonight, I think Dark God fits you better."

Dante slams his lips to mine and I'd say he likes that one too. Dante doesn't break our kiss until I'm breathless. He runs his nose against mine, catching his breath. "You look breathtaking, Rose."

“You look pretty hot, yourself.” I step back from Dante and look at all of them. “You all do.” I look at Matteo. “I think I want to change my dress code choice.”

Matteo smirks at me. “I’ll wear anything you want as long as you’re naked.”

I chuckle. “I’ll keep that in mind.” Maybe I can get him to do a little role play for me. It’s not normally my thing but it could be funny. Knowing that their meeting is coming up soon, I walk over to the couches and sit down. “So, who’s staying with me during your meeting?”

Whoever it is, maybe we can have a little fun. Dante steps forward so he’s in the middle of the other two as they look down at me. “You’re going to be in the meeting with us. We need your specific skill set.”

Intrigued, I sit up straighter. “Oh yeah? What skill set is that?”

“Poison and charm.”

“Okay tell me more.” I’m almost bouncing from excitement.



This meeting they have setup is with Jonathan Franks. Franks has his hands in several of the crime families here in New York because he runs the docks. Anything you want quietly brought into the city, you go to him. Personally, I’ve only heard about him a few times because my father uses him for drug transportation, but I’m not involved in that side of the

business. So, when the guys tell me he also deals in trafficking, I almost lose it. They know I'm not okay with that. Enzo calms me down enough to not kill him tonight, but I make no promises for tomorrow.

Tonight, we have to focus on the Russo contract with him. He's trying to raise their cost on the drugs and weapons they have shipped through the docks and Dante is pissed about it. He thinks that Franks is trying to take advantage, thinking that the brothers are new and young. Dante is going to show him that they aren't to be messed with.

After Dante tells me his plan, they head to the conference room, leaving me to my poisons, because Franks and his son have just arrived. I quickly go through my bag and grab the poison I need and the jewelry to best conceal it. With the poison hidden in a ring, I slide the white gold and diamond hand jewelry onto my pointer finger and thumb. God, I love this piece of jewelry. It makes my hand look so dainty and cute.

With everything ready, I join the guys in the conference room. As I walk through the door, all eyes turn toward me. Dante steps toward me with his hand out and I happily take it and slip him the antidote. I'm glad I brought it this time. "Franks... Junior, this is our girl, Ri."

"It's nice to meet you both." I step toward the two Hispanic looking men as they both look me over. Junior takes my hand in his first with a charming smile and interest shining in his eyes. Gently I pull my hand from his, letting him know he doesn't have a chance in hell and turn to his father. Frank instantly makes my stomach roll as I force myself to shake his

wrinkled sweaty hand as he undresses me with his eyes while biting down on his bottom lip.

“You don’t mind if she joins, do you?” Dante wraps his arm around my waist, pulling me a few steps back and away from Franks.

Franks continues to look me up and down like I’m a piece of meat, with an intrigued, pervy smile on his face. “Not at all. As long as she sits on my lap.”

Three loud growls fill the room from my guys and I watch Frank’s bodyguard reach for his gun because he can feel the anger radiating off them.

Needing to defuse this, I chuckle. “You’re funny, Mr. Franks. I’ll be sitting with my guys.” I step out of Dante’s hold. “Now before we get started, how about some drinks?” I clasp my hands together in front of me and look at him sweetly.

“That would be lovely, sweetie. Scotch neat.”

I give him a nod, holding back an eye roll and look at his son. “Same, please.”

Oh, he’s definitely not as creepy as his father. Too bad I’m going to have to poison him to get the leverage the guys need. I walk by them and around the massive wooden conference table, heading to the bar in the corner. As I pull out the scotch bottle, I look at the bodyguard. “Do you want anything? Water? Soda?”

He looks away from Franks for just a second to answer. “No thanks, ma’am.”

I give him a smile and pour two scotches. With both poured, I switch the lever, opening the ring and releasing the poison as I carry the glasses by my fingertips on the rim. Everyone is sitting at the table as I set the drinks down and carefully maneuver my way around Franks' wandering hands.

A chair is left empty for me in between Dante and Enzo and I head over to it, giving them a slight nod. As soon as I sit down Dante's hand goes to my thigh, under the table, and I place mine over his. "Before we start..." Matteo raises his glass and myself, Dante, and Enzo follow. "To a hopefully long and profitable relationship."

Franks being the sleazeball that he is, grins like he's just robbed a bank and got away with it, raises his glass. "Yes. To contracts, money, and a beautiful woman." He downs his glass in one gulp and I wish I would've poisoned his glass.

Nobody else drinks at Frank's toast and I notice Junior glaring at his father. "Miss Ri, I do apologize for my father."

Frank looks offended by his son. "Apologize for what?"

Junior just ignores him as I give him a nod, accepting the apology, and he raises his glass. "To business." We all raise our glass in the air and then take a drink. When I set my glass down, I move my hand back to Dante's on my thigh and draw the number ten on the top of his hand, letting him know he has ten minutes before Junior starts showing symptoms.

"Sweetie, why don't you get me another drink?" Franks holds his cup in the air. "I like to watch you walking around."

I dig my nails into Dante's hand, letting him know I'm reaching my boiling point. "Franks. You will not speak to our girl like that. She isn't your waitress. If you want another drink, get your ass up and pour it yourself." Dante glares at the man and Franks actually looks shocked. Well, he's not alone. I can't believe he just berated a business associate for me. When he doesn't say anything, Dante continues. "Now I've asked for this meeting because you're increasing our rates and I want to know why."

Fuck, why do I have to be turned on right now in front of this asshole? I shift in my seat slightly, trying to get a little relief, but Dante's hold on my thigh tightens, stopping me. "Mr. Russo, the rate increase is nothing personal. Based on supply and..." Whatever Frank's excuse, it goes right over my head because Dante's hand starts stroking my inner thigh as his hand moves up my leg. Oh god. Is he really doing this? I must go still because Enzo leans forward and whispers in my ear right as Dante's finger runs over my wet thong and traces down my core. "Are you okay?"

I shift, crossing my legs and capturing his hand. He isn't going to make me come in front of these guys. I give Enzo a small nod, letting him know I'm good. Out of the corner of my eye, I see Dante's lips turn up in a smirk.

"You see Franks, I call bullshit on your answer." Dante slips his fingers into my thong and pushes it to the side. I try to squeeze my thighs tighter to stop him but all it does is spur him on. He teases me, just stroking my skin, but not going for anything that'll get me off. "You see, I have a lot of contacts that do business with you. And do you know what they said?"

He pauses as he glares at Franks, but he takes the pause to spread me open and rub circles over my clit. I bit down on the inside of my cheek so I don't moan out loud and draw attention to myself. I dig my nails into his arm in frustration but he doesn't stop. "They told me that you weren't raising their rates. Actually, they say you never raise your rates."

"Mr. Russo..." Franks tries to give more excuses but Dante isn't having it.

"No." He pauses, pulling everyone's attention. "You tried to rip me off. Take from the Russo Family. I could take your life for that." Dante presses hard on my clit, building me quickly. "But I don't think that would be best for our business relationship. So instead, you're going to decrease your current rate by 50 percent. I think that will allow us to forgive you. Don't you think boys?" He looks at Matteo and Enzo.

They both nod in agreement. Dante's eyes connect with mine with a mischievous smirk and I pull his hand away right as I'm about to come. As much as it pains me to do so, I'm not letting this asshole see that.

"Are you fucking kidding? I'm not lowering my rate. Who do you think you are asking that?" Dante's eyes stay locked on mine as Franks boils across the table. The room falls quiet, waiting for him and he gives me a wink before turning to Franks.

"I think I'm the man who holds your only son's life in my hand." At that exact second, Junior starts coughing violently. He reaches for his glass and I speak up for the first time since the meeting started. "I wouldn't do that if I were

you. You'll only choke you faster. Plus, there is probably more poison in there."

At that Franks jumps up yelling and his bodyguard pulls out his gun. But this is what we expected, so at the same time, Matteo and Enzo stand, drawing their guns. Matteo has his aimed at the bodyguard and Enzo has his aimed at Franks. Dante and I sit back like we're enjoying the show and Junior is slouched over the table, giving me a pained expression, wheezing. I draw a five on Dante's hand letting him know he needs to move so we can give the antidote.

"Franks." Dante calmly pulls out the antidote from his pocket and sets it on the table in front of him. "Shut up and listen if you want your son to live." Franks shuts up. "Good. You're going to sign this drafted contract which now only gives you 5 percent of our shipments." Dante slides the papers that have been sitting on the table this whole time over to him. Franks stands, unmoving as he glares at Dante. When Franks doesn't move for the papers after a moment, Dante reminds him he has all the power. "Please take your time considering it. I'd say your son has three minutes to live. Is that right?" He looks at me.

I act like I'm thinking, tilting my head back and forth. "I'd say more like two."

"Okay fine, I'll sign. Please don't kill him."

"Sign first." Franks quickly grabs his pen and signs the contract. When he pushes the papers across the table, Dante hands me the antidote and I quickly stand and go over to Junior.

Pulling him up from the table and leaning him back against the chair. “Keep breathing, Junior.” I open his mouth and pour the antidote down his throat. Once he’s swallowed it, I head to the bar and grab a bottle of water. By the time I get back to the table, Junior is coughing again and I set the bottle in front of him. “You’ll be okay in a minute. Just keep breathing normally.”

Franks grabs my arm, leaning on the table, and pulls me to him. “You’ll die for this girl. No one tries to kill my son.”

I glare up at him without trying to pull away because I can feel my guys at my back. “Your threats mean nothing to me. But you should listen to mine. The first chance I get, I’m going to give you a visit and when I visit, I better find that you’re no longer in the skin business. Because if you are, I will tear down everything you own and hold precious. Nobody sells skin in my city.”

Franks laughs. “Who do you think you are? These boys don’t give you that kind of power.”

I give him a wicked smirk. “Oh, my bad. We weren’t formally introduced. My name is Riona Murphy, but you may also know me by M.”

Pure terror run through his eyes and he quickly let’s go of my wrist and steps back. “Oh good, you know who I am. Now I’m going to say this one more time. No one sells skin in my city. If I find out after today you sell or traffic one person, I’ll destroy everything, leaving nothing for your son after I kill you.”

Franks nods and Junior steps up to his father looking almost back to normal. “It’s time to go Father.”

They both turn to leave but I grab Junior’s wrist, stopping him. “Sorry about this. I hope there are no hard feelings.”

He gives me an understanding nod. “None at all. My father was an idiot to think he could play the Russo’s.”

“If you ever decide to overthrow him, you have mine and the Murphy’s backing, as long as skin isn’t a part of it.”

“How about if I need an assassin to do that?”

I’d happily do it. “Please call me. It’d be my honor.”

Junior chuckles and coughs. “It was nice meeting you, Riona.” He looks at the guys behind me and nods. “Russo’s.” Junior meets Franks and their bodyguard in the hall.

I close my eyes and take a deep breath, letting the tension go. That was a crazier meeting than I thought it would be. Feeling a body up against my back, I open my eyes and look over my shoulder to see only Dante. “Where’s Matteo and Enzo?”

Chapter Twenty

Dante

Watching her putting the fear of god in Franks from just her name was the hottest thing. Riona's confidence and power draws me to her. I want her attitude and sassiness directed toward me. She knows I like it too and she tries to get a rise out of me.

Matteo follows Franks and Junior out, making sure they actually leave and Enzo goes into the office with the signed contract. Once we're alone, I step up to her back and I watch her body relax. She looks back at me with a small smile on her face. "Where's Matteo and Enzo?"

I wrap my arms around her waist. "Matteo followed our guests out. Enzo is in the office."

"So, we're alone?" She turns and wraps her arms around my middle, underneath my jacket.

"Yes, we are." I run my fingers down her back and she shivers at my touch. "Are you still wet for me?"

"If I am, will you finish what you started?" Desire flashes in her eyes, knowing my answer.

I quickly spin us and lift her up onto the table. “Are you still on edge, Ri? Do you need some relief?” I skim my lips down her neck as I pull her thighs apart and step in between them.

She moans softly and tries to grind up against me. “Yes... please.”

I run my hands up her thighs, pushing her dress up and she lifts her hips so it gathers around her waist, exposing her lacey black thong. I rub my thumb down the seam and she bucks against my touch.

“Stop toying with me, Dante.” She glares up at me in the way I love so much. “You’ve had me on edge the entire meeting in front of that perv. Finish what you started.”

I growl, pulling her thong off and her hands go to my belt. She pushes my pants down just enough to release my erection and I thrust inside her. God, she can get me so worked up. She hooks her legs around me, digging her heels into my ass. The way she smiles up at me tells me she loves getting a reaction out of me. Her fingers go into my hair and she pulls me to her until my lips graze over hers. “Fuck me, Dante.”

I slam my lips to hers and do exactly what she asked. I fuck her hard and fast on our conference room table. The sounds she makes spur me on and I pick up my pace. I lift her leg higher to get a better angle and Riona digs her nails into my scalp and back. “Oh god... Please don’t stop.”

I kiss down her neck and grab her breast over her dress. “Not until you’re coming all over my cock.”

She arches into my hand and I rub my thumb over her pointed nipple. “Yes, Dante...yes.”

Loving the sound of her moaning my name, I reach in between us and rub circles over her clit. Her walls tighten around me and I let out a curse as I feel myself rushing to the edge. “You feel so good squeezing around me. You’re so close, Rose. Come for me. Let me hear you scream.”

I pinch her clit and she screams out my name as she comes, vibrating beneath me. Her tight grip around me has me coming seconds later. “Oh fuck.” I lay my head against her breasts as I catch my breath and she runs her fingers through my hair. “God, I could fuck you all day.”

“If you can fuck like that all day, I’m down. But you might want Matteo and Enzo to join just in case you get tired.”

I chuckle and look up at her. “What if you get tired from all the orgasms we give you?” I can feel myself hardening again inside her, just thinking about a second round.

“That sounds like a pretty ideal situation to me.” Ri leans up and pulls me into a kiss. I wrap my arms around her back and pull her up into a sitting position as I pull out of her. She groans at the loss of our connection and tightens her hold on me.

“Are you wanting a round two?” I slide my hands under her ass and squeeze.

“I wouldn’t say no to it.” She kisses along my jaw and I want to bury myself inside her, but I know I won’t get a chance.

“Well, the guys aren’t going to let that happen after hearing you screaming. They’re probably rock hard for you.” She looks around the room for cameras, almost giddy to think they watched. “They’re off.” I turn her face back to mine. “It’s not something I’m into. The walls are thin, though, and they heard all of it.” I pull back from her before I slide back in, tuck myself into my pants and get myself dressed.

Her cheeks turn pink as she rubs her thighs together and I know she’s picturing them in the other room wanting her. God, I want to lay her out again and see how wet she is. But before I can even take a step to her there’s a knock on the door, telling us our time is up.

“Come on, Rose. Let’s have some fun.” I hold out my hand for her and she takes it, sliding off the table. When she’s back on her feet, she pulls her dress down and eyes my pocket.

“Well, if we’re not going again can I have my thong back?”

She holds out her hand for me to hand them over but I shake my head. “They’re mine now.”

She gives my cocky smirk a stern look. “I won’t have you leaking down my thighs all night so you either give me my thong and I promise not to clean myself up or I can go into the bathroom and wash you from between my legs.” I growl not liking the thought of her washing me away. When I don’t make a move, she steps up to me, smiling because she knows she’s won. She rises up on her toes and kisses me in victory as her hand goes into my pocket and she takes her prize. “I’ll give them back to you back at the house.”

I place my hand on the side of her neck, keeping her head tilted up. “Only if I’m the one taking them off.”

“I think I can work with that.” She turns out of my hold before I get a chance to kiss her and walks away from me to the office.

The door opens and Matteo is standing there waiting. “The club just opened, ready to have some fun tonight?” He hooks his arm around her shoulders and leads her further from me.

She wraps her arm around his waist and answers while looking at me. “With you definitely.”

She’s not done with me yet.

Chapter Twenty-One

Enzo

Riona looks so happy tonight. I haven't seen her smile this big since the night she was here with Aisling, dancing the night away. Sure, she smiles and laughs with us but tonight she's carefree. I lean back in our private booth next to Dante as I watch her dance with Matteo. Well, dry humping is more like it. I watch as Riona grinds against Matteo's thigh as his hands slide down her back and grab her ass.

"They're magnetic." Dante leans forward on the table watching them.

"It's not just him and her. She has a pull to you as well. She riles you up just so you can let it out on her. She did it all afternoon to you until you snapped after the meeting. Or should I say during the meeting?" I look over at him with a knowing look.

It doesn't surprise me one bit that he knows I could pick up what he was doing to her under the table. "I know she does. She pulls me in with her challenging smirks and sassy attitude. But you two pull comfort from each other. You calm her when things get too much."

“She is perfect for us in every way.” I look at him.
“I’m not going to let her go after our end of the deal is done.”

“I’m not asking you to,” he replies, knowing exactly what I mean.

I nod and smile as I see Riona with her back to Matteo’s chest and her eyes connect with mine. “Matteo will fight you on it.”

“And you won’t?” Her eyes shift to Dante.

“Nope, because the decision is hers. Us fighting won’t matter.” My eyes lock with hers again and she starts reeling me in, guiding Matteo’s hands all over her body.

“They’re baiting you.” The growl in his voice tells me she’s baiting him too.

“I know. They probably have a bet to see how long it’ll take me to join.”

“So, when are you?” He moves closer to the edge of the chair like he’s about to get up.

“When she gives me a signal. Whatever they bet, I want her to win.” I smile at her, letting her know she has all my attention.

Her lips part and her tongue peeks out, running along her lips. My dick hardens in my pants and I lean forward adjusting myself. A satisfied smile pulls on her lips as she sees I’m hooked. I watch her every move as I sit on the edge of my seat, ready for her signal. I’ve watched her enough with him today. It’s my turn next. Her face morphs into pure pleasure as a moan leaves her lips that I swear I can hear. I scan my eyes

down her body and notice one of Matteo's hands isn't visible anymore. But I know exactly where it is.

"He's testing my patience." Dante growls next to me.

"She'd stop him if she didn't want it. You can see it all over her face that she wants this."

"People can see."

I let my eyes break from hers for just a second to scan the faces of the people around them. "There are dozens of people surrounding them focusing on their own desires. Not hers." I watch in slow motion as Riona's eyes fall closed, her teeth bite into her bottom lip and her hold on Matteo tightens. There she is, glowing in pleasure, surrounded by strangers, knowing our attention is solely on her.

When her eyes open, they're dazed but I don't miss her need for me reflecting in her eyes. I'm out of my seat in an instant and make my way to her, not caring who I push out of my way. I pull her from Matteo and she instantly melts into me with her arms around my neck and her face turned up to me. I lean forward and place a quick kiss on her lips. "You've been naughty, Beauty. Dante is going to punish you later for that."

Her eyes are filled with so much desire. "I know but it's you I need right now."

I place a kiss on her forehead. "And what do you need?"

"You, dancing with me. Feeling your hands on me. Your body against mine." Her fingers run through my hair at the back of my head.

