

A man in a dark suit and light-colored shirt is looking upwards with a serious expression. He is standing in front of a large, ornate iron gate with a grid pattern and circular motifs. The scene is dimly lit, creating a dramatic and somber atmosphere. The man's hands are clasped in front of him, and he appears to be in a state of contemplation or anticipation.

Rory's
Last Act
The Syndicate

Toni Kelly

Rory's Last Act

THE SYNDICATE

TONI KELLY

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Rory's Last Act

The Syndicate

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or events, is entirely coincidental.

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Dedication

For all those who wanted more...

Author's Note

Note from the Author

Trigger Warning

This is the 4th book of a crime syndicate series.

Please note this book does NOT have a HEA, it does end in
heartbreak.

There are sexually explicit scenes, swearing and scenes of
violence & death.

There are references to sex trafficking, and kidnapping.

This story will not be for everyone.

Happy Reading!!

Prologue



This is my contribution; how I save them all, my story, the story of how I die...

Brothers,

If you're reading this, then things went south and I'm no longer with you and Halliwell has followed through with my requests, and the last pieces of the puzzle have been put together.

He knows the content of this letter, so he can ensure that all information is still correct, and relevant. If you have questions, he should be able to answer them.

The pack that he has given you, contains everything you need to know about Da, the Syndicate, Liam, and the Russo's. It contains everything you need to take them down.

I have placed software on all their accounts, so when you're ready, just a few clicks of a button and you will control their entire fortunes. Do with it what you wish, but all I ask is that any share that would have been mine is used to fund a programme for victims of domestic abuse and trafficking.

The things that I have seen while investigating will haunt me, even in death.

I'll do my best to try and keep this brief, the pack will contain everything else you need.

The week that Da & Aoife died, do you remember that he said he wanted to talk to us all, said that he had something important to tell us, that we needed to know this to ensure the future of The Syndicate?

He died, before he ever got the chance to tell us anything.

It has taken me a little longer than I would have liked, but I found out what that was:

Liam's Da, Uncle Michael, you remember how we asked why he took the O'Farrell name, why Liam and Aunt Bernie didn't take his name? Well that's coz his real name is Michelangelo Russo, Marco's brother. Those fuckers have a sister too, Anjelica. While she stays mostly in the shadows, she is also involved in the shite her brothers are.

This was one of the last things I needed proof of, this was the last thing that Halliwell had to do before handing over the pack.

The other being Michael's whereabouts.... you see brothers, the fucker is still alive.

Michael, he married into our family to claim the Syndicate. Da had evidence, oh so much fucking evidence.

I'd stumbled upon some safety deposit box information that Da had, he had six boxes fucking scattered all over. Each containing journals, pictures, paperwork, records. All containing little pieces of a bigger puzzle.

The Russo's deal in many things, but their main trade is skin. They bring in the most revenue from that, and it has been their biggest source of income for decades. Long before Marco and Michael were born.

The Russo organisation has been trying to break into our waters for many years, but the Syndicates in the UK have held them at bay. They've never been able to get a foot hold in the skin trade within our waters, because our Da along a few others have been doing everything in their powers to ensure that they couldn't.

This is where it gets messy boys...

Liam has been betraying us for years, him and his Da. While he stood by our sides, playing a part in the O'Farrell Syndicate, he was using every opportunity to feed any information he could back to his Da, and the rest of the Russo's.

Aoife's boyfriend was drafted into the Russo's. I don't know if they got to him before or after he met Aoife, all I know is that he was one of them, and Da knew it. There is a video of the night they were killed, I have put it in the pack, but I implore you not to watch, trust me, it's not something you need to see, but I can tell you it wasn't her boyfriend who pulled the trigger...it was Liam and Uncle Michael.

They were tortured and beaten before they were killed, they were tortured in front of one another, all for kicks. Right before Liam killed our Aoife in front of Da. He only had to suffer that kind of grief for another minute before Michael killed him.

Aunt Bernie doesn't know the truth about who Michael is, or the fact that he's still alive. The time I spent in Ireland since we got Alex back, I spent some of it with Aunt Bernie. She doesn't believe he's alive, but if she knew he was I think you'd be in competition to take him out. The things he put her through boys, it wasn't pretty. So maybe It's best you don't let on.

I wasn't in Ireland to just spend some time with Bernie, I was there digging up information on the O'Malley clan.