“I can definitely do that.” My hands slide down her sides to her hips as I move us to the beat of the song. Our bodies never disconnect as we sway with each other. I get lost in her eyes as she stares up at me, drawing me in. Her fingers continue to run through my hair and everything around me disappears.

I lean forward and capture her lips into a soft kiss, but when she opens her lips and flicks her tongue against my lips, I break, deepening our kiss. Our tongues dance together just like our bodies, slow and sensual.

This isn't a kiss just to kiss. It's a kiss with feelings being expressed. And I show her just how I feel about her. Who cares I've only known her for days? I know how I feel. She is my orbit. All day she's on my mind when I can't see her. But when she's in the same room as me, she's the most important thing. My eyes never lose track of her.

She might think she's going home after all this and that's fine. I'll just be going with her. I hope she has a bed that fits four. Our lips break apart and my eyes open, connecting with hers. Her thumb runs across my cheek and I lean into her touch. “You have so much power over me, Beast. I don't think you realize how much.”

She lays her head on my chest and I know she doesn't want me to say anything. I kiss the top of her head and take her hand that was on my cheek and hold it to my chest. I rock us back and forth to my own beat not caring it's not the beat to the song playing.

“We're slow dancing.” I can hear the delight in her voice.

“Yes, we are.”

“But the music isn’t right.” She smiles up at me and my smile matches hers.

“Does it bother you?”

“No.” She shakes her head.

“Good.” I push Riona slightly away from me and pull our conjoined hands over her head and spin her. She giggles and I bring her back to me as I start moving us into a basic waltz. “I do own the place, so I can ask the DJ to slow it down if it bothers you that people are looking at us funny.”

She chuckles moving with me as our steps start widening so we’re taking up more space. “Well, if we’re doing this, we need proper form.” She shifts our arms so our elbows are up and out correctly. Riona lets me lead her around another square but then her focus breaks and darkness starts to consume the light in her eyes.

I stop us resting my hands on her hips. “What’s wrong?”

She looks up at me, worried. “Do you feel that?”

I start looking around to see if I missed something that everyone else is reacting to, but everyone around us is just dancing. “Feel what?”

She’s scanning the crowd. “Someone is watching us.”

I look around again and only see Dante and Matteo watching us. “It’s just Matteo and Dante.”

“No, it’s not. This is different. It’s like I can feel their anger or hatred. It’s chilling.” Her head continues to swivel as

she looks around.

I take another look around, still not seeing anyone looking directly at us. Not doubting what Riona is feeling, I grab her hand and start pulling her to our booth. “Let’s take a break.”

As we walk back, I watch everyone that we pass, ready to attack if someone goes for her. Dante and Matteo look confused as we reach them and I step to the side allowing Riona to slide into the round booth first so she’s sitting between me and Dante. “What’s wrong?” Dante asks as his arm rests behind Riona.

“It’s just a feeling.” She leans into him.

“What feeling?” He looks between the two of us.

I place my hand on her thigh and she immediately links our fingers. “Not everyone is friendly here tonight.”

Matteo and Dante look at me for clarity but when I don’t give it, I hear Matteo growl. “Did someone say something to you or touch you?”

“No. That’s why I said it was just a feeling.” She glares at Matteo and I squeeze her hand. She’s wound up, ready for something, so I know she didn’t mean to snap at him.

I watch as she takes a deep breath, trying to loosen the tension. She reaches over the table and places her hand on his forearm. “Maybe it was just someone being jealous that I get all you sexy men. It’s probably best I stop flaunting it and sit in this dark corner with you instead.”

I don’t think she believes that, but she’s definitely hoping that’s it. “You’re probably right. I’d be jealous if I saw

you with me.” Matteo smirks at her. “Our chemistry is something everyone...”

“Sorry to interrupt.” One of our waitresses, Shannon, gives us an intimidated smile. “A gentleman bought you this drink.” She slowly places the drink in front of Riona with a folded-up napkin. “He asked to give this to you as well.”

Riona looks at her, confused, and then down at the napkin. Dante goes to grab it but she’s quicker. A second after the napkin opens, Riona stills and goes cold. I quickly take the napkin from her and look at what’s on it.

You’ve been missing for days.

You finally reappear and you’re letting them touch you.

You’re supposed to be looking for Aisling, not fucking your bodyguards.

She’s screaming in pain and you’re moaning in pleasure.

What would she say if she knew?

“What the fuck?” Who the hell wrote this? I look at Shannon to see her a few steps away. I yell her name and she turns back around. “Who the hell wrote this?”

I slam the note on the table as I squeeze Riona’s hand, letting her know I’m here and not to take a word of this note to heart. Dante and Matteo read the note and they both curse loudly.

Shannon looks back to the bar. “I’m sorry sir. He’s not at the bar anymore. I don’t know who he is. Never seen him before.”

“What did he look like?” I start scanning the crowd as she tells us.

“He was wearing a hat, dark shirt, and jeans. He was average looking. Cute but not attractive. He seemed tall but was sitting. Average build. I wouldn’t have remembered him if he didn’t ask me to come over here.”

I give her a nod. “Thanks Shannon. You can go.”

Shannon quickly moves away and I pull Riona out of the booth with me as Dante balls up the napkin and pushes it into the drink. “Let’s go to the office. I want eyes on this guy.”

The four of us move through the club as a group with Riona in the middle and us surrounding her. When we make it upstairs, I head straight for my desk. My laptop is open on my desk and I’m logged in before my ass hits my seat. Riona leans on the back of my chair with her hands on my shoulders as she looks at the screen.

Matteo leans on the front of my desk as I bring our security system up and project it on the large TV screen across from us. “Move back to thirty minutes ago. Focus on the bar.”

“Yeah, I know.” I’m entering in the time and bringing up the right camera feeds when Riona’s hands slide off my shoulders. I look back at her to see what’s wrong only to find Dante has brought his chair over and pulled her into his lap. She smiles at me as she kicks off her shoes and rests her feet on my thigh. I pull up all the cameras facing the bar and it plays. All our eyes are on the screen as we scan everyone looking for the guy Shannon described.

“Right there. Third camera.” Riona calls out, pointing at the TV.

I pull that camera up and sure enough, there is a guy sitting at the end of the bar with a hat on. The guy is leaning against the wall, looking out past the bar to the center of the club.

“What’s he looking at?” Dante asks and I’m pretty sure we all know the answer.

Bringing up a wider camera angle I see Riona, Matteo, and I on the dance floor just as I’m pulling her from Matteo. “Oh god. He watched me...” I run my hand over her ankle and shin trying to soothe her. “I feel gross.”

A visible shiver runs through her and Dante wraps his arms tightly around her. Looking back at the screen, I watch Riona and I kiss and the guy becomes visibly angry as his grip tightens on his beer. Done watching this guy, I fast forward the feed until he gets up. I track him as he walks right by our table as Riona reads the note and leaves the club.

“I want his name, now.” Matteo pulls out his phone and calls someone. “Get me whoever is working the door.” He’s called the bar manager.

I rewind the footage to find when the guy came in. The guy is talking to John, our bouncer, as he hands over his ID and thankfully John does what he’s supposed. He places the ID under the UV light which also has a camera. I pause the image just as our bouncer walks in. “You called for me boss?”

Matteo stands and turns to our employee. “What can you tell me about this guy?”

“Oh, he was a nice guy. We joked about having the same name. I made fun of how common his name was. Who names their son John Smith? If your last name is Smith, have a unique first name. He said at least it’s not Jon Snow. What did he do?”

“Don’t worry about it. Thanks for the information. You can go back to the door.” Matteo instructs John and he nods and walks out.

We’re all quiet as we stare at the screen, looking at the ID. “It’s a fake.” I look at Riona and she stands from Dante’s lap and walks to the screen. She points to the hologram in the ID. “This is wrong.” She points to the bottom left corner. “These are five-point stars. There are supposed to be more points.”

“Well, damn.” I fall back into my chair. “People just look for the hologram, not the specifics.”

“I’m calling Zach.” Dante stands and walks out of the room.

“Who’s Zach?” She looks at us, confused.

Matteo walks to her and wraps his arms around her center. “He’s our best friend, next in command, and forger. We met him in boarding school and he hasn’t left our side since.”

“Is he this good?” She points to the screen.

Matteo chuckles. “No, he isn’t. Not with IDs at least. Passports definitely.” Riona slightly nods, acknowledging Matteo’s comment. She sees something that she’s trying to figure out. As much as I want to ask what, I keep quiet, studying the ID as well.

Dante walks into the room and he's not alone.
"Riona?"

She turns and looks relieved to see Killian. "Kill, what are you doing here?"

"Looking for you." He walks over to her and pulls her away from Matteo and into a hug. They hug tightly and I barely hear Killian whisper, "I'm sorry, Riona. I shouldn't have said those things."

She rubs his upper back. "I know. It's okay." She pulls back from their hug and looks to the screen. "Do you recognize him?"

"Do you?" I sit forward in my seat, surprised that's her question.

"There is something familiar about him. Like he looks like someone I know but I can't place who." She looks back to Killian.

He shakes his head. "No, I don't. I do see what you mean though. There is something about him that makes you think you might."

She nods still staring at the screen. "How about the address? I know that street name but I can't think why or where it is."

Killian smiles. "One of your favorite restaurants is on that street. O'Malley's"

"That's it." I pull up the address on my map and it comes up right over a blue pin.

“Guys...” Everyone turns to me. “That address is an O’Brien property.”

I move the map to the TV screen. “So, the note was definitely from O’Brien’s people.” Dante crosses his arms over his chest.

“So, Aisling could be there?” Riona looks at me, hopeful.

I shake my head. “Sorry Riona. She’s not there. Our guys cleared that place already. That’s why it’s blue. Red are properties we haven’t.” I zoom out showing twenty or so red dots.

She throws her hands up in defeat. “Of course it won’t be that easy. I’m so tired of today. Can we go home?”

I can’t help my smile as she says home. “Zach should be...”

“Talk about me and I appear.” Zach bursts into the room with his arms out like he owns the place. He’s your typical American jock, with shaggy dirty blonde hair and a body built like a tank. He steps up beside Dante and pats him on the shoulder. “So why have I been summoned?” He sees Killian and Riona. “Other than to meet the infamous Murphy siblings.” He walks over to Riona and gives her his signature smirk that makes girls swoon. “It’s a pleasure to meet you, Riona. I must say, you’re more beautiful than people give you credit for.” He kisses the back of her hand.

Instead of getting weak in the knees like most, Riona just rolls her eyes. “It’s nice to meet you Zach. The guys didn’t mention you were a flirt.”

“They never mention my best qualities.” He shakes Killian’s hand with a nod. “Okay, why am I here?” He looks at the screen. “Damn that’s a good fake.”

“That’s why you’re here.” Matteo steps up. “Do you know who did this?”

He shakes his head in awe. “Have no idea. Someone who charges more than me.”

“How much do you charge?” Riona asks.

He shrugs. “\$75 for ID.”

She nods and smiles like she’s chuckling to herself. “Then yes, they do charge more.”

“Wait, you know who did this?” Dante is getting angrier by the second as he fumes next to me.

“Yes. My forger did. That’s why I could point out the difference.” She looks at him like it’s not a big deal.

“Your forger?” They square off with each other.

“The Murphy’s forger.”

“Who is it?” he demands.

She shakes her head. “Sorry, but I’m not telling you. Their name doesn’t matter anyways because they aren’t local. No one really knows their location. You just order what you need.”

“Very secretive,” I comment. Never having to use your name is security.

Riona gives me an appreciative look. “Exactly. They don’t even know our names. When you place an order, you

send a picture telling them how to modify it, if needed, and the name and address.” But they do know what you look like. If they’re good enough, they could find you. This forger doesn’t seem like the safest option. “Our forger isn’t for underage students getting a fake ID. They service criminals only.”

“Why didn’t you mention this earlier?” Dante glares at Riona and she shifts her stance and crosses her arms, matching him.

“You didn’t ask.”

“Don’t start, Ri.” He points at her.

She hits his hand away. “Don’t start? I told you it was a fake and you walked out of the room to call this guy. Why would it matter who made it? This isn’t a common criminal that you can intimidate. They’re the best forger in the world. What did you think, they’d give up their client list?”

“You don’t know that they won’t.”

She throws her back with a laugh. “Don’t be stupid.”

“Okay. On that, I’m out.” Zach starts moving to the door.

“Me too.” Killian hugs Riona as she continues to glare at Dante. “Get some sleep. Your cranky side is coming out.”

“Fuck you, Kill.” Her glare turns to him and Zach chuckles by the door.

“Love you.” Killian gives her a sweet smile.

She flips him off. “Yeah... yeah... same.” Zach and Killian leave the room, leaving only us. Riona and Dante

continue to glare at each other until Riona breaks it, moving around him to grab her bag. “Let’s go.”

“You’re just done with this conversation?” He turns, watching her.

“Yes.” She doesn’t look back at me. “It’s been too long of a day to hear you yelling at me over something stupid.”

He huffs and runs his fingers through his hair. “It’s not stupid. It could’ve led...”

She interrupts him, or, more likely is ignoring him, when she steps beside me and holds out her hand. “You ready?”

Quickly I shut everything down and grab her hand. She looks at Matteo as I stand. “How about you?”

“Hell yeah.” He moves instantly, heading to the door.

“What? Are you ignoring me now?” She doesn’t respond as the three of us head to the door. “I have the keys, so how are you getting home?”

Riona stops, let’s go of my hand, and stomps over to him. When she’s standing in front of him, she holds out her hand, silently asking for the keys. After a few seconds, he pulls the keys out of his pocket and places them in her hand. Her fingers wrap around them and she calls out Matteo’s name before throwing the keys behind her, right at him. Matteo catches the keys effortlessly, but her eyes never leave Dante’s. “You coming or not.”

He nods and she turns and comes back to me, linking our fingers and we all leave the club and head home. Riona is

right, today has been long and all I want to do right now is curl up in bed with her.

Chapter Twenty-Two

Riona

Sleep is definitely what I needed. Yesterday was long. Some amazing things happened, but the crappy seemed to outweigh the good. The idea that I'm not doing enough to find Aisling was thrown in my face several times. That's why I needed Enzo last night. I just needed him to hold me. Soothe me. The way only he can.

His arm is draped over my middle and his body is pressed to my back. I turn in his arms so I'm facing him and I run my fingers over his sleeping face. His hold on me tightens and I start placing kisses over his face. When my lips skim over his, his hand buries in my hair and he slams his lips to mine. I welcome the kiss, opening my lips when his tongue asks for access. Enzo rolls us so he's on top of me and I open my legs, letting him settle in between them. I feel his hard length grind against my core and I moan out, lifting my hips to feel more of him. He starts kissing down my neck as his hands

go underneath my sleep shirt, pulling it up my body. “Good morning, Beauty.”

“Good morning, Beast.” I run my hands down his bare muscular back as I arch into him, rubbing my chest against his.

Enzo pulls my shirt over my head, leaving me in just my panties and his lips go to my nipples. A moan escapes me as my nipples peek and I tangle my fingers in his dirty blonde hair, holding him to me. I grind my hips up, wanting to feel him against me, but he’s too far away. “Enzo...”

“Shh. I’ve got you.” He starts kissing down my body as he pulls my panties down.

“I need you inside.” I grab for his boxers but he grabs my hand.

“Soon...” He brings my hand to his mouth and kisses the back of it. When his eyes connect back to mine, he smirks. “There’s something I want to do first.”

He places a kiss right over my core and I buck against his mouth as his tongue moves over my clit. “Oh god... yes.”

I open my legs wider as his hands move down my inner thigh. “I’ve wanted my tongue inside you since yesterday when I watched you come apart for Matteo.”

I hum, remembering how good Matteo made me feel in that bathroom and the feeling of Enzo’s eyes on me. Our eyes connect as he looks up at me and I know he’s remembering last night. “Did you like what you saw? Did you come watching me come on Matteo’s tongue? Or did you come watching us fuck against the shower wall?”

His smirk grows as he lowers his face and places a kiss on my clit. I moan at his touch and he doesn't stop at that one kiss. He sucks my bundle of nerves between his lips and his tongue works beautiful magic until I'm a squirming mess. I'm breathless and on the edge of coming, needing more. I grip his hair and push his face against me.

Enzo pushes two fingers inside me and hooks them upward, grazing them over my spot and I squeeze around his finger. "Yes...I'm so close."

He scrapes his teeth across my clit and I come screaming his name, riding out my pleasure on his face. He kisses back up my body until his lips cover mine in a passionate kiss. "I came watching you come all over his cock, hearing your screams echo in the bathroom."

I moan at his answer and frantically push his boxer down, needing more of him. All of him. "Enzo... I need you inside me. Please." Enzo presses his lips to mine and kisses me like he's never going to let me go. I feel his erection at my entrance and I wrap my legs around his waist as he slowly sinks into me. I'm panting by the time he's fully inside me, stretching me in the best way. Our eyes connect and my breath catches at all the emotions I see in his eyes. Emotions that I feel, but I'm too scared to say or even admit to myself.

I bring my hand up to his face and run my fingers along the edge of his jaw. He starts to move, thrusting into me slowly, building us up with soft touches and lingering kisses. But as I get closer and closer to the edge, his thrusts pick up and the power behind them has me moaning and squeezing

around him. He moves my legs higher on him, changing the angle so he's hitting me exactly where I need him to.

My orgasm starts at my toes and it shoots up my body and stars form in my vision. My screams are muffled as Enzo slams his lips back on mine. His thrusts continue until I'm falling into a second orgasm and then he comes, groaning my name.

My body shakes from the aftershocks as Enzo lays on top of me. I run my hands up and down his back and he places soft kisses across my shoulder, up my neck, and to my lips.

I kiss him back, taking his comfort wordlessly. He slowly pulls out of me and my body follows him, not quite ready for our connection to break. "Let me make you breakfast." Enzo kisses my forehead before rising above me.

"I'll never say no to that." Reluctantly, I release Enzo from my hold and he sits up and pulls his boxers back on.

Enzo stands, grabbing his sweatpants he changed into last night and I stretch my body out with my arms above my head and my legs straight. Enzo's eyes move over my naked body and I smile up at him. He smirks at me while shaking his head. "You're addicting."

I slowly sit up and stand so I'm right in front of him. "Is that a bad thing?"

He grabs a shirt off the floor and pulls it over my head. Instantly Enzo's cologne hits my nose and I know it's his shirt. I slide my arms into it and look down, seeing it hits right above my knees. "Not a bad thing. It just makes me want you always." Enzo takes my hand and pulls me out of my room.

I pull back at my open door. “Do I not get to put panties on?”

He looks over his shoulder at me with a smirk. “Nope.”

I chuckle as I follow him down the hall and down the stairs where Matteo and Dante are already in the kitchen, working on getting breakfast. Dante is at the stove flipping pancakes and Matteo is making coffee and pulling out butter and syrup.

“Looks like you won’t be making me breakfast.”

“Raincheck?” Enzo looks down at me and I nod. He leans forward and gives me a kiss.

“Oh, look who has decided to join us.” Matteo smiles at us as he tracks his eyes over my body and I feel like he can tell I have nothing on under this shirt. I rub my thighs together hoping that he’ll find out. Matteo moves toward me and Enzo steps away, giving him an opening. Matteo pulls me against him and buries his nose in the hook of my neck. “Hmm ... you smell like sex, Princess.”

“I do?” I slide my hands over his chest and around his waist.

“It’s one of my favorite smells on you.” He runs his hands down my back and grabs my ass. He definitely knows I’m not wearing underwear now. He kisses my neck. “You’re sitting next to me at breakfast.”

I nod and give him a quick kiss. Dante calls out that the pancakes are ready and I look to him, seeing him watching me. Matteo swats my ass. “Go make-up with him.” He walks away and takes a seat at the bar.

Dante and I stare at each other for a few seconds and I can tell he's trying to see how mad I am at him. To be honest, I'm not mad at him. I didn't like him yelling at me. I didn't like him implying I was holding back from them.

I take a deep breath and walk toward him until I'm right in front of him and my arms go around his middle. "Hi Stinkface."

He chuckles. "I thought you weren't going to call me that anymore."

I tilt my head to the side, looking up at him. "That was before you yelled at me."

He slides his hands up my neck and tilts my head back so our eyes are connected. "I yelled because a guy threatened you and you didn't tell us you knew who made his fake ID. Your safety is my top priority and he was able to hurt you. Maybe not physically, but he still hurt you."

How can I be mad that he was upset because someone upset me? I raise up on my toes and kiss him. When I pull back, I smile up at him. "Sweet words won't always make things better."

"I would never think that." He smirks at me and he has very dirty things running through his mind. Things I'd happily allow him to do as an apology. He covers my mouth with his, kissing me passionately. "I'm sorry, Rose."

"I'm sorry too, Boss Man."

He gives me another quick kiss and we separate. I head to the empty seat next to Matteo and he pulls my chair to him until our sides are touching. Enzo hands me a coffee and I

smile at him in thanks. As we eat breakfast, the guys talk about business but I'm not really paying attention to what they're saying because Matteo is teasing me with his hand.

He slowly moves his hand up and down my inner thigh, getting higher and higher every time. By the time he's skimming over my lower lips, I'm silently begging him to touch me where I'm wet for him. But instead of doing as I want, he removes his hand completely from me. I fight back a groan as I glare at him. His lips turn up slightly and I realize he's playing a game.

His hand goes back to my thigh and I stand from my seat removing it. I'm not playing his game. I can feel their eyes on me as I leave the room and I hear Matteo chuckle as I hit the stairs. "She doesn't like to be teased."

God, he's lucky I like him or I'd have a knife in him right now for keeping me on edge. I walk into my room and head straight to the bathroom.

After a shower and completing my morning routine, I walk out of the bathroom with a towel wrapped around me. As I head to my closet, my phone starts to ring. Thinking it's one of the guys calling me down, I slowly make my way over to the side table but instead of one of their names showing up, Father is on the screen. I quickly grab the phone. "Father."

"Riona. I hear you've been trying to reach me about Aisling's mother."

"Yes. Does Aisling have a connection to the O'Brien's?"

"Her mother's uncle was Carl O'Brien."

“What!?! You had me kill Aisling’s family?” I run my fingers through my hair in frustration. Aisling doesn’t have any family other than us and I just made her family tree smaller even though it wasn’t known.

“He wasn’t her family. Carl was never involved in Aisling’s life or her parents.”

Frustrated, I yell, “They’re blood.”

“That doesn’t mean anything. She is our family.”

Rage builds inside me. “You can’t call her family when you chose not to protect her. This is all your fault.”

“I’m not having this argument with you again. I protected my own. You might not agree with my decisions but you have to accept them. I’m the leader of this family, of this Clan, not you.”

“How can you be our leader when we don’t follow you?”

He growls in my ear. “Riona Murphy, don’t make me enforce my power over you. It won’t be pretty. Now if that’s all your questions about Aisling’s mother, I have to go.” Before I can say anything else, he hangs up and I let out a frustrated groan as I punch my bed.

This whole thing is showing me a side to my father I’ve never seen before. He’s never been a normal, loving father but he’s also never been cold to me and Killian. I stand from my bed and stomp over to my closet to throw on some clothes. Once dressed, I head downstairs looking for the guys. When I don’t find them in the kitchen, I call out their names. Seconds later I hear a faint “Down here.”

I head to the door that leads down to their training area. As I walk down the stairs, I hear two sets of gunshots going off. At the bottom of the steps, I see Dante and Matteo shooting guns down an alley at targets. Matteo turns to me with a teasing smile on his face. “Did someone cool off in the shower?”

I flip him off and head to Enzo’s office door. Opening his door, I stick my head in. “Hey, can you come out here?”

Enzo nods and heads toward me. When I turn back to Dante and Matteo, I find them standing closer. “What’s wrong?”

I look at each of them. “I just got off the phone with my father. Carl O’Brien was Aisling’s great uncle.”

“Well fuck. That means Aisling is from two high-ranking families in your Clan.” Enzo runs his finger through his hair.

“This is all my father’s fault. If he hadn’t asked me to kill Carl, Aisling wouldn’t be in this situation.” Needing to let out some of this anger, I move past Matteo and Dante and head to the shooting range. I pick up the first gun and aim for the target. I shoot until the clip is empty and then move to the next stall and aim for that target. Once that clip is empty, I move to the next stall which happens to be the stall where I threw knives at Matteo. I pick up the knives one at a time and throw them, imagining my father’s face on the target.

A ringing fills my ears and I don’t realize it’s me screaming until someone wraps their arms around me, pulling me back. “Princess, please calm down,” Matteo whispers in

my ear and I stop fighting against him. Dante and Enzo step in front of me and I see the concern written across their faces.

I take a deep breath and relax into Matteo's arms. "I'm fine. Just needed to let out my anger. My father put us at risk and didn't protect us. He knew they wanted revenge and only protected me. I'm who they really want. Why didn't they just take me? They got to her; they could've gotten to me. Maxim did."

Enzo answers me. "They couldn't get to you because we were watching you."

It just doesn't make sense. "Then how do you explain Maxim getting into the bathroom?"

A light growl leaves Dante. "We couldn't stop him because we were told not to interfere with the Bratva if he approached you."

"What? Why would he tell you that?"

Matteo holds me tighter. "Maybe because he knew you could handle that dick."

"I don't know." It doesn't make sense. Father told me Maxim dies the next time he touches me. Why wouldn't he have someone ready to take him after he attacked me. Why leave me open to being attacked?

"Well, I know one thing." Matteo loosens his hold around me. I look back at him curious to what he's going to say. "You have crazy good aim, even when you're using your emotions."

I look at all three targets, seeing I hit the bullseye on all three and I chuckle. "I am pretty good."

Matteo kisses my neck. “Damn right you are.”

Enzo steps forward and places his hand on my cheek. “You doing okay now?”

I nod, leaning into his touch. “I’m okay. Just had to release some anger so I didn’t kill my father.”

“Well let’s look into Carl a little bit more. If Aisling is that closely related maybe then they had other reasons to take her.” Enzo takes my hand and I step out of Matteo’s arms and follow Enzo to his office. I can feel Dante and Matteo closely behind me so I know they’re following.

I pull a second chair next to Enzo but Matteo quickly takes it, pulling me into his lap. “We figured they took Aisling to torture you but they could’ve taken her to remove her as a threat to Craig. With her link to you and Killian, they could be worried that she’ll claim power and sell out to your father.”

“Let’s hope that’s not the case because that means they’re going to kill her.” Enzo pulls up the family tree and adds Aisling’s connection. Seeing it all connected and knowing her father’s ties, Aisling could be the head of two families. Could this be about power?

“So, you want this to be about you.” Dante looks down at me as he stands between the two chairs.

I nod. “If that’s the only other option. Yeah. If this is about me, eventually they’ll reach out to trade. She has to be alive for that.”

“But you won’t be alive long after a trade.” Enzo gives me a concerned look.

“That’s something I’ll worry about when it happens.” I shrug my shoulders because I don’t have a plan for after a trade, if it comes to that. I’d happily give up my life for Aisling but they don’t want to hear that.

Dante grabs my chin and turns my face so I’m looking up at him. “You won’t die for her. You hear me. I’m not going to allow it.”

“Sometimes you can’t control everything, Dark God.” I pull my chin from his grasp.

“This I can.”

“Then we better find her before it comes to that.” He nods and I look back to the O’Brien family tree. Something Matteo said earlier is bothering me. Aisling being connected to both families means that her engagement to Killian brings more power to my father.

I pull out my phone and dial Killian. “Who are you calling?” Enzo asks as I put the phone on speaker.

“My brother.” I look at him.

“Hey Riona. You calling for a cleanup crew after tearing apart Dante?”

I chuckle as Dante growls. “Fuck off.”

“Oh, he’s not dead.” He pauses for a second. “What can I do for you?”

“Did you know Aisling was an O’Brien? Actually, the rightful head of the O’Brien family now that I killed Carl.”

“What?” I can hear the shock in his voice. “That doesn’t make sense. Carl wasn’t her father.”

“No, but he was her mother’s uncle.”

“Fuck. This isn’t good Riona. Craig could kill her just from the threat of her. Shit... this is what Father has been gearing up for. He wants that power and he’s using her for it.” I can picture him pacing whatever room he is in.

“Well then he needs her alive for that.”

He chuckles. “Looking at the bright side?”

“Something like that. You have to marry her for his plan to work.”

“I’m marrying her no matter what.”

“As soon as we have her, you can make that statement true. Talk to you soon, Kill.”

“Soon.”

I hang up the phone and I looked at Dante. “Who’s this guy that was looking at the footage?”

“Are you not waiting anymore, Ri?”

“I was never waiting.” Dante gives me a proud smirk at my comment. “He has to be close by now if he’s really been working on it nonstop for two days.”

“I’ll give her a call.” Dante brings his phone to his ear after dialing a phone. After a few seconds, I hear someone answer.

“Hey Carmen. I’m just following up on how the footage is going?” Carmen says something, but I can’t make it out. “Okay, send Enzo the last car and we’ll follow that one.” Seconds later, Enzo’s computer beeps. “Got it Carmen. Thanks for everything. Let me know where yours lead.”

Dante hangs up and Enzo pulls up his email. “She’s down to the last two cars. We’re taking the last one.”

The footage pulls up of a black sedan pulling out of the parking garage not even a minute before Killian pulls in. “What are the chances they left right before Killian got there?” I look between them.

Enzo looks at me with hesitation. “I think it’s easy to say you have a mole in the Murphy organization.”

“Let Killian know. I’m going to grab my laptop so I can help in hacking street cameras.” I’m out of Matteo’s lap and up the stairs before they can say anything. I can feel it; we’re close to finding her.

Chapter Twenty-Three

Riona

It took Enzo and I two hours to track the black SUV all over town. Not once did they stop somewhere but they definitely took the long way. Making unnecessary large circles. It's like they were making sure they weren't followed.

The SUV finally pulls into the driveway of an upscale townhouse on the edge of the city and I lean back in my chair, watching the SUV pull in and then disappear behind the garage door.

“Has Carmen found anything on her last car?” I look back to Dante and he shakes his head no.

“She texted a little bit ago saying she has nothing.”

I look at Enzo. “Who owns this house?”

Enzo types away on his computer and pulls up his map of O'Brien properties. The black cursor of the townhouse we just watched the SUV pull into sits right on top of a red cursor. “That's where they took her.”

Dante stands, bringing his phone to his ear. “I'm calling in Zach.” I look back at him to ask him to let Killian

know but he doesn't need me to. "I'll call Killian too."

I mouth "thank you" to him and he nods before walking out the door. Matteo stands next. "I'll go load the car. Do you need anything specific?"

"My backpack has my gun and knives. Will you grab that? I also need some clips."

"I got you." Matteo leaves Enzo and I alone.

"Let's run through the footage over the last couple of days. See if there's anything that we need to be aware of." Enzo plays the footage on fast forward since we have five days to get through.

I sit back watching the days go by with normal traffic and I wonder if maybe this was too easy. Enzo must sense my worry because he reaches out, grabbing my hand and linking our fingers. "What's going on in your head?"

I look to him and squeeze his hand. "It almost seems too easy. What if she's not there and it's a trap?"

He turns to me and pulls my chair close. "Would you rather we wait and get surveillance on the place first?"

That's a hard question to answer. "Ideally, yes, but if she's there, I don't want to waste a second sitting outside."

"Then if it's a trap, we'll kill everyone waiting for us." He smiles with confidence.

I love his confidence but I'm worried about this. "And if it's a bomb?"

"We'll send Dante in first." He smiles at me, telling me he's joking.

I point at him playfully. “I’m telling him that.”

“Go for it. Dante will die...”

“I’ll do what?” Dante walks back into the room.

“I was just telling her that if there’s a bomb, you’d go in first.”

“Please...” Dante chuckles. “That’s Matteo, not me.”

Matteo walks in. “No way. Zach is the dispensable one. He’ll go first.” We all chuckle.

I look at Matteo. “Are we ready to go?”

“Yep. The car is all packed.” Matteo nods.

“Zach and Killian are meeting us in thirty minutes,” Dante adds.

“I’ll move the footage to my laptop and we can finish going over it in the car.” Enzo grabs his laptop and we all head upstairs and out of the house.

I climb into the backseat next to Enzo and find my backpack waiting for me. Dante pulls out of the driveway and I blindly start strapping on my knives and guns as I watch Enzo’s screen. We’re halfway across town when the video feed shows live. “It looks like they’re still there.”

Enzo nods. “At least at quick glance. It also doesn’t look like it’s an ambush. Maybe six guys at most.”

“We’re meeting Zach and Killian a couple blocks away to go over how we’re doing this.” Dante looks back at me through the rearview mirror.

“It appears to be a three-story townhouse with a basement and a patio on top. If I can use your computer, I should be able to hack into city records for blueprints.” I look at Enzo and he quickly hands over his laptop.

I get to work hacking into city records as I listen to them plan how this will go. By the time we’re pulling into the parking lot to meet everyone, I have the blueprints of the house next door pulled up. The O’Brien’s are smarter than I thought. They’ve gotten the property removed from city records so I can’t pull their blueprints.

“Who’s with your brother?” Dante asks as we’re pulling to a stop.

I look up and can’t help my smile as I see the twins standing next to their car in a t-shirt and jeans with their dirty blonde hair styled back. As soon as the car is stopped, I’m outside, jumping into the arms of Tanner. “Oh my god!” I let go of Tanner and hug Colton next. “When did you guys get back into the States?”

Tanner and Colton aren’t only my brother’s best friends, but mine as well. They’ve been there for me through everything, but our connection isn’t always just friendly. For years, I have willingly allowed them in my bed to explore all desires and pleasures but we’ve never committed into a relationship. Our love for each other never blossomed into more than friendship.

“This morning. Sorry it took so long getting back. We just heard last night about Aisling.” Colton answers me as I step back from our hug.

“How are you doing, Firecracker?” Tanner runs a hand down my back and it’s a touch I’m familiar with. But it’s a touch someone doesn’t like as I hear a growl come from behind me.

Colton chuckles as his hands rest on my hips. “Or should he ask who you’ve been doing?”

I smack his chest. “That’s none of your business. All you need to know is it’s not you two anymore.”

They both gasp dramatically and act like I hurt them. I look at my guys and step toward them. “Tanner, Colton, these are the Russo brothers, Matteo, Enzo, and Dante.” I point to each of them. “Guys, this is Tanner and Colton, Killian’s best friends and his chiefs when he takes power. They do a lot of our weapon sales overseas, so they’re off the grid most of the time.” Enzo steps forward and shakes their hands as Matteo wraps his arms around my shoulders and presses his lips to my ear. “Who are they to you?”

I look up at him and smile. “We grew up together.”

“And?”

“And we have a physical relationship when they’re in the city.”

“Not anymore.” Matteo leans down and kisses me, staking claim.

I push him back, not liking his jealousy. It’s not playful. “Stop acting like a dog. I’m not a toy you can piss on and mark as yours.” I step out of Matteo’s hold. “Colton... Tanner, I’m with them. We’re...” I point between Tanner,

Colton, and myself. “Not fucking anymore. You cool with that?”

They smile at me as my brother groans in the background. “Really Ri? We had a deal.”

I chuckle at my brother’s discomfort. Tanner and Colton look at each other and then nod. “We’re cool with that, Red. But can I get one last kiss? So I can store it to memory.” Colton puckers his lips at me.

I shake my head at him. “No. You have plenty of memories for your spank bank.”

“So true. I guess we’ll be stopping by your club while we’re here.” My burlesque club also has a lower level for the sex club we open twice a month.

“I’m sure Bianca will be happy to see you.”

A wide smile spreads across his face. “Ahh yes. Bianca is a close second to you.”

“Okay I’m done with this. Can we talk about anything else? Where’s Zach?” Killian steps forward, pushing his best friends back. Just then, Zach pulls into the parking lot. “Oh, thank god.”

With everyone here, the energy changes and there’s no more joking. Enzo starts out with all of us surrounding Dante’s hood. He pulls up the map on his laptop. “We’ve tracked an SUV from the parking garage to this property. We believe this is where they’re keeping Aisling.”

I step up, pulling up the blueprints. “These are blueprints to the neighbor’s house. So, you can see there’s a

garage with a basement, a main floor, top floor, and a rooftop patio.”

“Do you not have their blueprints, so we know if there are any hidden rooms?” Colton steps forward, looking at the layout more closely.

“I didn’t have time to find them. They’re wiped from city records.”

“You’re losing your touch Red. These boys making you soft?” He shakes his head with playful disappointment.

I flip him off.

Dante steps up, moving the plan along. “Riona believes they’re holding Aisling in the basement so you...” He looks directly at me. “and Killian should cover the garage and basement. That way, if she’s there, she’ll see someone she knows.” I give an appreciative smile. “Tanner and Colton, you can clear the first floor and we’ll cover the top floor and patio.” He points to his brothers and Zach.

Everyone nods and we all start gearing up. Once again, Dante straps a bulletproof vest on me and I see the worry in his eyes. “Which one of you was shot?” His eyes look up at me. “I was. It was about five years ago. I’ll give you the story at another time.” When he’s done, he moves off to get geared up and I go over to Matteo to get a few clips.

“You still mad?” Matteo looks down at me with sad eyes.

“No, Bear.” I push up on my toes, giving him a kiss and he gives me the biggest smile.

“Bear?”

“Yeah, you’re a big teddy bear but you can also be a grizzly bear.” He growls but I can see he’s not mad about the name; he likes it. I leave him at the back of the SUV and get into the backseat, finding Enzo sitting there checking his gun. Everyone else gets into their cars as Dante and Matteo get into the front.

As Dante leads us to the house, I reach over and take Enzo’s hand, needing just a second of his calmness. He gives my hand a squeeze and then the second is over because Dante is pulling into the driveway with Killian and Zach’s car behind him. We’re all out of the car as soon as it comes to a stop and moving to the front door as a group.