I've been following the sex trafficking ring the Russo's own, and part of their trade links back to the O'Malley's and some mean cartel fucker called José Carrera.

Brian O'Malley is in bed with the Russo's, has been for years, he's been in the business of weapons, until he started stealing from them. He amassed a debt so big he couldn't pay, so he got into bed with Carrera. I haven't been able to figure out the extent of the deal, I just know that Carrera paid that debt and now O'Malley is in the skin trade, he provides woman and children to Carrera, who then sells

them on to the Russo's, and vice versa. It's all just one fucked up chain.

From what I've been able to figure out, Brian O'Malley and only a small select few of his clan know about the trafficking, Seamus doesn't nor does his daughter.

There were rumours about the death of his wife, but it wasn't anything I could corroborate.

I have included the Carrera accounts in the list we now have access to, and control over when you hit a couple of buttons.

I didn't bother with the O'Malley's...there isn't anything left to take.

My investigation has raised more than a few eyebrows, the places I have been digging have resulted in a number of death threats. I have included these in the pack, screen shots of messages, emails you name it.

Whoever killed me boys...give em fucking hell.

In the pack, you will find, names of people and organisations involved, and numbers of bank accounts to be drained.

There are lists of people who have been saved recently and lists of people I was too late to help, I tried brothers, fuck me I tried to save them all, but I couldn't. I feel like I failed.

Da's journals are in the pack also, so you can view them yourselves. They gave me a place to start, without them we would never know the truth.

I have included a letter for each of you in the pack, some of the things I have written in them are personal to each of you, so you have a choice to share with the others or not.

There are so many things that I wish I could say to you all, but there just isn't enough time.

I'm sorry, that I kept you all in the dark for so long. I hope you understand why I did it. But I wanted to be certain that I had all of the facts before bringing you all in, I didn't

want to come to you with bits of info or info that I couldn't yet prove.

Hopefully now you have everything you need to end these fuckers.

Burn the world to the ground brothers!!

I'll be watching.

Love Rory

Chapter 1



The night I saw Alex in the club with Bella, I knew I had seen her somewhere before. But when I asked she denied it, I knew she was lying. She may have thought she schooled her features, but it wasn't quick enough. There was a small flicker in her eyes that gave her away.

It had taken me a few days to figure out where I had seen her before, but the moment I did I had a sick feeling in the pit of my stomach.

She'd been in the office in our club in Chicago, the one we put Liam in charge of. She was beaten, and bound, she'd looked afraid and when I had asked Liam about it, he tried to pass it off as a druggie who'd stolen from his right-hand man J. Aside from the fact, we don't hurt woman, something had felt off. But it had kicked off with a local gang who'd stormed the club and started shooting the place up. By the time we'd dealt with it, she was gone. He said she was being taken care of by J. I'd questioned him, but he said that J was just helping her, before they tried to figure out what she had done with their shipment.

I'll never forget what I saw on the CCTV footage I accessed from Liam's club. The beating she'd received from J, her trying to fight him off before he knocked her unconscious and dragging her out the back.

I fucking hate myself for not questioning him more, for not looking for her. I know she made it out, but I should have done more to help her that night.

When she told us yesterday what really happened to her. What our cousin has really been up to, the sex trafficking, the fact that they were the ones who had stolen our weapons shipment, drugging their dancers at the club, my stomach dropped. The son-of-a-bitch is our blood, I wish she had been wrong. But the more digging I did, the more I found to back up her claims.

After she had explained about the building they had secured was for an auction of women, I'd hoped she was wrong, I'd hoped that she was mistaken, but I knew, we all knew it was the truth.

I'd sat on the flight and accessed everything I could find on J and our Liam. Having to tell Connor about the sale card I had found for Alex, was painful. I've never seen him that angry before, I don't think any of us have felt that angry before. Seeing the sale cards, seeing her up for auction brought a new level of rage and fear for us all.

We've been in Ireland a few hours, Alex freaked only minutes after getting here and took off. Ma and Bella went after her. Ma seemed to have an idea where she might have gone and told us all to wait here for them. They'd been gone for three hours, I don't know where they went or what was said. But when they came back Ma made the girls go upstairs and told us to stick the kettle on. We'd tried to find out what had happened with Alex when Connor had gone up to see his woman, but Ma, she wouldn't tell us, she said that we'd find out when Alex was ready to tell us. If she was ever ready to tell us.