I stand behind Matteo and Zach, with Killian next to me and Tanner and Colton behind as Enzo picks the front door lock with Dante ready to enter. We decide to go in quietly and not to alert whoever is inside; that way, if someone is with Aisling, they don’t kill her before we reach her. Enzo stands once done and I grip my gun tighter. As soon as the door opens, we all filter in the house and Killian and I head directly for the lower level. I know something isn’t right as we step into the garage and the SUV isn’t there. I look over to Killian. “An SUV should be here.”

“It’s too quiet here.” Killian looks at me and we both have the same sinking feeling.

“They aren’t here anymore.”

“Let’s make sure though.”

I nod and we continue through the garage and into the connected basement. As soon as we enter the unlocked steel door, I’m instantly hit with the smell of blood and death. But

what sends shivers down my back is the chains attached to the far wall.

This is where I saw Aisling get branded in my dream.
“She was here.”

Killian walks over to the corner of the room and picks up a dirty rag. He turns and holds it up and my breath catches. It's Aisling's romper from that night and there is blood on it. “This is hers, isn't it?” Pure fear washes over Killian and I've never seen him so broken.

I nod as tears pool in my eyes. We don't know if she's okay but we do know she went through a lot of suffering in this room. “Come on. She's not here. We need to figure out where they took her from here. Maybe the others have found something.”

“What if they already killed her?” For the first time, my brother is looking to me for hope.

Without hesitation, I answer, “She's alive.”

We head back upstairs to find Tanner and Colton in the living room. “No one is here.”

“But they were.” Killian holds up the dirty romper.

Colton, seeing Killian's despair, takes the romper and pulls out his lighter. He sets the fabric on fire and throws it into the fireplace. “This doesn't mean anything. Aisling is alive and you know it. Stay strong.”

Matteo, Dante, Enzo, and Zach enter the room. “This place is wiped clean.”

“They haven’t been here for days.” I look to Enzo. “We need to look back at the video footage. She was here that first night when she was...” The sound of static silences me and we all turn to the TV that’s just turned on. I look at everyone, trying to see who has a remote in their hand. “Who...?”

An image comes on the screen and it takes me a second to recognize the older man smiling at me is Craig O’Brien. He’s smiling like he’s won. “Hello Murphy Princess. Or should I say M. You’re not as great as I thought you’d be. I was expecting you two days ago. I guess Aisling isn’t as important to you as she thought. Because of you, she had two extra days of torture.” I feel Matteo, Dante, and Enzo move in closer to me. “Ahh, are they the reason why it took you so long?”

He looks off camera. “Aisling, do you want to see why Riona hasn’t saved you yet.” Craig walks out of the camera shot and we hear a whimper before Craig comes back in the camera’s view with Aisling, holding her by her hair. I reach out and grab Killian’s hand, squeezing it, telling him not to react. Craig pulls her head back so she’s looking at the camera and she lets out a scream in pain. Even though I’m not wanting Killian to react, my knees almost give out as I see the bruises on her face and her cut lip.

Craig steps into her space and runs his nose up her face. Killian growls and you can tell the moment Aisling hears it because her eyes focus in front of her and she lets out a sob.

Aisling drops to her knees as Craig sadistically laughs beside her. Killian tries to charge the TV but Tanner and Colton grab him and hold him back. Aisling calling out pulls

my attention back to her. “Kill, Ree Ree...” I look at her and see she’s looking right at me. “Ree Ree. I want to go home. Please.”

Killian continues to fight Tanner and Colton and they pull him out of the room. Craig continues to laugh as he reaches down and grabs Aisling’s hair again, pulling her up. “You hear that, Riona? She wants to go home. And I know just how you can make that happen.” He pushes Aisling out of camera view and gives a command. “Take her back downstairs.” I scan my eyes over the wall behind Craig, trying to see if I can see anything in the room.

His attention turns back to me. “I want you. Meet me at the Franklin Airstrip at 10pm and we’ll do a trade. You for her. If you give yourself to me, I will let Aisling go at midnight in a different location.” He gives me a cocky smile, knowing I’ll die for her. “See you at ten.” The camera feed shuts off and I immediately turn and walk out of the house.

Stepping out of the front door, I see Killian on the sidewalk, pacing and pulling on his hair. I walk over to him and stop in front of him. “Look at me.” Killian takes his eyes from the sidewalk and connects them with mine. “Did you hear what she said?” I feel everyone surrounding us.

Pain pours from his eyes. “She said she wanted to go home.”

I shake my head. “No, not that.”

Zach speaks up beside me. “She said ‘Ree Ree, I want to go home. Please.’”

I look at Killian, trying to get him to register. “Killian, she told us where she was.”

He looks at me like I’m delusional. “No, she didn’t. She’s not at home.”

“She called me Ree Ree.” Come on get it.

“So...”

“Killian, that’s our code. Don’t you remember?” I stare at him, trying to force him to remember.

He shakes his head desperate to know. “No, I never listened to you guys when you made up your codes.”

I let out a frustrated growl. “Ree Ree is her code to get my attention. To listen for a code.”

He still looks like he doesn’t get the code. “She said she wanted to go home. She doesn’t call the Murphy mansion home. You know that. And she didn’t say please. She said peace.”

I stare at him, hoping he’ll understand. “Fucking Christ Riona, just spit it out.”

“She’s at our home. Our home away from all this. Our peace.” I pause, waiting for him to catch on. “She’s at the house she and I bought to make into our own home. She’s on the estate.”

“What!?” He doesn’t believe it.

“After she said that, I looked at the room he was in and I’m pretty positive he was in the dining room, based on the edge of the photo frame I saw and the color of the paint on the wall.”

“Then what are we waiting for? Let’s go.” He turns to leave but I grab his arm.

“I think we should wait.” I look at the guys around me. “We should head back to the Russo’s...” I look at them for permission because I know they’re secretive of their house. Dante gives me a nod to continue. “My laptop is there. I can access the security feed of the house. Then come up with a plan where half of us go to get Aisling at the same time I’ll be meeting Craig for the trade.”

“Trade?” Tanner questions.

“Yeah, he wants me for her. Tonight at 10pm at the Franklin Airstrip. Once he has me, he’ll release Aisling at midnight at a different location.”

“You don’t think he’ll move her until he has you?” Connor tries to figure out my plan.

“I think he’ll release her from the house.” I look around at everyone. “Let’s go so we can get a plan together.”

Everyone nods but I can see Killian is fighting himself not to run right to her. I squeeze his hand. “Trust me. If you don’t like the plan once it’s all laid, we’ll head straight there.”

Killian pulls me into a hug. “You aren’t going to that trade.”

Before I can even respond, he lets go of me and throws his keys at Colton as he climbs into the passenger seat. Everyone gets into the car they arrived in and I slide in beside Enzo, taking his comfort as I formulate a plan.

Chapter Twenty-Four

Matteo

Headlights are the only things that illuminate the Franklin Airstrip. One car pulls in from my right and one car pulls in from my left. I look down at my watch and see it's 10 o'clock on the dot. The doors on the SUV to my left all open and I watch as Craig O'Brien steps out of the passenger seat with three of his men. It takes everything in me not to just shoot him right now, from where I'm hiding, but one thing has me holding back. He's not leaving this airstrip with Riona.

Instead, he'll be leaving as one of our captives. I can't wait to get him back to my torture room and show him all my favorite toys. Maybe Riona will let me fuck her as we're both covered in his blood. I bet she will. Craig moves around the front of his SUV with his guys all standing behind him. He still has his cocky smile on his face, thinking he's going to get his hands on my princess.

My eyes catch movement behind Craig's car and I know it's Dante getting into place. The front doors on the car to my right open, drawing my attention. With the darkness of the airstrip, the only thing I can see is a woman getting out of

the driver's side door in head to toe black with a hood up over her head and a guy climbing out of the passenger side. But I know exactly who they are.

She keeps her headlights on as they both close their doors but makes no attempt to step forward, using the darkness to conceal herself.

Craig's smile widens as his eyes land on her, not caring about Enzo and my hand starts to get twitchy as he starts moving toward her leisurely. He can't get too close to her or this is all going to blow up.

I lean down, taking in the scene before me through my scope. I adjust some of my dials, zeroing in on my targets. "I'm glad to see you do care for Aisling. She'll be happy to be let free out of her own personal hell. Too bad she'll never see her savior again. You'll be dead before she'll even get a chance to look for you. You're going to die screaming like my mother screamed over my father's dead body. Revenge is such a beautiful thing." Craig nods to his guys and they step forward, moving toward her.

That's my signal. Bang. Bang. Bang. Down each of Craig's men go, hitting the concrete dead. I look up from my scope to find Dante with his gun pressed against Craig's temple and Enzo standing in front of him with his gun trained on Craig's chest. I stand from my hiding spot and loop my rifle over my shoulders.

I walk out of the hangar I was hiding in, and I can't help my smile as I approach Craig. "Guess you won't be getting your revenge." I take the butt of my rifle and smash it in his face, knocking him out. Dante steps back, allowing

Craig to fall to the ground hard. Enzo puts his gun in the back of his pants and I swing my gun back over my shoulder.

“Wow this was a much more interesting night than I would’ve had at Mystique.”

We all turn to Stella, who’s grinning from ear to ear. Stella is the manager of Riona’s Burlesque club, Mystique, and she looks exactly like Riona, except for the pink hair. At least from a distance. No one can be as gorgeous as my princess.

Chapter Twenty-Five

Riona

A couple of hours earlier

I walk into the dining room where the guys and I have been working to find Aisling. But for the first time, all the seats are filled. “Alright Red. Tell us this plan you have going on in your head.”

I smile at Colton as I set my laptop on the table. “First, let’s see if I’m correct at what Aisling was trying to tell me.”

I bend forward between Enzo and Matteo and pull up the security footage of our estate. I don’t have a lot of cameras set up yet because we’re never there but I do have cameras on the gate, front door, living and kitchen areas.

“Why didn’t you get an alert if someone is at the house?” Killian leans forward resting his elbow on the table.

“Full security isn’t set up. I just put cameras up to keep an eye on the place. We’re planning on doing a full remodel so I didn’t see a reason until it was done.”

The four camera images pull up and I can’t help but smile. We found her. Thank you, Aisling, for sending me the

signal.

I turn the laptop around and show everyone. “They’re there.”

“How do you know it’s live?” Enzo asks because he found out on our drive back that they looped the video footage on the townhouse so we wouldn’t know when they left.

“These are hidden cameras. They’d have to know they’re there. Plus, they’re wireless and they wouldn’t be able to hardwire in.”

“They could hack in,” Tanner suggests.

I shake my head. “It’s encrypted. They’d have to hack my computer to get access.”

“Well then, they don’t have access.” Tanner leans back and crosses his arms over his chest, knowing my coding skills.

I give him an appreciative smile. “Now let me verify that Aisling is there.” I rewind the footage to about an hour ago and I watch as they bring her out of the basement connected to the kitchen and to the dining room that I don’t have cameras in. But that’s okay because we know what happened in the dining room. Several minutes later, I watch them lead her through the kitchen and to the door leading into the basement. “Okay so she’s there.” I look at Enzo. “Do you mind watching this to make sure they haven’t moved her?” He nods and slides the laptop in front of him.

“So, I think we need to get Aisling at the same time as the meet up. Craig isn’t going to bring her with him, since he plans to release her hours after he gets me.” I look at everyone and they all are focused on me.

Well, everyone except Enzo. I'm about to continue when his head shoots up. "He left the estate right after talking to us." I look at him and he answers the question I'm about to ask. "Not with Aisling. Just him and three guys."

I nod, figuring out what this means. "That means he hasn't been staying there with her. There's no way to get them together before the meet up. We'll have to separate."

"Riona, you're not going to that meetup. Aisling is going to need you when we find her." Killian gives me a stern look.

"She needs to be at that meetup so Craig can let his guard down so we can take him," Tanner says.

"I have a plan for that. Stella, my manager at Mystique, is about my size and she has pink hair. She can pass as me if we keep her face hidden." I look to Dante, Matteo, and Enzo. "You guys have to keep her safe."

"Why us?" Matteo asks.

"Because he knows about us. He won't believe it's me if she shows up with someone else. You guys would be the ones that would follow me if I did go, right?"

They all nod but I can see Dante wants to argue. I silently plead for him to keep his arguments to himself because I know they're about him not being with me.

"I'm going to leave it to you to plan how you want to take Craig." I look at Zach. "Zach, you can go with them or come with us." He's really the only outlier. Killian, Tanner, and Colton are coming with me to get Aisling.

“I’ll come with you. I don’t think they’re going to need me.” He tilts his head toward my guys.

“Okay. I’m going to make a couple of calls to get Stella and my doctor ready, then we can go over how we’re going to get into the house.”

I step out of the room, sending a quick text to Dr. Gibbons letting her know I’m calling in my favor and she’s on call tonight. Once that’s sent, I pull up Stella’s contact and hit call. She answers immediately, “Hey boss lady. What’s up?”

A smile spreads across my face at her loud voice. “Hi Stella! I need to ask you a huge favor.”

“Okay? You know I’ll do anything for you.”

This isn’t a favor she should accept kindly. “This ask is dangerous, so hear me out before agreeing. You can say no, okay?”

“Okay. What’s going on?”

“Tonight, Killian and I are going to get Aisling but I need to be in two places at once.” Stella was one of the first people I called after Aisling was taken. She hears a lot as she strolls through the club each night.

“If this is about saving Aisling, I’m in.”

“Thanks, but I’m not done.” I take a deep breath. “At the time I’ll be getting Aisling, I’m supposed to be at a meetup with the man that took her. He wants me to trade myself for her. That’s where I need you to be. I need you to go as me. You won’t be alone; my guys will be with you, but what makes this dangerous is if this man figures out you aren’t me,

he could try to kill you.” I’m silent, letting her take in what I said.

“You said try. Are your guys going to keep me safe?”
Dante walks into the living room, by himself.

“Yes. They won’t let anything happen to you. You’ll be their number one priority.” I look at Dante as he gives me a nod from the wall he’s leaning on.

“Then I’m in.” There is no hesitation in her voice.

“Thank you. I’ll send you a text with an address. Get here when you can. We’ll go over everything then and get you dressed up so you’ll look like me.”

“Okay. I’ll be there in a couple hours. I’ll just get everything set at the club.”

“Thanks again. See you soon.”

I hang up the phone and Dante pushes off the wall and walks to me. Once he’s within reaching distance I wrap my arms around his waist and lean into his body. “Tell me what you aren’t happy with.”

“I don’t like us not being with you.” His hands rub up my back.

“Do you have another plan in mind?” I’m open to other suggestions.

“Not one that makes more sense.”

I smile up at him. “People that Aisling knows need to be there when we get her.”

“I know. I just don’t like us not being with you when something could go wrong.”

“Everything is going to be fine. By tomorrow morning, Aisling will be safe and Craig will be dead or locked in Matteo’s torture chamber.” I know this will end tonight.

“Hopefully so. Will you just stay in contact with me?”

“If that’ll make you feel better, absolutely.”

“It will.”

I nod, agreeing. “Stella will be here in a couple of hours, promise me you’ll keep her safe. She was one of the first girls I saved and her story is darker than mine. Nothing can happen to her.” We found Stella is a high end brothel in New Orleans that was being run by her stepfather and stepbrother. The things they forced her and twelve other kidnapped women to do was unthinkable.

“I promise. Craig won’t touch a hair on her head.” I know he’d step in front of a bullet for her just because I asked.

“Thanks.” I lean up and give him a quick kiss. “Let’s get this all planned out.” I take Dante’s hand and lead him back to the dining room while I send off the address to Stella. It’s time to get all the details in place because we only have five hours until the meetup.

Chapter Twenty-Six

Riona

Our headlights flick off as we pull on to the street that runs along the side of the estate. The front gate is just out of sight down the adjacent street but this is the closest road to the exit of my hidden tunnel. We're going in quietly, getting Aisling out and then we're going to make some noise. Every one of O'Brien's men are dying tonight.

I climb out of the passenger side of Killian's car and head to the back where Zach, Colton, and Tanner get out of an SUV. We're all dressed in head-to-toe black, with knives and guns holstered to us. We look lethal. "You guys ready to stomp through the woods?"

"Born ready, Red. Let's go get Aisling." Killian grabs Colton's shoulder as a silent thanks and we all head into the woods. Since I'm the only one that knows this entrance, I lead the way, making sure to keep my steps quiet. We're pretty far from the house but five people stomping through the woods can get noisy. The guys seem to have the same thought because other than hearing them breathe, I wouldn't know they were behind me.

Before I know it, my foot is connecting with the hidden steel door in the ground and a smile forms on my face. I look back at the guys. “We’re here.” Bending down, I start moving the leaves and pine needles off the door and open the latch, revealing the security pad. I type in my code and the door slides open to a dark tunnel where you can only see the top two steps of the ladder. “This tunnel isn’t soundproof so we have to stay quiet in case someone is in the wine cellar.”

They all nod and I grab my flashlight and turn it on, facing it down into the tunnel. I step onto the ladder and make my way down until my feet hit the floor. Each of the guys come down the ladder one by one and when we’re all in the tunnel, I open the panel in the wall signaling the door to close. My eyes connect with Killian and he gives me a nod telling me he saw the code. If everything goes to plan, he’s leaving with Aisling as soon as we get her and the rest of us are clearing the house.

Making sure to keep our flashlights low, we head down the tunnel. Since the house is closer to this side of the property, it doesn’t take us any time at all to see the back of the wine shelves. A low light filters through the shelves and I click off my flashlight because the light should only be on when the wine cellar door is open. The guys turn theirs off as well and the tunnel falls into almost complete darkness.

I take slow, measured steps toward the back of the shelves making sure not to make a sound. With my breath held, I look through one of the openings, scanning the small room for someone. I let my breath go when the room comes up empty and the door is slightly ajar. All they have to do is close

the door and the light would turn off. Instead, they're racking up my energy bill.

Reaching in through the hole, I grab the decoy bottle and twist. A faint clicking sound of the latch opening has me freezing for a second, making sure no one heard. When I don't hear anyone approaching, I pull my hand in and slowly push the hidden door open. These shelves are full of wine bottles so I make sure to move it smoothly. Not wanting to risk a bottle rattling, I only open the door wide enough for us to slip through.

The cellar isn't much bigger than a walk-in closet so once all of us are out of the tunnel, it's a little tight. I'm standing right by the door opening and I can see two guys standing outside the only other door down here. That's where Aisling has to be. Since the guys are standing at the end of the hall, I look at Colton and signal him to cover my back. Tanner steps up to the door as I pull out two knives from my thigh. I give Tanner a nod and he quickly pulls the door inward and I step out, locking eyes on the guys as they turn toward the squeak of the door hinges.

A smile pulls at my lips as one knife leaves my hand and the other does the same seconds later. Before the guys even have time to react, my knives lodge into their necks. I step out of the safety of the room and Colton shifts behind me, covering the other end of the hallway. Both men fall to their knees, clutching their necks as blood spills from their mouths. Standing over the first guy, I bend down and pull out the knife. His muffled screams fill the hall as he looks up at me with fear in his eyes. "You should be scared. Hell is going to be torture."