It's late, but here I am sat in my old bedroom, on my bed tapping away on my laptop trying to find anything and everything I can to take down Liam. I never thought I'd see the day that I was looking for something to take one of our own down, but here I am.

I take a large drink of my whiskey and look around my room. Ma's changed nothing in here in twenty years. It's the same grey wallpaper covering the walls. The beds Ronan and I slept in when we were teenagers are still in the same place.

Our old footie duvet covers have been replaced by plain dark blue ones.

Our dark oak bedside tables couldn't be more different. Mine is littered with my phone, the chargers, notebooks, my old footie trophies and a picture of my high school girlfriend Nora. Maybe I'll hit her up while I'm in Ireland, it's been a couple of years since I last saw her. But I know she's still single, I always check before I come home, just in case.

Ronan's bedside table is empty, completely clear, nothing at all on it. He doesn't do trinkets, or mess of any kind. He likes order in the things around him but thrives in the chaos he creates.

He's calm right now; I feel it. Being twins, we know when the other is hurting, when something isn't right, and when the other is calm.

I know he's angry, I know he feels guilt over Da, Aoife, and the shit Liam is into. But in this moment, he's calm. Knowing I don't have to worry about his rage, I can focus on the task at hand. I look back down at my laptop when my phone vibrates with a text message.

Connor

Need you, brother. Bring your laptop. And quiet, she's asleep.

Before I even have a chance to respond he sends another.

Connor

And bring me a whiskey.

Shaking my head, I tap Out a response.

Me

Be there in two.

I grab my laptop and the whiskey bottle that also sits on my bedside table with the two glasses I have and head to my brother's room.

I give a gentle knock on the door. "Yeah." I hear Connor call out.

Pushing the door open, I quietly enter the room, making sure not to disturb Alex. “Hey, brother, she okay?”

I watch him look down at her before responding, he looks tired. “She’s just taking a break. And now I’m making her tell me. It’s a lot, she was looking like she was gonna break, so I told her to sleep. The truth is though, I needed her to stop for a minute. She’s barely told me anything and I can already feel my demon surfacing. I needed a breather as much as she did.”

I give him a small nod and take a seat on the bed, as I open my laptop, I turn to look at him.

“What do you need from me, brother?”

“Lex mentioned that he beat her so badly that he put her in the hospital twice, I’d rather she didn’t have to go into too much detail about that so I’m going to need you to pull her medical records. I need to know what she sustained at his hands.”

I start tapping at the keys, but steal a glance or two his way. “I can do that brother, but are you sure she’d be ok with this? I mean it’s one thing for her to tell you, but pulling her medical records is violating her personal space.”

I know I’m pissing him off, I just need to check. “What... suddenly you have a conscience? You do worse than that shit daily.” He snaps at me, trying to keep his voice low so not to disturb Alex.

I stop typing and turn to look directly at him. “This is different, and you know it. I’m pulling her personal medical records; this isn’t some asshole we want to get one over on, or someone we’re looking to terminate, this is the woman you’re holding in your arms like your life depends on her.”

“And that is why I need you to do it, please, Rory...”

I nod and pull up the files “Okay, you ready to hear this?”

Chapter 2



The rage I had felt build inside me when I went through her records was something I don't think I had felt before. But once again, my rage wasn't just directed at J or even Liam. It was directed at myself. Her last stay in the hospital was only a few days after I had seen her in Chicago, if I'd fucking done something then she wouldn't have suffered that last beating. She almost died that day, as it happens, she'd miscarried as a result of the beating she received.

Reading her records was one thing, they only told us what her injuries had been as a result, they couldn't tell us the truth, couldn't tell us all the detail.

Alex did though, that night I'd stayed up researching trying to find anything I could. I'd created files on Liam and J and started filling them with whatever I found online. Ronan had sat awake with me, we didn't talk, we didn't need to. He was showing his support by just being there. Around two in the morning, maybe three we'd heard Connor and Alex go downstairs, we didn't follow them down, but we sat at the top of the stairs my brothers and I had listened as she recounted every detail of what had been done to her, the hell she suffered. We sat there and listened as she broke reliving the worst times of her life.

We made a silent promise the four of us, sat there on the stairs in our Ma's old house, that we would do whatever we needed to protect her. We'd do whatever was necessary to ensure that neither she nor anyone else would suffer at the hands of those fuckers ever again.

We've been in Ireland for four days, and all I've done is research. Even when I've been to the gym with my brothers, I'm at my laptop while Connor trains for his upcoming fight against 'The Sleeper'. I need a break, I need some stress relief, and I know just the person.

I pull out my phone, and find the contact I'm looking for, I smile as I hit call. It only rings twice before they pick up:

"Four days, Rory O'Farrell, four days you've been home before you finally decide to call."

I love that the first thing out of her mouth, is cheek for waiting so long to call, "Hey there beautiful, you free?"

"For you...always."

I smile into the phone "I'll be there in an hour, and I'll bring the wine."

A little over an hour later and I'm letting myself into her first-floor apartment. The door opens straight into an open plan space, the kitchen is on the right with a built-in island that looks across into the sitting room and dining area. The whole place is bright and white, and airy. It makes you feel like you can breathe.

Heading straight to the kitchen I pour two glasses of white wine and place the rest of the bottle in the fridge. I round the counter, placing the glasses on the table as I throw my jacket on the back of one of the dining chairs. She has jazz playing through the apartment, and it makes me smile, she loves jazz, loves singing it. Her voice is perfect for it.

Taking a sip of the wine, I pull my phone out of my trouser pocket and quickly check I've not got anything from my brothers or Ma. Satisfied everything seems to be good I place it back into my pocket and head for the bedroom.

The closer I get the more I hear it, the distinct sounds of heavy breathing, and moaning, the sounds of pleasure. She started before me.

I round the corner to the bedroom and lean against the door frame to watch, "You couldn't wait huh?"

Her eyes ping open and lock onto mine, she smiles as I raise my eyebrows before raking my eyes over every inch of her naked frame.

Her light brown hair, braided over her right shoulder, the light outside of her window casting a glow over her beautiful white skin. I watch her left hand pulling and twisting on her nipple, her legs spread wide open, her pussy completely exposed to me. My eyes focus on her right hand, her thumb rubbing and pressing on her clit as she slides two of her fingers in and out of her pussy. Her movements slow and controlled, I stalk toward her, placing both glasses down on her bedside.

Kicking off my converse and pulling my t-shirt over my head at the same time, I'm desperate to get out of these clothes, desperate to touch her, to be inside of her.

As I drag my jeans and boxers down my leg, I climb onto the bed, ready to climb over her, but she shakes her head at me. "It's not your turn yet, you can sit and watch."

I lean back on my heels and bite my lip. I glare at her pretending I'm pissed, but in reality, I love it when she makes me watch when she takes herself over that edge.

I lick my lips, as I watch her fingers increase their speed pumping in and out of her slick pussy, a moan falling from her lips as her head tips back and her back arches. She's close... I'm torn between wanting to watch her lose control and wanting to be the one that makes her lose it.

I spit into my hand and wrap it around my shaft, lazily pumping up and down as I keep my eyes focussed on her. I crawl up so I'm situated between her legs, but making sure to give her enough room. I see her stomach muscle tighten, and her legs begin to shake.

I continue to rub my cock up and down increasing the speed, as I tighten my grip, I can feel myself getting closer, I want to get there the same time she does.

"Oh, shit, oh god yes," she calls out, her toes curl as she slides her legs up toward her body. Her fingers sliding in and

out of her soaking wet cunt. I need to get in on the action, I need to taste her.

My hand continues to rub up and down my cock, as my other reaches forward. I slide two of my fingers into her pussy alongside hers. Her breath catches in her throat, it's so short and rapid. I take a quick glance at her to make sure she's OK, her body is covered in sweat, her head tipped, eyes closed.

I lean into her, my fingers increasing their speed ensuring hers have enough room. I feel the tingle begin and I pump my fist up and down my cock, faster and faster. Just as I feel it, I lean over her as I curl my fingers inside her pussy hitting the spot that makes her scream, a scream so loud that I know her neighbours are sure to have heard. I give my cock another pull and I look down to watch my cum cover her stomach and chest.

We both ride out our orgasms. I take one prolonged look at her, covered in my cum and sweat. Her porcelain skin now completely heated and a beautiful shade of red and I challenge myself to see if I keep her skin that wonderful shade of red for the rest of the night.

Chapter 3



The skin on my knuckles is white, my grip on the headboard tight as I try to keep my balance as Rory pummels into me from behind. His thrusts are so forceful I can't stop my breasts from slamming into it, right now I'm pleased there is cushioning on the top half.

His fingers have such a solid grip on my hips I can already feel bruises forming, and I'm pretty sure he'd pulled some strands of hair from my head when he wrapped it around his hand.