I quickly and deeply slice across his throat and all the light leaves his eyes as his body slumps to the floor. Standing over my first kill of the night, I'm a little disappointed it wasn't messier. A groan comes from the guy next to me and I look over to find Zach plunging his knife in the guy's gut and slicing up.

He gives me a smile. "You don't mind, do you? I needed to get my hands dirty."

A dark smile forms on my face because I know exactly what he means. "Not at all. I like your style."

"You done playing?" I look behind me to find Killian there, not looking as excited as us.

I smirk at him and hold out my knife. "Not even close. You didn't want to get your hands dirty?"

He crosses his arms. "The most valuable lesson Lorcan has ever taught me is never get your hands dirty if you have people to do it for you." I roll my eyes at him. Killian isn't fooling anyone. He's just as lethal as I am. He never sits anything out.

"He says that because he's a coward." Killian glares at me as I stand and wipe my knife clean on my pants. "Good thing you're not."

Muffled screams suddenly start and Killian pushes past me and barrels through the wooden door. I quickly rush after him, pulling out my gun, ready to find Aisling being brutally tortured by someone but instead I'm greeted with total darkness and deathly loud screams. What the hell? Those aren't Aisling screams. It sounds like five people screaming.

With my hand out in front of me I find the light switch and flick it on. The room illuminates, giving me a clearer picture. There is a dirty cot on the far side of the room and right next to it I see Aisling curled up in the corner with her head on her knees and hands over her ears, trying to block out the screams that haven't stopped.

God, how has she survived this. Slowly I move closer to her while calling out her name but it's no use. She can't hear me. I don't want to get too close to her without her knowing we're here, so I look to my brother and I find him frozen just staring. Suddenly the screams stop and I look back to see Tanner lower the handle of his rifle from a now destroyed speaker.

Her head shoots up at the silence and relief instantly washes over her face. "Ri?" Killian steps up beside me and tears stream down her face. "Kill?"

"Hi Angel." He steps in front of her and crouches down.

She hesitantly reaches out for his face. "Please tell me you're real."

He leans into her hand. "We're real. You're safe now."

He reaches out slowly and pushes her hair off her face. "Thank you for coming. I've been trying so hard not to break." A sob breaks from her and she throws herself at him.

"Oh Angel. You can break now. I've got you." Killian scoops her up in his arms and the sound of chains running across the ground has me noticing the metal cuff on her wrist. Killian looks at me and I step forward, pulling out a metal pin

from my hair. Quickly I unlock the cuff and it falls to the ground, revealing the harsh red marks on her wrist.

Anger fills me at seeing more harm done to her. “Get her out of here. We’ll meet you at the safe house. Dr. Gibbons will be there.”

Killian nods and heads out of the room and I follow after. Aisling looks at me over Killian’s shoulder. “Make them bleed, Ri.”

I smile at the fight still inside her. “I’ll paint the walls with their blood.”

“Then we’ll bulldoze...” A high-pitched beep rings out from somewhere in the room and Aisling’s whole body shakes in fear. I slam the door shut the moment we’re in the hall, muffling the sound. The crew upstairs must’ve heard me slamming the door because the dead guys’ radios start going off.

I give Killian a nod and move ahead of him to join Tanner, Colton, and Zach at the bottom of the stairs. “Go... go now.” When I look back, Killian and Aisling are gone.

Tanner looks at me and gives me a playful smile. “Ready for some fun, Firecracker.”

“Absolutely.” I give them a deadly smile. Colton and Tanner immediately head up the stairs and Zach and I follow with guns in both hands.

Chapter Twenty-Seven

Riona

Blood splatters the walls as dead bodies lay on the floor. There were more men than I expected in here, but it still wasn't an issue for us. I walk across the open foyer to the two guys from the gate that made the stupid decision to run up here instead of away. Now they lay dead in the front doorway with bullet holes in their heads. Quiet surrounds me and it's a good feeling. No more gunshots. No more groans of dying men. No more yelling. All the O'Brien men are dead. I just know it.

I step over the two bodies and walk into the living room, finding Tanner and Colton. Tanner is standing close to Colton, doing something that I quickly realize is wrapping fabric around his bicep. "What happened? Are you okay?"

Colton smiles at me. "I'm fine, Red. It's just a graze. Nothing stitches can't fix."

I sigh in relief. "We'll get the doc to look at it. Where's Zach?" Tanner shrugs his shoulders. "He headed upstairs when we separated."

I nod and head that way. I'm ready to get out of here and to Aisling. She seemed okay but I need to hear it from her and the doc. I jog up the stairs and I'm about to call out to Zach when I hear a man's groan and the sound of wrestling.

Quietly I walk up the stairs until the hallway comes into view and I see Zach and a man wrestling. Fear courses through me as I see Zach on his back, fighting the guy for the gun. This isn't good.

A shot goes off and I quickly pull out my gun and fire two shots into the guy's back as I run up the final few steps. The guy rolls off Zach and I send another shot in his head just to make sure he's dead. Tanner and Colton come running up the stairs just as I'm kneeling next to Zach, who's groaning in pain as he grabs his shoulder. Blood starts to pool under him and I quickly press down on the bullet wound. "Shit. Tanner gives me something to apply pressure."

"I'm fine. It doesn't even hurt." Without thinking Tanner pulls off his shirt and hands it to me as Zach tries to push me away. His wince as I push the shirt to his shoulder betrays him and Colton calls him out on it.

"Yeah right." Colton kneels next to me by Zach's head. He takes over adding pressure. "Let's roll him. I want to see if it was through and through."

Zach tries to help but it's really Colton and I that half roll him to see the exit wound. Another cloth is placed in my hand and I look up at Tanner to see him tearing up a bed sheet. I press the ball of sheet to his back wound and we pull Zach up to a sitting position. Tanner steps up and expertly wraps the strips of bed sheet around Zach's shoulder, holding the fabric

to the wounds. “Alright, let’s get out of here. I have more supplies in the truck.”

Colton grabs Zach’s uninjured arm and hooks it over his shoulder, supporting Zach as we make our way downstairs. I run down the stairs and to the front of the house where a bowl of keys sits. Grabbing the first set I find, I hit the alarm button and listen. We need a car to get to ours. Zach can’t make it through the tunnel and the walk would take too long.

The alarm for the black SUV sitting out front goes off and I quickly run to it, getting in the front seat and turning it on. The guys are right behind me, climbing in. Once everyone is seated, I hit the accelerator and make my way down the long driveway. As I’m approaching the closed gate, I look back at Zach to see him very pale and barely keeping his eyes open. We don’t have time to stop and wait for the gate to open. I’m ramming it. “Hold on.” I push down on the accelerator harder and everyone grabs their oh shit handle when they realize I’m not slowing. We hit the gate with a loud bang, jerking us forward and the gate flies off the hinges.

“God, Red.” Colton looks back at the destroyed gate. “You’re going to have to completely replace that.”

I shrug my shoulders. “I was going to have to replace it anyways. I can’t have a gate that’s easily bustable.”

“True that.” Zach groans in the back and I can’t help my chuckle. Looking back at him in the rearview mirror, he tries to give a wink but his eyes are too far shut.

I pull up to our SUV and jump out of the car without turning it off. Tanner throws the keys to me and I run to the driver’s seat as they get Zach in the back.

Tanner gets in with Zach, grabbing his medical kit from the back. Colton jumps into the passenger seat and I take off down the road. I can hear Tanner working in the back replacing the shirt and sheets with actual bandages. I look at Colton. “I need to call Killian and the guys.”

He nods. “I got you.” He pulls out his phone and instantly Bluetooth pulls up with Killian’s name. “Hey man.”

I answer instead of Colton. “Killian, how is Aisling? Is she with the doc?”

“Doc said physically she’s fine. She’s still with her though.”

“Okay great. We’re coming, Zach was shot in the shoulder and Colton has a graze. We’ll need her to also...”

“I’m fine. Tanner can stitch me up.” Colton interrupts.

“Fine. We need her for Zach. It’s not looking good.” I chance a glimpse at him.

“Tell me what’s going on so I can get her ready. How far out are you?”

“Fifteen minutes. He has a gunshot wound in the shoulder. Through and through. He’s losing a lot of blood.”

“Okay. I’ll let her know.”

He hangs up because he knows I don’t have anything else to say. Immediately, Dante’s name shows on the Bluetooth. “Colton, why the hell isn’t Riona calling?”

Relieved to hear his voice, I quickly rush out, “Dante, it’s Zach. He’s shot.”

“Ri? What happened? Is he okay?” Concern fills his voice.

I look at Zach in the back. His shirt is now gone and Tanner is pressing a shit ton of gauze on the wound but there’s a lot of blood. “He’s losing a lot of blood. He was shot in the shoulder. He should be fine if we can get the bleeding to stop. We’re heading to the safe house now; Killian is giving the doc a heads up.”

“Shit. We’re on our way there. Does she need anything?”

“I don’t know. We’re about 10 minutes out right now.” I weave in and out of traffic, wishing we were closer.

“Okay.” I can almost see him nodding and coming up with a plan. “Ri?”

I look at the dashboard like I could see his face. “Yeah.”

“How are you? How’s Aisling?” I know it’s killing him not being here right now to see that everything is okay.

“I’m fine. Aisling was badly beaten and they were torturing her mentally.”

“Shit.” Mind games can be the worst type of torture.

“Yeah.” Mental scars are the hardest to overcome. They don’t just heal. It’s a daily fight to overcome them.

Enzo speaks up, saying exactly what I need to hear. “She’ll be okay. She’s strong.” I wish he were here so I could hold his hand.

Zach decides in that moment to break the sad tension by finally making himself known. “Russo’s...” He sounds drunk, slurring his words with delirious excitement. “You should’ve seen me. I kicked some ass.”

We all chuckle and Matteo’s voice rings out. “It sounds like you got your ass kicked.”

“Nah. He got a lucky shot. He died right after that.”

“At least you killed him,” Dante says.

“Oh, not me. Your girl saved my ass.” A smile spreads across my face and if I wasn’t driving, I’d give him a fist bump.

We pull into the neighborhood where the safe house is and I slow down so I don’t draw attention to ourselves. I pull into the driveway and find Dr. Gibbons waiting for us. As I come to a stop, she rushes to the back and they all help Zach out of the car but Zach’s not leaving without the final word. “Bye guys! The pretty doctor is going to fix me up now.” He looks up at her like he’s dazed by her beauty. She just shakes her head at him and leads the twins to the house.

Silence fills the car and I let out a long breath. We made it. Zach is still alive. “You good, Rose?” Dante breaks the silence.

“Yeah.” My adrenaline is slowly starting to drain and my body relaxes.

“Okay.” I can tell that they don’t believe me. “We’re only a few miles out. Go inside, check on Aisling. We’ll be there soon.”

“Yeah okay. See you soon.” I hang up at the mention of Aisling and sit up a little bit straighter. I need to see her.

I slide out of the car and look around, seeing how quiet this neighborhood is in the middle of the night. People here don't know the horrors my world has. They're lucky to not have to worry about the shadows that lurk in the night. I walk into the house to find Dr. Gibbons and Tanner in the kitchen working together getting a passed out Zach patched up on the dinner table.

The sound of Colton's voice has me looking to my right, into the living room. I find Killian cleaning Colton's arm as he tells Killian everything that happened after he took Aisling out. Killian sees me standing in the doorway and he gives a smile with a head tilt, signaling me to the back of the house. I give him a smile and head to the back bedroom. The door is closed and I give it a soft knock before opening.

“Ash?”

I peek my head around the door to see a sleeping Aisling. She looks so peaceful and almost like normal except for the black eye and cut on her lip. I quietly slip into the room, close the door, and walk over to the bed. I reach out to push her hair out of her face when I see all the blood on my hands from Zach. I quickly withdraw my hand, step back from her and head toward the bathroom.

Looking in the mirror, I see I'm covered in blood. Earlier I wanted this, but knowing the majority of it is Zach's, I feel gross. I tear off my clothes quickly and jump into the shower, frantically scrubbing at my skin. Over and over, I

lather myself in soap until the smell of lavender is almost too much. That's when I step out of the shower and dry off.

Since I don't have any clothes, I wrap the towel around me and head out of the bathroom. Feeling tired, I head to the bed and climb in next to Aisling. My eyes instantly go heavy as my head hits the pillow and I turn to face her.

"I'm sorry this happened to you. It's all my fault." A tear slides down my cheek and soaks into the pillow. I place my hand over hers in between us and a weight lifts from me. She's here and safe.



I didn't know I fell asleep until I'm woken up by someone lightly shaking my shoulder as they whisper my name. Opening my eyes, I see Aisling is still sleeping in the same position. She must be exhausted. I look over my shoulder and see Enzo sitting on the edge of the bed. He smiles at me. "Sorry to wake you, but Dr. Gibbons is leaving and I brought in your bag with a change of clothes."

I smile at him as I sit up. "Thank you. I'll be out in a moment." I give Enzo a quick kiss and I just want to relax into his arms. But now isn't the time. Enzo leaves the room and I slide out of bed and grab my bag. Throwing on my clothes, I head to the front of the house where I find everyone hanging out in the living room.

As I walk into the room, Dr. Gibbons stands up and walks over to me. She doesn't slow down until she has her arms wrapped around me in a hug. "Thank you so much for

what you did. It's been months since my daughter and I have slept soundly and we now can because of you."

I hug her back. "You don't need to thank me. I need to thank you. Thank you for looking over Aisling and stitching up Zach." I look over at him lounging in the chair looking exhausted.

"Oh, this is nothing. If you need anything else, please let me know." I give her a grateful smile and she gives everyone a wave before leaving.

I walk over to Zach. "How are you doing?"

"Better. Just a little tired." He doesn't even lift his head, just looks at me over his nose.

"It's all the blood loss."

"Yeah. Luckily Matteo and I are the same blood type."

I look over at Matteo who's laying back on the couch next to Dante. I move over to him and sit on Dante's thigh because I don't want to sit on his lap if he's feeling weak. He definitely looks paler than normal. He doesn't seem to like that because he quickly reaches out to me and pulls me in his lap. "I'm the one who gave blood, not Dante."

I chuckle as I run my fingers over his prickly hair. "Such a hero, giving Zach your blood."

"I am a hero. And not because of the blood. I kept Stella safe tonight." He gives me a smile believing himself to be the savior of the day.

Happy to boost his ego I lean into him wanting to hear it all. "You did?"

“Not by himself.” Dante says, not liking me giving Matteo all the credit. “But yes, Stella is safe and at home. We checked your phone.”

Matteo glares at his brother. “I’m the one who killed Craig’s lackeys.”

Dante happily glares back. “We were there too, making sure Stella was safe.”

Enzo gets into the conversation before Dante and Matteo start arguing. “Everything went as planned. Craig didn’t realize you weren’t there and we have him waiting for you.”

I smile at him and then Dante and Matteo. “Thanks for watching out for her.”

“She’s actually pretty cool. She said she’ll be your body double whenever needed.” Matteo pulls me closer and rests his head on my shoulder in the nook of my neck.

I chuckle. “She is pretty awesome.”

Colton and Tanner stand up. “We’re going to head out. We have a flight out tomorrow afternoon and need to get some sleep.

I go to get off Matteo’s lap but his hold tightens, not letting me up. I shake my head at him and Colton and Tanner chuckle. “It’s okay. We’ll come to you.”

Tanner comes over to me and gives me an awkward hug and a kiss on my head. Matteo growls at him and I hit his chest.

Colton steps up and kisses the top of my head as well, making Dante growl too. I give him a kick and Colton chuckles. “It was good seeing you, Red. Until next time. Maybe without these guys.”

Dante and Matteo lose it, but I stretch out over their laps, preventing them from getting up. Colton quickly steps back, laughing. “Calm down. He’s just messing with you.”

Enzo chuckles at the end of the couch and I smile at him. I love them being possessive but I also love that Enzo didn’t get riled up at Colton’s joke. Zach sits up in the chair. “Can I actually get a ride with you?”

“Sure man. We’ll drop you at your place.” Tanner helps Zach up.

“Thanks.” Zach says bye to everyone and the three of them leave the house.

We’re all quiet for a moment and I look over at Killian. “Did she say anything before going to sleep?”

He shakes his head. “Just that she’s fine and that she hasn’t slept in days. Doc said she’s not dehydrated or malnourished. The cuts and bruises are a couple days old. There is also a symbol carved into her hip but it’s healing fine.”

I look at Enzo when he mentions the symbol in her skin. If that was true, then so was everything else. “She didn’t mention anything else? What other trauma she might have gone through.”

He shakes his head. “Anything else I wasn’t in the room for and the doc wouldn’t say.”

I can see the worry in his eyes and I get up from Matteo's and Dante's laps. I crouch down in front of him and take his hand. "She'll tell us what she went through when she's ready. She's sleeping soundlessly so she can't have too much trauma. Remember my nightmares?" When I came home after Tony, I didn't get a good night's sleep for months. My nightmares were every time I closed my eyes.

Killian looks a little less worried and I look around at everyone. They all look exhausted. "We should all get some sleep. It's been a long day."

Enzo stands and walks over to me. He wraps his arms around my middle as I stand. "Are you coming home with us?"

I shake my head. "I'm going to stay here with Aisling."

"Okay. We'll be back after we get some sleep. We have a prisoner you're going to want to see." He smiles with a promise of revenge.

"I can't wait until we have some fun with him." Matteo comes up to my side and nuzzles into the side of my neck.

Dante appears on my other. "But he can wait. A few days tied up won't kill him."

"You will." Enzo leans forward and gives me a kiss. Matteo leans in next and then Dante.

Killian coughs behind me and I chuckle. I step back from Enzo and look at Killian. "Can you make-out with your boyfriends somewhere else?"

"Yes, I can." I grab Dante and Matteo's hand and beckon Enzo to follow. The four of us go to the front door and

Dante quickly pulls me into his arms and kisses me.

I run my hands over his abs and around his middle. When my knees start to feel weak, I pull back from him but I'm instantly pulled into Matteo's arms. He slams his mouth to mine and I melt into him. I wrap my arms around his neck so I don't become a puddle on the ground. When we break apart to catch our breath, Enzo is there and I willingly go into his arms.

His kiss is slow and passionate but I still get weak-kneed and breathless. He rests his forehead against mine and I smile at him. Reluctantly, I separate myself from them and watch them leave, wishing they could stay, but this is only a one-bedroom home. As the door shuts behind them, I hear Matteo say, "Killian called us her boyfriends and she didn't correct him. Do you think that means she's staying?"

I don't hear what they say, but I know the answer. Yes, I'm staying. A large grin forms on my face as I turn and lean against the door.

Killian walks out of the living room and smiles at me. "It's nice to see you happy."

What is he talking about? "I'm always happy."

He shakes his head, looking like he's not sure. "Not the same happy as when you're around them."

I smile at him knowing he's right. They make me very happy and hopeful. He steps up to me and places his hand on my shoulder. "I hope you're prepared for when Father calls you home. He's not going to allow you to stay."

Why did he have to go and ruin the happiness by bringing up Father. I push his hand off me and move toward

the hallway. “I’m a grown woman and I can live wherever I want.”