I'm worried with how rough he's being, not for me of course. I love it when he's like this, I like my sex with more than a bite of pain. I wish he was like this with me more often, but I know he hates hurting me. So if he's being this rough, then there is something wrong. The last time he was like this, he'd just lost his dad and sister.

His breathing is heavy. As he grunts with each thrust, his speed increases and I know he's close. I release one of my hands from the headboard and place my fingers on my clit, rubbing and nipping. My body shakes the closer I get, he pulls my head further back, kissing and sucking down the column of my neck, he then turns my face to his, and his lips crash into mine. Swallowing the scream that was just about to escape my lips. I see stars as I soak his cock with my release. It doesn't take long for him to follow me over that edge. As he pulls away from my mouth and cries out, his fingers providing an immeasurable sting of pain the tighter they grip my hip, his

other hand slams into the headboard, when his head dips forward, his forehead resting on my shoulder.

We stay like that for a few minutes catching our breaths, before he pulls out and I hiss at the loss of him inside me.

I flop down onto my back and watch him head into the bathroom to get rid of the condom and clean himself up.

I hear the toilet flush, then the tap running. A minute or so later, he walks back into the bedroom naked as the day he was born, a satisfied smirk across his beautiful face.

He climbs onto the bed and uses a cold wet flannel to clean away the cum from my legs and stomach. I take a small sip of the wine then hand him the glass.

“So...you wanna talk about what’s eating you?”

He chugs the rest of the glass and lies down, his head resting on my chest. His fingers tracing small circles on my stomach “Nothings eating away at me babe.”

I play with his hair, letting him come down from our last high. hoping he’ll be honest, when several minutes pass and it’s clear he’s not going to be honest I try again.

“Rory O’Farrell, I have known you your whole life, I know when there is something wrong. You only ever get rough when you have something playing on your mind.”

“Shit” he jumps up, turning to face me, “Did I hurt you, god Nora, I’m sorry tell me where?”

I shake my head and place a kiss on his forehead. “I like the pain handsome; you know I do. I love that you let go tonight, but I know you only do it when you have too much on your mind. So talk to me. This is what we do, we fuck and talk without getting into each other’s business.”

He sighs then jumps off the bed, “I’m hungry, let’s order in.” He grabs his jeans pulling out his phone, and taps away.

“Hey, do I get a choice or are you ordering for me?” I playfully scold him

“Two cheeseburgers, onion rings, fries, and mozzarella dippers, have I missed anything?” I shake my head at him, and he laughs, knowing full well he’s right. If only I wasn’t so predicable with my food order.

I climb off the bed and grab the robe from the back of the door, wrapping it around myself and securing it. “You want more wine, or do you want beer?” I call out as I head into the kitchen, I make it as far as the dining table when he comes up behind me and pushes me forward, bending me over the tabletop. “I want a beer, right after I’ve fucked you again, tell me we’re good.”

“Mmmhmm,” I hum, knowing what he’s asking. He wants inside of me bare, the feeling is so much more intense with nothing between us. He leans down, and licks my neck then whispers in my ear, “Hold on tight.” As he slams his cock into me. This man likes sex almost as much as I do, his appetite for it is almost as insatiable as mine.

He has one hand on my back pressing between my shoulder blades holding me down. The other gripping my hip, as he slides almost all the way out of me, then slams back in with such force my hips hit the table ledge, I hiss out my sting of pain, “Babe?” he questions.

“Fucking harder Rory, I need you to fuck me harder,” I yell, gripping the edge of the table to steady myself as he repeatedly slams into me.

“Holy fuck Nora, I love fucking you bare, and I love it when your pussy grips my cock. Fuck yes...oh fuck.” He continues to cry out as I struggle to catch my breath, the pressure the pain. The speed the force it’s exactly what I need, exactly what he needs. We’re both close, but then he pulls out and flips me over, lifting me up, and laying me flat on the table and slamming back into me.

I raise my legs and place them both over his shoulders knowing it’s so much deeper at this angle. He leans down taking one of my nipples in his mouth and sucks pulling at it, so hard I almost come right there. “Rory, yes, fuck me... harder, I need it harder.”

One hand on my hip the other, moves to my other nipple. He twists, and pulls and nips, as he continues to suck and bite at the other one.

I slide my hand between us reaching for my clit, but he lifts and grabs both of my wrists pinning them above my head.

“You come when I let you come, and not before.”

He slows his movements and I cry out, “No please I need to come Rory, you fucker.” He just laughs as he slows to almost a stop, pulling his cock out to the tip, then slams back into me again. He continues this pace for several more minutes until I think we’re both going to explode. He looks down at me. “Now.” One word is all it takes for us both to cry out as we come together.

Chapter 4



I left Nora sleeping and came to the gym at seven this morning. Fucking her all night wasn't enough, it didn't give me the release I needed to be able to sleep for even just a couple of hours.

"Don't be a dick." I look over at Killian, making his way to me as I lay down on the bench press.

"You know better than to do that without a spotter." Stopping just at my head, he nods letting me know he's got me.

He's right, I do know better, but I need to train, I need to try and tire myself out, just a couple of hours sleep. That's all I need then I can focus, and maybe figure out where the fuck I need to look to get the answers I need.

"You with Nora last night?"

I look up at him and smirk. "Where else brother?" He knows me, they all do. Whenever I'm in Ireland Nora is my go-to. It's an arrangement we've had since we were teens, we'd been hanging around together so often that our parents thought we'd end up together. But that's not what either of us wanted, even at fifteen we knew that there was nothing more to our relationship than friendship and fucking.

I was one-fifth of an heir to a massive crime syndicate and she was your regular small-town girl, with maybe just a few dark sexual needs.

We had learned fairly early on that she needed certain things, things that I was less than comfortable giving her. Nora

likes sex, but she likes her sex with more than a hint of pain, she likes to hurt, she gets off on it.

I'd tried it for a while, experimenting with her. But I'd come away feeling dirty, the guilt was all consuming, I wouldn't settle for days. So, we'd agreed that we'd just be friends, with the occasional benefit. Moving to New York with the family when I was eighteen, meant those benefits were few and far between. We were young, but we learnt a lot from each other in the first few years, and more in the years since.

I give myself a mental shake, clearing away those thoughts, and focussing on the weighted bar I have across my chest. "What's going on in your head Rory?"

I push up and Killian helps me rack the bar back in place. "Nothing..." I sit up and swing my legs around, grabbing my water bottle and chugging half of it down, I see him out of the corner of my eye, just standing there waiting for me to continue.

"Something isn't right, Killian, I have this nagging feeling..."

He reaches out for my hand, pulling me up from the bench. "Of course something doesn't feel right, Connors woman is a target of her ex and our own cousin, our own flesh and blood who we only just found out is running a sex trafficking ring under our own brand. That nagging feeling you have is rage, disgust and fear, I feel it too, we all do."

I stop mid stride, watching Connor go at it in the octagon with Billy Briar, Jr, the son of our Da's old trainer. I grab hold of Killian's arm stopping him in his tracks, he turns to me, a look of I'm not sure what crossing his face. "I feel like we're missing something, like we haven't been given all of the pieces of the puzzle."

I run my hands over my face. "I can't explain it bro, I just feel like we don't know the whole story."

He looks at me. "Whatever you need to figure this out, I'm here." He gives a single nod then throws his arm over my shoulder pulling me with him to the octagon where our other

brothers are. No questions, no doubt. Just trust, trust in me, in my feelings. This is why we're all so close, we never doubt one another. We never do anything alone, it's not in our nature. We're family, we're brothers.



“Hey gorgeous, you free tonight?”

I hear her laugh on the other end of the phone. It's been two weeks since I last saw her, but I know she won't really hold it against me. “Oh Rory, you don't call, you don't write...”

“Babe, I'm sorry, I know it's no excuse. I've just been busy... I need you.”

Nora and I, we fuck, we chat, but we rarely need anyone. So me telling her I need her, she doesn't hesitate.

“I'm working till eight pm, be at my place when I get there, you know where the key is.”

“I really wish you wouldn't fucking hide your key out in the open...”

“See you tonight, Rory.” She hangs up without another word. I know she hates me going on at her, but she hides her damn key under a fucking picture above her front door in the apartment complex, and it fucking infuriates me.

I have a whiskey in my hand, and my head tipped back on the sofa, when I hear her key in the lock. When I got here I'd turned on her music, jazz, as usual filtered through the apartment as I took a shower, Now I'm sitting here, in nothing but my jeans waiting for her.

The apartment is dark, save from a lamp in the corner of the sitting room, giving a warm glow over me. She drops her keys on the counter and makes her way to me. I turn to face her, and watch as she strips every item of clothing from her body as she makes her way to me.