He chuckles like I’m delusional. “Good luck with that.” I flip him off and he only chuckles more. “Where are you going?”

“To bed. I’m sleeping with Aisling.” His laughter fills the hallway.

“That’s okay; I was planning on sleeping in the chair anyways.”

I look at him confused. “Why?”

“I don’t want her to wake up and freak out.” I can see it pains him to keep his distance, but he’s trying to do what is best.

“She’s going to want you with her. So don’t go far, okay?” I reach out and grab his hand.

He squeezes my hand back. “I won’t.”

We enter the room and I go straight to the bed as Killian goes to the chair on the other side of the bed. As I slide in, I face away from them, giving Killian his privacy to say goodnight.

A quiet peace fills the room as it sets in that the three of us are together again and safe. We’re going to be okay.

Chapter Twenty-Eight

Riona

Someone bopping my nose pulls me from my deep sleep and as I crack my eyes open, there is a smiling Aisling looking back at me. Tears pull in my eyes as I pull her to me and we hug each other. “I’m so sorry I wasn’t there to stop them. It should’ve been me.”

“No, it shouldn’t. He would’ve killed you. He would rant about how much he hated you.”

I roll back from our hug and scan her face looking for any pain reflecting in her blue eyes. She might think that it would’ve been worse if it was me but she definitely didn’t have it easy. “Are you okay?”

Darkness fills her eyes and I know she’s not. “I will be.”

I grab her hand, giving her support. “I know you went through some dark things. I’m here for you.”

She looks at me confused and I answer her silent question. “Whenever I slept, it was like I was there with you. It was so real.”

Her eyes lock with mine as she tries to figure out what exactly I saw. Whatever she sees has her looking back at Killian who's sleeping. At least I think he is until his body relaxes when she looks away from him. "What did you see?"

"The night after you were taken, I was in the basement with you as you were chained to the wall. A man walked in talking about how you were family and you needed their mark on you. I was pulled from my sleep as he started cutting into your skin." I look past her shoulder as I continue not being able to look at her as I say the next part. "The next night you were in what I now know was our basement, sleeping on the cot. I curled up next to you and slept with you. At least until two guys came into the room. One guy held you down as the other..."

I can't finish that sentence. Not with Killian listening. And I know he is because his whole body tensed with anger. "I ended up getting pulled into my own memories and nightmares from that."

Aisling squeezes my hand and I know she's trying to give me support for my nightmares. "They didn't rape me." I look at her in shock because that isn't what I saw. "They were going to but Craig ended up coming in right before that guy was going to force himself inside me. Craig shot them both in the head for touching me." I can't tell you how relieved I am that she didn't go through the horrors I have, but it's weird that he was so protective of her. Killian gives up all pretending and opens his eyes. Aisling must've known he was awake because she reaches behind her and Killian instantly jumps out of the chair, taking her hand in his.

Aisling turns on her back to look at him. “The first two days were the worst, physically. After they took me and chained me to that wall, I was beaten. Not constantly. It was like a game. They’d come in individually, Craig and Davis. They’d either punch or slap me or they’d just fake it. They’d swing their arms back like they would and I’d flinch. Then they’d just leave. I never knew if they’d actually hit me or not. I’m not sure how long that happened but it eventually stopped. Then right before they moved me, Davis came in saying I needed their crest.” She lifts her shirt showing us the scabbed marking. I know Killian has seen it, but this is my first time. It isn’t pretty. I can tell she moved while doing it because the lines are jagged.

Killian runs his fingers over it softly. “Once it’s healed, we can come up with a gorgeous tattoo to cover it. You won’t even know that it’s there.”

She nods but I can see that she knows she’ll always know what is carved into her skin. “As he did this, he told me all about how my mom was an O’Brien and that we were family.”

She looks between the two of us, seeking the truth. “We found out a lot about your mom’s past. I can tell you if you want.”

She shakes her head no. “I don’t really care. O’Brien’s aren’t my family.”

I nod and she continues. “Once they moved to our house, they started the psychological torture. Other than the almost rape. That was the last time I slept. After that, either the lights were on with this annoying beeping sound or it was

pitch black with the terrifying screams. I started hallucinating you guys rescuing me. I'd only get a break when they brought me food and water and then I'd have to listen to Craig rant about you and your father." She looks right at me. "I didn't realize where I was until he brought me out for the video call. That was the first time I was out of the basement. I'm so glad you remembered our code." Tears fill her eyes and I wish I could take the terror away.

"Well, you calling me Ree Ree brought it back quickly." I chuckle.

She tries to laugh but it comes out more as a sob from the pain. "Yeah, it is an obnoxious name."

She curls into Killian as her tears start flowing and I know they need time together. I climb out of bed and give them a smile. "I'm going to grab us something to eat." Neither of them says a thing as Killian pulls her to him and holds her tightly.

I find my phone and Killian's car keys in the kitchen and as I head out of the house, I see I have a few missed calls from my father and several texts from Stella and the guys from yesterday. Reading over the guy's text, I can't help my smile at how worried they were. I know it's only been seven days, but I've become really attached to them. I know my father won't be happy about me staying with them but he can't force me to not be with them.

I send out a group text to the guys to see if they want to eat with us before I back down the driveway. I don't know what's around here but seeing it's lunchtime, I just drive around trying to find something to eat.

I pull up Stella's contact and hit call. "Hey Boss Lady."

"Hi Stella. I just wanted to call and thank you again for last night."

"Oh, that was no problem. It was a lot of fun. Your guys kept me completely safe. By the way, they're super hot. Especially when they're holding guns and killing people."

I chuckle at her bluntness. "Yeah, they're fine as hell. I'm a lucky girl."

"Does that mean you're not with the twins anymore?"

I shake my head. "Oh god, no. That wasn't anything serious."

"Well, that's some interesting information."

Well...well...well. I never knew she was interested in them. If I did, I would've sent them her way instead of Bianca's long ago. "Do you want me to tell them to come visit you tonight? You can make your office into Room 7."

The bottom level of Mystique is a sex club that is only open twice a month, by invitation only. It gives the girls opportunities for release in their own controlled, safe, environments.

"Don't you dare." I can hear her embarrassment through the phone.

"Alright, I won't but I'll send you their numbers if you change your mind."

"I won't." Maybe not tonight, but in the future, I know she'll call them. "Well, I should go. The girls are arriving and we have a new routine to learn."

I chuckle at her excuse to get off the phone with me.
“Alright. Call if you need anything.”

“I will. Call if you need a body double.”

I chuckle. “Will do. See ya Stella.”

“Bye Boss Lady.”

I hang up just as I see a strip mall up ahead and I pull in when I see a Chinese restaurant. Cheap Chinese is always a good choice. My phone rings as I walk in, but when I see it's my father I hit ignore. I order a ton of food because I don't know what the guys like and the cashier gives me a shocked look. I understand why when he hands over two full bags of Chinese food. I really hope the guys are coming or we're going to have leftovers for days.

When I get back to the house, I find Killian and Aisling cuddling on the couch, watching TV in the living room. “I got Chinese!”

Aisling jumps up from the couch. “Thank god! I'd kill for some fried rice and sweet and sour chicken right now.”

“Good thing I got those, then.” She follows me into the kitchen with Killian on her heels.

I start unpacking everything and Killian looks at me like I have lost my mind. “Did you get enough food?”

I flip him off. “I invited the guys over so I ordered one of all the combos.”

“Do they each eat for three people?”

“Guys?” Aisling looks up from her container with a fork already filled with food.

I ignore Killian and smile at Aisling. “I got some gossip to tell you.”

“Oh yay. I like gossip. Killian, leave us alone. I’m sure you don’t want to hear the dirty stuff.”

“You can talk about this later. I’m not leaving.” He wraps his arms around her from behind and my phone starts to ring. “Is that Father? He’s been trying to reach you.”

“I know. I’ve ignored the calls.” Looking at my phone, I see it’s Enzo. I move out of the kitchen to answer. “Hey! Did you get my text?”

“Yeah, we did. Sorry we didn’t text back but we’ve been dealing with your father’s men as they came and packed you up.”

Shock and anger courses through me. He had no right. “They did what!?!?”

“All your stuff is gone.” I can hear the irritation in his voice.

“How dare he?” He violated their space and forced his hand without discussing it with me. I know I’ve been ignoring his calls but Aisling has only been safe for hours.

“Don’t worry, Princess. I still have a pair of your panties.” I bite my lip to stop myself from chuckling at Matteo and from the sound of him groaning as one of his brothers hit him.

“We’re on our way to you.” Dante sounds pissed.

“I didn’t ask for this.” They have to know that I didn’t want to leave.

“We know,” Enzo says, but I can hear the uncertainty.

“Okay. See you soon.” I hang up my phone and walk back into the kitchen, fuming. “He had his men go to the guys’ house and pack up my stuff. How did he know where they were? Who does he think he is?”

Killian shakes his head. “That means you’re probably next.”

“I’m not going back. He can’t lock me away.”

Aisling looks at me with concern because she knows I’m not going to be able to stop him. The sound of car doors closing has me running to the window to make sure it isn’t my father’s men. I won’t go easily.

A smile spreads across my face as I see Dante’s SUV sitting in the driveway and the three of them getting out. Looking back at Aisling, I smirk. “It looks like the gossip has come to you.”

I move to the front door and open it just as they step on the porch. Enzo steps forward and gives me a kiss. Matteo is next as he whispers against my lips. “You’re not getting those panties back.” I chuckle and he smashes his lips to mine in a quick kiss before heading into the house. “Yay Chinese.”

I chuckle looking after him while shaking my head at his silliness. When I turn back to greet Dante, he has a stern look on his face as he leans against the porch railing with his arms crossed. “I’m sorry my father invaded your space.” I step outside toward him and wrap my arms around his middle.

He lets his arms fall but he doesn’t wrap them around me. “Did you know he was sending them?”

I shake my head no, squeezing him tighter. I need him to wrap his arms around me. “Of course not. He’s been calling, but I haven’t answered. I wasn’t ready to tell him I was staying with you guys.”

His hands slide up my arms until he wraps his arms around my shoulders, pulling me against him. “So, you were going to stay?”

I nod against his chest. “I’ve gotten a little attached to you guys.”

He tilts my chin up and pushes my hair behind my ears. “We’ve gotten attached too.” His lips move closer to mine and I raise up on my toes, trying to close the distance between us faster. “Your father’s men left a message.”

Instant mood killer. I let out a huff and fall back down on my heels. “Let me guess. My father is calling me home.”

He nods. “Yes. The threat is gone and you’re to report home.”

Report home. What am I? A soldier. “Well, he’s going to have to find me and drag me home.”

“Not going to happen if we’re around.” They’ll stop anyone from taking me from them, I have no doubt.

I grab his hand and pull him inside, not wanting to talk about this anymore. Aisling is gushing over Matteo and Enzo and when she sees me walk in with Dante, she’s shocked. “Oh my god. Three! I need to up my game.”

“No, you don’t.” Killian pushes off the counter and pulls her to him.

She waves him off. “I can’t believe you’re dating contestants one and two.”

I chuckle remembering her dating game that night. The guys look at me confused. “That night, Aisling was trying to find me a guy to hook up with. Enzo and Matteo were the two guys that made the list. Dante huffs and wraps his arm around my shoulders holding me against his side. I pat his chest. “I’m sure you would’ve been contestant three if everything didn’t blow up.”

He leans down and whispers, “And I would’ve won.”

A shiver runs through me as his breath tickles my ear. I step away from him before I ask him to show me what he would’ve done if he did win. “Alright, no more talking about contestants. Aisling, this is Matteo, Enzo, and Dante. Guys this is Aisling, my best friend.”

They each step up and shake her hand. “It is nice to meet you,” Enzo says.

“We’re glad you’re safe,” Dante says.

“Craig will be dead by nightfall,” Matteo says.

I pat Matteo’s arm and chuckle. “Alright let’s eat. And no talking about killing people.”

He shrugs his shoulders. “Later then.”

Yes. Later.

Chapter Twenty-Nine

Riona

After we finish, eating the guys sweep me into the car so we can have some fun with Craig. And I literally mean sweep. As soon as I take my last bite, Matteo has me in his arms, carrying me out of the house. I only have time to wave bye to Killian and an amused Aisling before the front door closes behind him. He doesn't let me go as he climbs into the back seat of Dante's SUV and places me in his lap so my back is leaning against his chest. The seat belt comes across the both of us and his arms wrap around my waist as well.

"This isn't very safe." I look back at him with an amused smile.

"We don't have to go far and I'm sure Dante will drive extra safe, right?" He looks at Dante who has just gotten in the SUV with Enzo.

"Nothing is going to happen to you." I give him a smile, knowing I'm safe in his hands.

Adjusting myself in Matteo's lap so I can see him, I run my fingers over Matteo's hair, feeling his short hair prickle

my skin. “So, what are we going to do to Craig?”

His eyes shine as a wicked darkness fills them. “I’ve prepared all my toys. You can do whatever you want.”

An excited smile pulls on my face thinking about all the possibilities. “We’re going to have some fun, taking turns on him.”

As Dante drives us to Matteo’s playroom, Matteo whispers all the things he wants to do to Craig in my ear. I didn’t know talking about torturing a guy could be such a turn on, but with Matteo, it is. He runs his hand up in between my thighs and I grind myself against his hand. “Are you wet for me, Princess? Is thinking about torturing Craig turning you on?”

Matteo presses his thumb against my clit through my leggings and I let out a moan. “*You’re* turning me on.”

“Matteo,” Dante growls.

“Just ignore him.” Matteo pulls me into a kiss as he rubs my clit in quick circles. “I bet I can get you off before we get there.”

“I bet you can too,” I pant.

Matteo pinches my clit, making me buck against his hand and sending me straight to the edge. He kisses up my neck and nips at my earlobe. “You’re soaking through your pants. God, I want to taste you so bad.”

“Yes... please.” Matteo slides his hand into my leggings and he pushes two fingers into me. My walls squeeze around him and he slams his mouth to mine as he pinches my clit again, sending me right over the edge. I moan out his name

and he gives me a cocky smirk as he continues to rub my clit in rough circles, sending me into another orgasm.

I'm breathless when he pulls his hand from my pants, showing me his glistening fingers. He brings his fingers to his mouth and he sucks them clean. A moan escapes me, watching him, wishing he was between my thighs, licking straight from the source.

I pull him into a sloppy and desperate kiss, wanting more from him. Not caring about the seatbelt anymore, I unbuckle us and shift so I'm straddling his lap. My hands go to his jeans blindly, but before I can unzip them, someone else's hands are on me, pulling me out of the car. "No...we weren't done."

"Yes, you are." Dante sets me on the ground and his eyes burn with jealousy.

I press my body up against his and kiss along his neck. "Are you jealous, Dark God?"

He growls in response and crashes his lips to mine. God, I love his jealous side. Just to make him burn more, I break our kiss and step out of his hold to Enzo. Enzo takes my hand and leads me toward a warehouse. I look around, taking in the area because I don't even remember us stopping. Shoot, I don't even remember how we got here. Looking back over my shoulder, I find Dante fuming with Matteo chuckling next to him. I send him a wink and follow Enzo inside, feeling the other two close behind me.

I quicken my steps so I'm next to Enzo and lean over to kiss his shoulder. I don't want him feeling left out or like

I'm using him. Enzo hooks his arm around my shoulders and pulls me into a quick kiss.

We walk through rows of shipping crates filled with god knows what until we come to another door that Matteo quickly runs to, opening it for us. He bows as we walk into the room. "Welcome to my torture room, Princess."

I chuckle and look around to find an empty office. Well, this wasn't what I expected. This can't actually be it. Enzo removes his arm from around me and bends down, pulling back the rug that covers the floor, revealing a trap door. That's more like it.

"This way to fun." Matteo climbs down the ladder and I go after him. I'm halfway down when his hands grip my hips, picking me up and lowering to the ground with my back to his front. He turns us with his arms around my waist and that's when I see the full torture room. Craig sits in the middle of the room, or should I say, hangs by his arms from the ceiling, with his toes barely touching the ground. On the right and left of Craig are tables filled with all kinds of knives, guns, and other tools.

Matteo skims his lips over my neck. "Do you like?"

I nod, amazed by the setup as I step out of his arms and head straight to the tables. There's literally every tool possible here. What should I use? Every item I see I think of a great way to use it, but when I get to the knives, a calmness washes over me. Here is my tool. I wrap my hand around a knife that looks like one of mine and make my way to Craig.

"Wakey. Wakey, Craig." I slap his face and he jerks awake. When he zeroes in on me and sneers, I grin happily at

him. “How’s it going Craig? Comfortable?”

Craig spits at me and it lands at my feet. “I should’ve killed you the second I saw you at the airstrip.”

I ignore him but on the inside I’m grinning, because he doesn’t know I wasn’t there. “You know what? You look like you’re hot. Let me help you with your shirt.” I place my hand down on his chest, holding his shirt down and I slice down his body, cutting through his shirt and skin. Screams fill the room and I cut deeper with a satisfied smile. His shirt falls open and blood runs down his chest as I take a step back. I’m impressed with myself at how straight the line is, going from neck to belly button, especially since he was jerking the whole time, trying to shake me off.

“You fucking bitch.” Craig tries to lunge at me but all he does is cause his body to swing back and forth.

Matteo comes out of nowhere and punches Craig across the face, making him sway more. “You don’t talk to her like that.”

Heat spreads to my core and I rub my thighs together, turned on by Matteo. The look that Craig gives me as he stops swinging tells me he has so many other names he wishes to call me. Not affected by his hateful stare, I continue my plan. My knife slices into his chest and he doesn’t quietly take his punishment. He screams and curses, calling me vile things as he tries to move away from me.

A few times he tries to kick out at me, but each time I just stab my knife into his thigh and then when I start carving again, my cuts become slightly deeper. When I’m finished, I step back admiring my work. Man, does my mark look pretty

on his chest. Matteo wraps his arms around my middle from behind and he kisses my cheek. “Beautiful work.”

“Thank you. Do you want a turn?” I look at him.

He nods happily as he walks over to his tables.

“Alright Craig, my friend here is going to have some fun...”

“Friend?” Matteo interrupts.

“Oh sorry, Matteo. My guy. My lover. My boyfriend.”

I say each title as I stare off with Matteo.

“Future husband,” he adds.

I shake my head and look back at Craig. “Once he’s done, we’re going to have a little chat.”

“Go to hell.” Craig kicks out again but Matteo is there hitting his legs with a metal pipe.

I step back as Matteo proceeds to shatter Craig’s legs with the pipe. “You don’t get to touch her, you filthy piece of shit.”

I lean on the wall next to Dante and Enzo as Matteo drops the pipe and grabs brass knuckles. Matteo proceeds to take his rage out on Craig, shattering rib after rib with each punch. When Matteo has broken every bone of Craig’s from the chest down, he goes for the face and I push off the wall and walk up to him, running my hand up his back. He immediately relaxes and drops his arms to his sides.

I sidestep him and look Craig over. Bruises are forming on his skin that isn’t covered in blood and a victorious smile comes across my face. He beat Aisling repeatedly, covering

her body with cuts and bruises and now his whole body is the same.