Without hesitation she climbs onto my lap, grabbing the glass and downing what was left in it. She leans back placing the glass on the table as I lean forward both hands grabbing her hips and taking a nipple in my mouth. She cries out as I bite down hard, hard enough to break the skin. Her hand flies to my head, gripping my hair, holding me in place. She thrives of this, and tonight, it's exactly what I need.

I bring one of my hands down to her clit, rubbing and nipping, as I continue to suck and lick and bite her nipple. Her other hand grabs at my nipple, as she twists and pulls. "Fuck... that hurt," I scold pulling away from hers. Looking up at her she just smiles, "Lay back handsome, let me take care of you."

She pushes me back then raises a little, undoing the button and the zipper on my jeans. She looks back at me, cocking her head to one side and raising an eyebrow, letting me know I need to lift so she can remove my jeans.

I raise my hips just enough for her to slide my jeans down to mid-thigh, before she gets up and gets to her knees on the floor in front of me, taking my jeans with her. Pulling them off at my feet and pushing them to the side.

Before I even have time to register what is happening, one of her hands is cupping my balls, rubbing and squeezing, as she wraps her lips around my cock and takes my entire length until it hits the back of her throat.

"Fuck..." my hand instinctually goes to the back of her head pushing down as far as she can go, I hold her there until I can feel her choking around my cock. Wrapping my fist around her hair I pull her all the way off, saliva and pre cum drip from her mouth, she just fucking smiles at me and reaches forward to take me again.

Chapter 5



“Please let me stay, Aunt Bernie and Uncle Michael have said I can live with them, da please”

We buried our Grandpa only yesterday and I watch as Aoife pisses Da off more and more with every word that comes out of her mouth. She’d been warned to behave, my brothers and I had told her she had to let Da and Ma grieve, in peace even fucking Niamh tried telling her. But would she listen? She’s a fucking spoiled teenager who thinks the world owes her for being ‘dragged to New York’ as she puts it.

“Da please...why can’t I?”

“I said no Aoife, please just fucking go upstairs will ya, leave me be,” Da yells at her.

“Urgh, I hate you, you’re so selfish, you dragged us to New York and now you won’t let me stay here with my friends.”

“AOIFE...” I race into the room, Ronan and Killian hot my heels, we stand between Aoife & Da. We’ve noticed over the last couple of years he’s started to get angrier and angrier, yelling shouting, even belting us, I mean it’s not like we haven’t sometimes deserved it, because believe me we did. But Da had never hit any of us until about four years ago. We still don’t know what brought it on, but he lashed out belting Connor across the face, he stormed out of the room leaving us all sitting there stunned.

“Aoife go to your room...”

“No Killian, why does he have to be so...”

“Enough, Go. To. Your. Room,” Killian tells her through gritted teeth. We all watch her as she stomps out of the room and up the stairs, Niamh trailing after her.

I turn back to Da, his head is low, he looks tired. Not just the, not had enough sleep kind of tired, but the tired of life kind of tired.

“Da...” Killian steps forward, kneeling at his side, Ronan and I stay rooted to the spot. “She doesn’t mean it, she’s a teenager, she’s just lashing out...”

“She does, in this moment right now, she hates me, but I love her. All I’m doing is trying to protect you, trying to protect you all.”

“Talk to me Da...what’s going on?”

I think for a moment that he’s going to for once be honest, and actually tell us what is on his mind. But then he takes a deep breath and I see it in that moment, he’s shutting down again. He lifts his head, looks at all three of us dead in the eyes and smiles, like he didn’t just have the weight of the world on his shoulders only moments ago.

I watch as he gets up to leave, but just as he gets to the door I call out, “The trouble is in New York right, trouble is wherever we are?”

He doesn’t move his body, but he turns his head slightly to look over his shoulder at us, but not quite far enough that he can really face us. He gives a small nod. “For the most part, yes. But there is danger everywhere boys, you have to know that.”

“And we do Da, we all know there is danger around every corner, it kinda comes with the territory of being an O’Farrell. But Liam is here, Uncle Michael, and damn even Auntie Bernie, surely, she’s safe with them...let her stay.”

“Maybe you’re right.” He doesn’t say anything else, just turns his head and walks out the door.