“You know Craig, I can understand you being pissed at me for killing your father but the reason you’re here now is because you took Aisling. You brought someone I deeply care about into this when your father’s death was inevitable. He was a snitch. Someone else would’ve done it if I didn’t.”

Matteo goes back to his brothers as Craig lifts his head and I can see that his fight is gone. “He wasn’t a snitch, you stupid bitch. Your father had mine killed because he didn’t bow down to him when he asked to make a deal. Now your father will get what he wanted anyways, since you’ve killed everyone in his way. He orchestrated all this.”

“You’ve lost everything because of you, not my father. You stupidly tried to go up against the Murphy’s. Their deaths are on your hands. But yours will definitely be on mine.” My knife slides across his neck, splattering drops of blood across my face and he dies choking slowly on his blood.

Hands move across my hips and I let go of the knife, letting it hit the ground as I lean back into Matteo’s chest. His hands come forward pushing under my shirt as he kisses up my neck, sending a shiver through me. “Are you ready for our fun now?”

“Depends on what you have in mind.” His hands slide up my stomach and he cups my breasts over my bra. I arch into his hands with a moan as I grind my ass back on his erection.

“I think you’d be down for anything, but first...” He pulls my shirt over my head and turns us so I’m looking at

Dante and Enzo. “We need to get you out of these bloody clothes.”

His hands lightly run down my body and I lay my head back on his shoulder so I’m looking up at him. “We?”

He smirks at me, knowing what I’m asking, but before he can answer, Dante is pushing off the wall and I can’t look away from him. My body buzzes from Matteo’s wandering hands and Dante’s eyes and I pull him to me when he’s close. Being sandwiched between them, I look up into Dante’s blue eyes and silently beg him to kiss me. He crashes his lips to mine and I grip his shirt pulling him closer. Matteo starts kissing down my neck and I moan out, loving both their lips on me.

Dante skims his lips down the other side of my neck but instead of staying there like Matteo, who’s marking me, he kneels in front of me, taking my bra straps down with him. My breasts fall free and my bra falls to the floor seconds later with Matteo’s help. His hand slides over my stomach and cups one of my breasts as Dante’s mouth sucks on the other nipple. I fist Dante’s hair, holding him to me as my eyes connect with Enzo’s.

He watches from the wall and my whole body breaks out in goosebumps as everything clicks into place. I have all three of them here and I want all three of them touching me. I reach out for Enzo but he just shakes his head.

“Let him watch, Princess. He’ll join when he’s ready.” Matteo turns my face to him and he crashes his lips to mine. My knees go weak and I wrap my arm behind his neck so I don’t become a puddle on the floor. Dante’s lips move down

my body and Matteo takes both of my breasts in his hands. He grips them roughly before pinching my nipples and I grind back against his erection, needing more from them.

I don't know if Dante can read my thoughts or if he's as desperate as I am, because he slides his fingers into the edge of my leggings and pulls them down my legs, exposing me to them. I break my kiss with Matteo and look down my body to find Dante smirking up at me. He hooks my leg over his shoulder, spreading me open for him and pushes a finger inside of me. "You're so wet for us, Rose. So desperate for us."

Dante leans forward, licking up my wetness and humming against my clit. I buck against his face, gripping his hair tighter as I moan out, "Oh god, yes."

He pushes a second finger inside of me as he sucks on my clit. My back arches as I throw my head back on Matteo's shoulder and grind down on Dante's face. With hooded eyes, I look over to Enzo to find his pants undone and his hand wrapped around his erection, pumping himself slowly.

Matteo nips at my earlobe as he rolls my nipples in between his fingers. "You like him watching you. Seeing you being touched by his brothers."

Dante hooks his fingers inside me, running them along my upper wall and my answer comes out as a screamed moan, "Yes."

"Then put on a show for him, Princess. Make him come to you." My core squeezes around Dante's fingers at Matteo's words.

They want a show, I'll give them a show and take my pleasure from them while giving it too. I let go of my hold on Matteo's neck, sliding my hand down his abs to his jeans, and into his boxers. He's already hard as I wrap my hand around him and give him a soft pull. He growls next to my ear and nips at the sensitive spot he was sucking on earlier. I pump Matteo at the same pace that Dante's fingers thrust into me, bringing him to the edge with me. Dante hooks his fingers again and my knees go weak as my core clenches. "Yes... again."

Dante answers my pleas as he hums against my clit at the same time Matteo pinches my nipples and I fall into a pool of pleasure as I scream out their names. I'm not sure when my eyes closed as my body exploded with pleasure but I'm not ready to open them as my body buzzes from Dante's tongue still licking me clean and Matteo's hands roam my upper body.

Sensing my Beast is close, I open my eyes as he brushes his fingers over my cheek. Enzo's brown eyes connect with mine as he gives me a sexy smirk. "My turn."

He pulls me from between Matteo and Dante, picks me up, and places me down on the table. Whatever tools were there are now all over the floor from one sweep of his arm and I pull Enzo into a kiss. I wrap my arms around his neck and my legs around his waist, pulling him to me. His erection rubs against my center and I moan against his mouth as I pull at his shirt. He reaches behind his neck and pulls his shirt over his head, showing me his muscular chest and tight abs.

I take my time running my hands over his muscles as I memorize every inch of his body. A wave of pleasure washes

through me, knowing that he's all mine. Looking into his eyes, I open myself up, showing how much I need him. "Enzo..." A quiet plea slips from my lips.

Enzo's eyes have the same wanting need I know mine have as he pushes his pants down more and he brings my knees higher up his sides. I lean back on my hands as I slide to the edge of the table, giving myself to him. His eyes run over me as his hand runs up my stomach and cups my breast. "You're so beautiful." He leans forward and brushes his lips against mine. "And you're all mine."

He pushes into me with a powerful thrust and I groan out in pleasure, finally being filled. He pulls out and thrust back in as our eyes stay locked and we breathe each other's air. His slow pace quickly picks up as our pleasure builds together and when I'm right on the edge, I lean back on my elbows to get better leverage so I can meet his thrusts. He grips my hips as his thrusts pick up, making my toes curl against his ass.

I squeeze around him as an early wave rolls through me and he removes one of his hands on my hips and presses on my aching clit. "Oh god... yes... harder." Enzo pinches my clit as he chases his release and I come screaming his name. He continues to fuck me as I ride out one orgasm and quickly fall into another and he comes with me, pressing his forehead against mine. Our lips meet in a slow kiss as Enzo lifts me off the table and I let my legs slide down his body until my feet touch the ground, breaking our kiss.

Someone presses up against me from behind and a shiver runs through me as their hands roam down my sides.

“You’re mine now, Princess.” Matteo licks up the edge of my ear and I grind my ass back against his erection. Enzo steps out of my hold with a dirty smirk and I know he’s not done watching me yet.

I look away from Enzo and up at Matteo. “What are you going to do to me?”

Pure desire fills his eyes and I clench my thighs together. “I’m going to fuck you so hard you won’t be able to leave us.”

I pull Matteo to me and he devours me in a kiss, pushing me back against the table where the cold metal presses up against my hot skin. “I’m not leaving you.” I moan against his lips as his erection slides in between my legs from behind.

“Good. You won’t want to after I’m done with you.” Matteo kisses down my neck to my shoulder, where he nips at my skin and thrusts into me. I brace myself on the table as I widen my stance, welcoming him in. His hands run up my spine, bending me further over the table and as my breasts touch the cold metal, I let out a moan in pleasure. Matteo pulls out of me all the way to the tip as his hand wraps around the back of my neck and then he thrusts back into me with such beautiful power.

“Oh fuck.” I reach out for the edge of the table in front of me, holding on as Matteo does exactly what he promised. He fucks me good and hard, to where if I wanted to leave, I’d be changing my mind. No sane woman would leave a man that can give you this much pleasure.

My body buzzes and I can't help the nonsense that comes out of my mouth as he shoots me right to the edge. I reach back for him, gripping his hip as his hand slides to my clit. I dig my nails into his skin as I fall into the most powerful orgasm ever. Matteo continues to fuck me, prolonging my pleasure until he comes with his face buried into my shoulder.

Matteo kisses down my back as he pulls out of me and I'm ready just to fall asleep in his arms. But I'm not done yet. My eyes connect to Dante who's watching us as he strokes his erection, which looks ready to explode. Matteo pulls me up from the table and circles me in his arms as I turn to face him. He's still wearing his clothes, with only his pants open. "You rocked my world and you didn't take off any clothes. I'm feeling a little undressed now."

His hands slide down my back side and take handfuls of my ass. "You're in the perfect amount of clothes." I chuckle as I lean up, placing a kiss on his lips and he smacks my ass. "You have someone else who wants your attention."

I step back from him and look to Enzo and then Dante, then back to Matteo. "I have three someone's." I hold up three fingers before turning my back to him and walk over to Dante.

He's still leaning against the wall but his eyes roam over every inch of my body. He doesn't reach out to me when I stand in front of him, holding my stare as he starts pumping himself faster. I push his hand away from his erection, taking the final step to him, and start pumping him. That seems to get a reaction out of him because his hand tangles in my hair and pulls me into a powerful kiss. My knees go weak from the pure passion between us and I break our kiss, letting my body

bring me down to my knees. My eyes stay locked on his hungry gaze as I bring my face closer to his hard erection. I take my time licking up the underside of his erection and when I reach the tip, I suck on it like it's my favorite lollipop.

“Fuck, Rose.” Dante grips my hair tighter, pushing himself further in my mouth until he hits the back of my throat.

We fight for control as I pull back to the tip, flipping my tongue over it before taking him again all the way to my throat again. Dante holds me there, making me open my throat for him and I swallow around him with a moan, allowing him to take what he wants. A deep growl comes from him as he fucks my face and I run my nails down his ass as I push his jeans down while holding him to me. I want his release. I want the taste of him on my tongue. I tighten my throat around him as I graze my teeth along his underside and he pulls my head back, off his erection.

An amused grin pulls across his face as he shakes his head at me like I have been naughty and my core flutters with desire. I give him a wicked smirk as I dig my nails into his ass and he yanks me off my knees and into his arms. He slams me against the wall as he devours me with a kiss. “All mine.” My arms and legs wrap around him as he lines himself at my entrance and thrusts into me.

I moan out his name, feeling full of him as I grip his hair and pull him back in for a kiss. He fucks me into the wall while gripping my ass so hard I know there'll be bruises. From the three of them, I'm going to be marked all over my body. And I can't wait to see.

Dante nips at my shoulder and kisses up my neck. “You’ve been teasing me all day. Making me watch you fuck my brothers. I want to be the last one to mark you as mine.” He bites down on my shoulder again, leaving his mark opposite of Matteo’s. “The last one to come inside you. My come will run down between your thighs, covering theirs.”

I squeeze around him and I throw my head back, as I beg, “Please.”

“You want me coating you with my come? You want to feel me leaking from you?”

I nod frantically, answering in time with his thrust. “Yes... yes... yes.”

Dante rubs rough circles over my clit. “Come for me, Rose. I want you all over me as well.”

I come screaming and Dante erupts with me, doing exactly what he said he would. I bring his face to mine and kiss him as we come down from our highs.

Dante pulls out of me and helps me lower my legs to the ground. My whole body feels like jelly after having the three of them, but it feels amazing. “The next time we do a sex marathon, can it be near a bed?” Dante chuckles as he tucks himself away and buckles his pants.

“Did we tire you out, Princess?” Matteo is bent down over Craig, who’s now laid out on the ground in a pool of his blood.

“You try coming six times. You’d be passed out after number two.”

“Not with you. I’d go nonstop.” He gives me a wink before rolling Craig in a tarp. That’s when I see my clothes are sitting in the middle of the blood. Well shit, now I don’t have any clothes. Dante walks over to help Matteo and I head to Enzo and wrap my arms around him.

He hugs me to him and I place a kiss on his chest, right over his heart. “Can I have your shirt?”

I look up at him with a pout and he chuckles. He reaches behind him pulling his shirt over his head and I loosen my hold on him. With his shirt off, he holds it open for me and I slip my arms in. The shirt falls down my body and stops mid-thigh, covering all the important stuff. Enzo lets out a possessive growl as he looks me over and I do a little twirl. “You like what you see?”

He pulls me back to him. “Always. But this might be your new required sleepwear.”

“I can work with that.” I give him a quick kiss and go grab my shoes, which, by some miracle, aren’t covered in blood. I stand from my crouched position after my shoes are on to find all of them staring at me with hunger in their eyes and I shake my head no. “Not going to happen.”

Matteo adjusts Craig on his shoulder. “Then let’s get out of here so we can find a bed for round two.”

I’m exhausted but it doesn’t stop my heart from racing, wanting another round. “Let’s... and clothes.”

“You don’t need clothes for round two.” Matteo looks at me like I’m silly.

We all head to the ladder and all the guys step aside for me to go first. “Nope. I’m not going up first, opening myself up to your wandering hands.” I wave my arm out silently, saying after you. They each go up one at a time and I get to check out their perfect asses as they do. Truly, I’m a very lucky girl.

Chapter Thirty

Riona

Dante pulls up to the safe house and I lean in between the front seats and give him and Enzo a kiss. Matteo's hand runs up the back of my thigh and I quickly swat his hand away. "Stop feeling me up." I sit back and give him a kiss as well.

"It's hard not to when I'm around you." His hand goes to my thigh again.

"Well, I'm fixing that." I slide across the backseat, removing his hand and open the door. "I'll see you guys later."

I give them a wave and jump down out of the car. They have to go dispose of Craig's body but I promised them I was theirs tonight, with explicit details on all the dirty things I want them to do to me. It almost started round two in the backseat.

In only Enzo's shirt and my tennis shoes, I run for the front door, while holding down the sides of the shirt. The neighbors don't need a peepshow. I'm sure they already have

wild ideas about who keeps coming in and out of the house, but who cares. We'll be out of here in a few days.

I walk into the house and a whistle has me stopping outside the living room on my way to the room. Aisling is laying out on the couch and the TV is on. "What happened to you? You look like you've been railed by three gorgeous men."

"That's because I have." I lean against the doorframe.

"How are you walking right now?" She teases.

I chuckle. "To be honest, I have no idea. What are you doing?"

"Killian was called in by your father so he had to leave. I didn't like the quiet so I came out here to watch TV."

I walk into the room and take a seat next to her. "Why did he go? Father knows you were rescued. He should let you guys be for at least a couple of days."

"He only went so he could pack yours and my bags. I need to get away from this life for a while and you're dodging your father, so I volunteered you to come with me."

"Don't you want to go with Killian?" I'm happy to go, but shouldn't he go?

"Of course I do, but he can't leave right now. Your father is up to something that has Kill concerned, but he'll come join us at some point."

"And how long are we going to be gone?" I just told my guys I'm staying.

“As long as we want.” She must see my hesitation.
“Are you going to miss your guys?”

I shake my head like I won't but I'm really trying to formulate a plan because I'm going to miss them. “If Killian is coming, then they can come at some point as well.”

“That is true. Wasn't sure if you wanted space from them or not. You went from casual hookups or one-night-stands to living with your three boyfriends.” She knows how serious that is and it's completely foreign to me.

“I don't know how it happened. It just did. We have this crazy connection. So far I haven't gotten tired of them yet.”

She smiles at me. “You look happy.”

“I am happy.” I lean into her, giving her a big hug.
“Especially with you here and safe.”

Aisling pulls back from me. “I love you but you reek of sex. You should shower.”

I chuckle. “I don't have any clothes.”

“Take some from the bag on the bed.”

“Alright, I'll wash my men from me just for you.” I stand from the couch.

“Your brother will appreciate it too.” I chuckle and head back to the room. After grabbing some clothes, I head into the bathroom.

After my shower, I take my time to dry my hair and apply makeup. Even if I'm only wearing sweats, I want my guy's mouths to drop. Once I'm done, I give myself a final

look over and I've got to say I'm looking good in leggings and a white t-shirt crop top.

Stepping out of the bathroom, I can tell something is off. The house is too quiet. I reach next to me and grab a hidden gun under the nightstand. All my houses have weapons hidden. Especially if I know I'm going to use them. With the gun in my hand, I make my way to the open bedroom door.

Once I step into the hallway, I know exactly why I have a chilling feeling. Three of my father's top men stand at the end of the hall. Cyrus, who's standing in the middle of Jake and Zeb, steps forward. "Riona, your father has been trying to reach you."

"I'm aware." I make my way toward him.

"You need to come with us." I slide past him without touching him and he knows not to reach for me, especially with a gun in my hand.

"If my father needs me, he should come collect me himself." Once I see Aisling is safe in the living room with Killian, I turn back to Cyrus. "I don't see him here. Please give him my message."

He crosses his arms over his chest, trying to make himself look bigger. "We're not allowed to come back without you. We've been given permission to use force if necessary."

I chuckle. "You couldn't take me without my permission and he knows it. You'd be dead before you could even touch me."

Thing is, I don't want to kill these three. I actually like them compared to some of my father's older members. I look

back to Killian who just left my father and he gives me a nod, telling me it's time to see my father.

“Alright let's go. I have plans tonight I'm not missing.” I stick my gun in the back of my leggings and head for the front door. My father's men follow me out of the house and to their SUV. I open the passenger side door and climb in.

The drive across town is quiet. Not one word is said, which works well for me. It allows me to focus on why I've been avoiding my father. Over the last week my father has really shown his cards. The things he did and said came from a man I didn't recognize. He's always been a monster, but it was never directed to us.

When we pull up outside the house, I jump out as soon as the car stops and head in through the front door, making sure it bangs against the wall. He wants me here, he's going to know I've arrived. I march all the way to his office and let myself in with a bang.

My father calmly looks up from his computer to me. “About time you came home.”

“I'm not home.”

He continues without noticing I spoke. “I have a job for you.”

“What!?!” I throw my arms up in disbelief. “We just saved Aisling and killed all of the O'Briens and you've been calling for a job.”

He stands from his desk and walks around it. “Yes. You're to kill the Russo boys.”

“What!?! No. I won’t do it.” I shake my head, not believing this.

“You will. I made a deal with them that I don’t plan to keep. So, I need you to kill them so they don’t retaliate.” What kind of reason is that?

I look at him like he’s lost his mind. Has he always been this murderous, sending me to kill for stupid reason? “I won’t do it. I won’t kill the men who’ve been protecting me and helped me find and save Aisling.”

“They only did that because they wanted power. A connection to us. Your hand in marriage.” I flash back to that first day and Matteo asking to marry me. Then earlier today when he said he was my future husband.

“Maybe I’m okay with that.”

Anger courses off of him as he looks me over and I know he sees the evidence of their marks on my neck. “You let those boys into your heart. Don’t you see they were just playing you? Their family has been trying to take control of this city and this isn’t the first time they’ve used you to get it.”

He’ll say anything to get his way right now. “What the hell is that supposed to mean?”

“Tony DeAngelo.” My heart stops at what he’s implying. “Tony was a Russo. A cousin. Do you really think those boys care about you? They know what Tony did to you. They sat back and let it happen. Their father wants my power and those boys will do anything to get it.” He sneers at me in disgust. “Just this time, they didn’t have to rape you. You willingly opened your legs for them.”

I pull my gun out and aim it right at his head. “You’re lucky I still consider you family. People have died for less than what you just said. Watch how you talk to me. In a second I could make Killian the new boss.”

My father at least has the brains to take a step back. At that, I walk out of his office and head straight to the garage. Needing to get out of here, I grab my car keys and head to my black Tesla. My mind is moving a million miles an hour and I feel like my fury is about to explode, but I don’t know where to aim it. Sliding into the driver’s seat, I grip the steering wheel and scream.

Did I let them fool me? Was this all just a manipulation to overthrow the Murphy Clan? If it was just the deal, I’d be okay with it. I want to be with them. But knowing Tony was their family, I question every touch, kiss, and loving words.

It takes me a while to get to the Russo house, since I first had to find a place I recognized from one of our trips. I park right behind Dante’s SUV and open my glove box, grabbing another gun and a knife. Looking at Dante’s SUV, an evil smile spreads across my face as I spin the knife in my hand, eyeing his tires. I’m vibrating as I storm into their house with my guns raised and they all turn, reaching for their guns. My eyes scan over each of them as I feel my heart break open. Please let it be my father lying.

Dante steps forward with confusion and distrust written across his face as he grips his gun tighter. “What the fuck Ri?”

The only one that should feel distrust is me. I shift to face him and aim my gun just over his and Matteo’s shoulders.

“Did you guys know this whole time? Were you just playing me?”

Enzo steps forward, but stops when I turn my aim in his direction. “Beauty, what are you talking about?”

“My kidnapping. Tony DeAngelo. Did you know before I told you?” Recognition registers on all their faces. “Am I a tool again, so your family can gain more power? I guess I should thank you for not raping me this time.”

“Okay. Hold up. We weren’t playing you.” Dante moves closer and I keep my gun trained in his direction. “We knew nothing about your kidnapping until you told us. All you said was his name was Tony. We never knew our family was responsible for that.”

“But you made a deal with my father for my hand in marriage to gain power.”

Matteo smirks at me. “We made a deal for marriage because you’re beautiful and captured our attention the night of the gala. We wanted time with you and yes, I wanted to marry you. I did ask that night, if you remember. We’d never force you into marriage.”

My head starts to spin with what they’re saying and what my father said. Who is telling the truth? I lower my guns and start walking backwards. “If I find you just lied, I’ll kill you without my father’s orders. And if your father did order for my kidnapping, tell him to up his security because I will come after him.” I turn on my heels and walk out of the house with them following.

“Where are you going?” Enzo asks as I walk through the front door.

“Aisling and I are going away for a while. Get away from this life.” I round the front of my car and look back at them. Worry and confusion is written all over their faces.

“Where are you going?” Enzo asks again as he clenches his hands into a fist and I know he wants to reach out for me. “I don’t know. But I don’t want you following me.”

I open my door and I’m about to get in when Matteo speaks. “Can I call you?”

Even though I’m not sure about them right now, I can’t help my lips turning up slightly in a smile. “Maybe.”

I slide into my car and drive away. In my rearview mirror I watch them run to Dante’s SUV but stop when they see my knife sticking out of his now-flat tire. I swear I can hear Dante cursing my name as I pull out onto the road.

The further I run from them, the more the pain in my chest grows, but I can’t stay. I don’t know who to trust, including myself. I pull out my phone and call Aisling. “Hey.”

“Hey. I need to leave now, tell me where we’re going and you can meet me later.”

“Go to the private airport; we’re waiting for you there.”

“We’re?”

“Well, Killian is here until we leave, but we’re crashing Tanner and Colton’s flight. I knew you wouldn’t want to stay in the city after talking to your father.”

“You don’t even know the half of it.”

“Then I can’t wait to hear what an asshole he is. See you soon.”

I hang up and waste no time getting to the private airport. Distance is what I need.

Chapter Thirty-One

Riona

It's been almost two weeks since Aisling and I arrived at Tanner and Colton's property on the Cliffs of Moher in Ireland. It's a fantastic place. The perfect place to reset and relax. It's only been Aisling and I here until two nights ago, when Killian showed up.

I walk out of my room, still in my pajamas, throwing my bedhead hair up in a messy bun as I head to the kitchen to get some coffee. Aisling is standing over the stove in her pajamas with her strawberry blonde hair tied in a ponytail as I walk into the kitchen. "Morning!"

She looks over her shoulder at me as I pass her, heading to the coffee maker. "Morning Ri. I'm making eggs if you want some."

"Yeah, that would be great. Thank you." I pour my coffee and add cream and then head around the island to take a seat on the bar stool. "Is Killian still sleeping?"

She turns off the stove. "No, he went to Galway this morning to pick up groceries and other things we need."

“It’s just us for the morning, what should we do?” I smile at her, knowing the answer.

“What we do every morning. We eat here and then go sit outside as we drink coffee. You’ll get your morning call from Matteo and, like every morning, you just let it ring.” She puts a plate of eggs in front of me and takes a seat beside me. “Maybe you can change it up today and answer?”

“You know why I’m not answering.” Everyday my reason gets weaker and weaker.

“I do, but I also think it’s bullshit. You know those guys weren’t playing you. Your father was making up things to get you to do his bidding.” Ever since she found out my father left her to be taken, she’s lost all trust in him.

“But what if he wasn’t? What if I let them in and they’re just using me?”

She grabs my hand and squeezes. “You need to go with your heart on this one. If it’s true, then you’ll kill them and I’ll help.”

I chuckle. “Wow. That’s a big statement.”

“Right. I don’t kill just anyone.” Aisling grew up in this life, so she has had to kill to survive, but she doesn’t want that side of this life. She likes the business side and all the connections. That’s why she and Killian are going to make a powerhouse couple once they take over.

“I feel so honored you’d kill for my broken heart.” I squeeze her hand back.

“I’d kill for less for you.”

“Same.” I’d kill someone if they spoke ill of Aisling, but she doesn’t need to know that.

I bump my shoulder against hers and we both smile at each other. It’s been nice having time with her. Over the last couple years, with her in law school or with Killian, and me taking on jobs and running our businesses, we haven’t had just us time for so long. It’s almost like when we were kids. Hanging out all day, binging shows and movies at night, falling asleep on the couch.

After we finish eating, we both fill up our coffees and with our sweatshirts and blankets, we head out to the back porch. We each take a porch chair and bundle ourselves up so we can look out over the cliffs. Even though it’s July and probably 100° at home, here it’s in the 50’s.

It’s beautiful and peaceful out here, just listening to the water crash against the cliffs. “Do you think you’ll start planning your wedding now?”

She smiles with so much excitement for the future. “Probably. I want something small. With everything going on back home, maybe we’ll just elope here.”

That would be perfect. At home it would be made into a big event. “That could be fun.” My phone starts to ring.

“Oh look. It’s 10 o’clock.” Every morning Matteo calls me at this time, which means it’s 5am back home.

“Shut-up.” I stick my tongue out at her.

“You know what?”

I look up from my phone. “What?”

She holds my stare. “I think you miss them and really want to answer.”

I give her a weak smile. “I do miss them.”

“Then answer.”

I shake my head no and the phone stops ringing. “Oh, too late.”

“Phones go both ways.” My phone starts going off again. “Well, it looks like he’s not taking no for an answer.”

I can’t help but smile. She might be right. Matteo was the one who’s called me the most. At first it was multiple times a day and then it started every morning. Dante calls me daily and his voicemails always leave me smiling because I’m driving him crazy. Enzo calls every night and leaves me a goodnight voicemail. He seems to be the only one who’s allowing me time.

“I’ll leave you to answer that.” Aisling stands and walks inside.

I stare at my phone, fighting myself on answering it or not. The side of me saying to answer ends up winning as I reach for my phone right before I know it’s going to stop. “Is there an emergency?”

“Princess!” A huge smile spreads across my face. “Yes, there is an emergency. I miss you and needed to hear your voice.”

I shake my head but swoon over his answer. “That’s not an emergency.”

“Yes, it is.”

I close my eyes and lean my head against the back of the chair. “Well, now that you’ve heard my voice, I’m going to hang up.” But I don’t actually move to hang up because I miss him too.

“You better not.”

“Bye Matteo.”

“Riona!” I stay silent holding back my laugh.

“Princess?”

“I’m still here, Bear.”

He growls. “That wasn’t nice. Tell me where you are so I can come punish you.”

“I’m not sure I want you to know where I am right now. My head is still a mess about all this.” I’m afraid to see them because I know I’ll fall into their arms, not caring if they were trying to trick me. That’s how much I miss them.

“Ri, is it really a bad thing that one of us wants to marry you?”

“Before knowing me, absolutely. When you made that deal you knew nothing about me. At least that’s how it seemed.”

“We didn’t know anything about you then, except that you drew all of our attention the night of the ball. And then at the club, you can’t deny the chemistry that was between us and I’m guessing between you and Enzo and maybe even you and Dante. That deal was made after Aisling was taken and before you came home with us. You needed protection and to lie low and we wanted to get to know you. We didn’t need money so we made a deal for your hand in marriage, knowing

we'd never force you into it. Even after everything between us, if you said you didn't want to ever get married, we'd accept that."

"You'd let me go if I wanted to walk away?"

"That's not what I said. I'd always follow if you tried to walk away. What I'm saying is, if you never want to get married, we'd be okay with that as long as we had you. Marriage is just a piece of paper in the end. A commitment can be made without it."

"The Murphy name is strong for just being associated with us. Marriage isn't needed to get our power and respect, just dating me will give you that." I stand up and walk out to the edge of the property and pace along the brick one foot wall marking the edge of the safety area for the cliff.

"Ri, at any point before your father put all this doubt in your head, did you question how we feel about you?"

"I know you like having sex with me; I don't know how you feel. But to answer your question: no, I didn't doubt anything you did."

"Princess, this isn't about sex for us. Would we be chasing after you, calling you every day, if it was just about sex or even power? You matter to us. We want to be with you. You have us all in a mess since you walked away and we'd fly to wherever you are right this second if you'd let us. Dante is all wound up ready to explode. Enzo is moping around and me, I can't focus on anything. I've spent the last two weeks just waiting for you to call or trying to figure out where you are."

I'm silent for a while, taking in everything he said. It's hard for me not to believe him and I really want to believe him. I've missed them too and it's been wrecking me to think they were faking it. "Princess, please tell me you believe me."

I think it over for another second and then I answer with my heart, hoping it won't blow up in my face. "I believe that you want to be with me, but what about Tony? That order had to come from somewhere. I can't just forget that your family had something to do with the darkest moments of my life."

"My father didn't give that order. I flew out to Italy and confronted him myself and he swears that it didn't come from him. I don't know where it came from and I can't deny Tony was family, but he's dead and I can promise no one from the Russo family will ever hurt you again. We'd kill them if they do. That includes my brothers and myself. We'd die before ever hurting you."

I'm silent trying to process everything and think of things to build my walls back up again, but I can't. As much as I'm scared to open my heart to them, I can't find a legitimate reason to keep them away anymore. "Okay."

He's quiet for a second and I wish I could see his face. "Like okay, okay?" His excited voice has me giggling as he asks for confirmation that we're good.

"Yeah, okay okay."

"Oh, thank god. Please tell me where you are. We'll get on a plane now. I've got to see you."

“I’m in Ireland, but don’t come. I’ll be coming home in a few days. I promise.” That wasn’t the plan, but it is now.

“You get 48 hours to show up at our door before we go hunting for you.”

“Maybe I like being chased.” I smirk.

He growls. “Get here and I’ll chase your naked ass all over the house.”

“Okay. Two days. Can you do me a favor?”

“Sure.”

“Rub it in Dante’s face that I answered your call and tell Enzo I’ll talk to him tonight.”

Matteo chuckles. “You’re asking for a fight when you get here but I’ll happily deliver the messages.”

That’s exactly what I want. “Alright I’ve got to go.”

“See you in two days, Princess.”

“You better welcome me with an earth-shattering kiss.”

“Hell yeah, I will.”

I chuckle. “Bye, Bear.”

“Bye, Princess.”

My cheeks hurt from smiling so hard as I end the call. I’m about to turn to the house and tell Aisling everything when I see a man in the reflection of my blacked-out phone. Instantly, I turn, throwing my phone at the guy, hitting him directly in the eye. I rush him as he clutches his face and I add my fist to it, breaking his nose and making him fall to the

ground. I add another punch as I go down with him, knocking him out.

As I stand, I'm about to make a run for the house but I have a wall of men standing in front of me, blocking my way. As I look over the ten men, I recognize each of them as father's men. I step away from the down guy and stand in front of them with my arms crossed. God, I wish I had a weapon on me right now. This is going to be a hard fight.

I open my mouth to say something smart as my eyes connect with Cyrus, but Aisling calling out my name has my focus changing to the open door where Aisling appears. "Aisling..." She looks up from her phone and surprise and terror washes over her face. "Run!"

Aisling immediately turns on her heel and runs and I charge at the man who's raising his gun at her but before I can get to him, he fires and I watch as Aisling's body jerks from getting hit but she keeps going inside. I jump on the man's back and snap his neck as I scream out. His body falls and I jump at the man next to him, tackling him to the ground and as I raise my fist to punch him there's a pinch on the back of my neck. I turn to see Cyrus injecting me with something and my attention goes to him.

I throw my elbow back hitting him in the shoulder, but the force isn't there. I shift, trying to put my body weight into the next hit but my limbs fall to my sides. Whatever he injected me with is quickly immobilizing me as I collapse on the ground. I'm able to turn enough to land face up, but as blackness fills my vision, I see a satisfied Cyrus standing over

me. “Don’t look so pleased. You’ll die for hurting Aisling. You better hope she lives.”

“It was only a tranquilizer. She’ll wake up in a few hours. You’ll be out longer. We don’t need trouble on the flight.”

My eyelids droop so I can only see a sliver of the sky above me. “That’s okay once I wake up, you’ll be the first one I kill and then Father.” My vision goes black and I fight to stay awake, but it’s useless.

“You have no idea how wrong you are.” That’s the last thing I hear as I’m swallowed by darkness.

Chapter Thirty-Two

Riona

Horns blaring and someone cursing pulls me from the darkness and a smile forms on my face. New York City. Home. I open my eyes to take in the entertainment the city always is, but I can't see anything. Something is over my head. Realization hits as I remember what happened and I freeze. I was taken by my father's men on his orders.

How long have I been out? How are we in the city right now?

A loud horn rings out from what sounds like the car I'm in and then I'm jerked to the right. I try to brace myself, but can't as I feel the plastic ties on my wrist cut into my skin. Hands grip my shoulders and I fight myself not to jerk away as they set me up and back against the seat.

"Why couldn't we put her in the trunk? I'm tired of her falling over on me because this idiot doesn't know how to drive." A third hand pushes me back harder against the seat and I let my head fall back.

Two soft cushions brace my face and I know it's the headrests. It's uncomfortable having my hands squished behind my back, but it also gives me cover to try to get out of the ties. I zone out the guys bickering as I focus on my wrists, trying to stretch out the ties.

The man on my left shifts his body closer to me as a finger pokes my thigh and I freeze my movements. "Isn't she supposed to be awake by now?" The one on my right starts poking my face through the bag, hitting my cheek, nose, and eye. I let out a fake tired groan as I turn away, acting like I'm waking up.

"You idiots stop messing with her before she kills you." Cyrus.

I groan again, moving my head side to side like I'm waking up. "You scared of me, Cyrus?"

"I'd be a fool not to be." I almost wish that he was.

"Well, at least you're no fool. I'm still going to kill you."

"Well, you better do it now, it'll be your last chance." The car turns and then starts bumping down an unpaved road.

"Untie my hands so I can. You can even leave the bag on my head."

"Sorry, we have other plans." The car stops. "Aren't you excited?"

I shake my head. "Can't say that I am."

Four doors open and the guy to my right pulls me across the seat and sets me on the ground. He pulls me a short

distance away and then hands grab each of my biceps as the bag is ripped off my head. The sun is bright, making me blink a few times, trying to take in my surroundings. I look at the two idiots who each have a hold on my biceps.

Past each of them, I see several men standing in a line facing forward. My attention is drawn forward at the sound of footsteps on gravel. I really should be shocked at the sight of my father in front of me, but I'm not. "Hello my dearest daughter."

"Father. If you wanted to see me, all you had to do was call." I give him a sarcastic smile.

His hand comes out faster than I expected, slapping me across my face. "You will not speak to me like that."

The burn that takes over my right cheek is nothing compared to the hatred that burns inside me. How dare he hit me?

He stands in front of me with his arms crossed, looking at me with disgust. "It was time for you to come home. You're needed here."

"What for?" I glare at him.

"It's time for you to get married. Make the connection that your marriage was always supposed to make." My father looks back at the car behind him and both the back doors open.

"I thought you didn't want me..." I watch in horror as Ivan Volkov, the head of the Bratva steps out, followed by his mini-me, Maxim, in their identical black suits, white blonde hair combed back and green eyes staring at me. Ivan looks at

me like he's pricing me out, while Maxim looks like he's gotten everything he's ever wanted. "No."

My father turns back to me and gives me a death glare. "You will keep your mouth shut."

My father shakes both their hands and I thought I couldn't hate my father more. "With your marriage into the Bratva, you're bringing a new business opportunity to the Murphy's."

I can't help my snarky response. "What's that? Vodka?"

My father fists his hand, trying to rein in his anger. "No... Women. Men. Children. Skin."

"What!?!?" I pull against the idiots' hold. "You're tarnishing the Murphy name by getting involved in that disgusting business? What's the matter with you?"

My father advances on me, grabbing me by my throat and squeezing. "What did I say about keeping your mouth shut?"

Even with my throat burning, I spit back a response, "You're delusional if you think Killian and I will allow you to buy and sell skin."

Evil pours from him as he looks at me like I'm nothing to him. "You won't be able to stop it, since you'll be locked up with your new husband."

My father releases me. "I'll never marry Maxim or any of the Bratva."

My father chuckles in an evil way that sends chills through me. “You won’t have a choice.” My father pulls his phone out. “But first, I need to tie up a loose end.” His eyes connect with mine. “The loose end that you couldn’t close.”

Chills take over my body in pure terror as my father turns his phone toward me and I watch as Dante, Matteo, and Enzo get out of Dante’s SUV and head into their house. “This was just a few minutes ago.”

He walks to me so he’s standing next to me. “You know, I had a feeling you wouldn’t be able to do what needed to be done, so I had my men put into place a plan B when they went and collected your things.” My father taps on an icon I recognize and a red dot appears.

I fight against the two men holding me as my father laughs with his thumb over the button. “I hope you said your goodbyes.” Down his thumb goes and the house explodes in a fiery ball of flames.

Thank you so much for reading *Ignite the Fire*. Riona's story will continue in *Watch it Burn* coming soon. I would be honored if you had the time to write a brief review letting me know what you thought.

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E. Molgaard was born and raised in North Carolina. She currently lives in Raleigh, NC with her dog Mia. When she isn't writing you can find her curled up with her dog watching her favorite shows or hanging out with her friends and family.

She became an avid reader after college, which inspired her to start writing down the stories she imagined.

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