I shoot up in bed, the memory of the dream weighing heavily on my mind. If only it was a dream, if only we...no if I hadn't convinced Da to let her stay in Ireland, if I'd just kept my mouth shut, she would still be here now...they both would.

I had been so sure I was right; I was convinced that she would be safe. But being here with them, that was the furthest from the truth. Her being here had put her in the biggest danger of us all.

“Hey.” Nora sits up, and rubs my back. “You wanna talk?”

I shake my head and climb out of bed, heading to the kitchen to grab some water. Just as I'm downing my second glass Nora comes up behind me, her hands wrap around my front, and she rests her cheek on my back.

“We have this arrangement for a reason Rory, we tell each other anything and everything and the other offers nothing but support, judgement free. You came to me last night, because you needed me, because you needed a release. Sometimes a release isn't enough. I get that, sometimes saying things out loud is exactly what we need to help us breathe. Talk to me, let me help you breathe.”

I fill my glass and another for her, then let her lead me to the sofa. Taking a seat, I roll my neck letting it crack. Swallowing I take a breath and face away from her. “I found some journals that belonged to Da. Fuck, the things he wrote Nora, the things he was suspicious of, when I first read them I put them down to the ramblings of a tired old man who'd been in our line of work for way too long. Resulting him being paranoid and suspicious of his own damn shadow...but the more digging I did, the more I found to be true.”

I swallow a lump in my throat, and I'm not sure if I want to cry or vomit. “I can't tell you what is in those journals, but I can tell you that everything I've found to be true will destroy our family as we know it, it will destroy the face of our Syndicate.”

She shifts so she is straddling me, her bare pussy teasing my cock. Neither one of us had bothered to put any clothes on when we came out here. I'm not ashamed of my body and

neither is she, nor should she be. I run my hands up her torso, stopping at her breasts, massaging them. My thumbs rubbing over her nipples, teasing them into beautiful pert pink buds.

“I need to talk to my brothers but I’m still missing so many pieces of the puzzle, some of the things I’ve read I still have no proof of yet...”

She leans in kissing me, effectively silencing me. My mouth instantly gives her tongue access, as she rolls back and forth over my cock, pleasuring herself and making my dick harden. She sucks on my bottom lip, before clamping her teeth over it and pulling. She bites down and we both moan as we taste the bitter tang of copper.

I spank her and she jerks, as my fingers bite into the globes of her arse. “Ride me.”

She doesn’t need telling twice. Lifting herself enough to get her hand on my cock, then slams herself down onto it. She winces at the sting it gives her, but I see the edges of her lips curve up into a small smile.

She removes my hands from her arse and places them on the back of the sofa. “No touching handsome.” She winks at me, as she lifts herself almost all the way off my cock then slams herself back down. Twisting and rolling her hips backward and forward, side to side.

“Fuck, Nora.” I grip the back of the sofa, the tingle already staring in my stomach. “That’s it you dirty little slut, fuck me. Ride me hard.” Her movements stutter, as she gets closer. Trying to steady herself she places her hands on my shoulders, increasing her speed.

“Oh, oh god, fuck Rory, yes...give it to me,” she calls out, her movements erratic. She grips my shoulders, then runs her nails down my chest. I hiss as she breaks the skin, making me bleed, leaning in to get a taste, she runs her tongue up the scratches, licking up the blood, and it’s all either one of us can take. We both cry out as our bodies shake, and our orgasms take control.

Chapter 6



I've been working night and day trying to find out as much information as I can on Marco, after finding out that he bought Alex for five million dollars. I feel sick.

The thought that fucker might be related to Liam.

I pull out Da's journal re-reading the entry I've read so many times since finding it in one of those damn safety deposit boxes.

I thought Aoife was wrong when she called me the other day, telling me that she'd overheard Michael and Liam talking to Marco. When she said she had heard Liam call him Uncle Marco, I swear she'd had one too many knocks to the head...too many damn knocks from that fucking fella of hers, I haven't told her brothers yet. When they find out that he's been fucking hitting her they are going to lose it.

It took her six weeks, six fucking weeks to finally own up to the fact he was abusing her, I'll kill him.

We're all heading to Ireland next week, I'll deal with the piece of shit when I'm there, then I'll tell the boys about it. I don't want them involved, no sense in dragging them all into when I can handle him.

I'm expecting a call later tonight, from someone I've had doing some digging since my little girl called me, I hope to fucking God she's wrong, because if not, it changes everything.

A knock at the door pulls me from the journal. I answer without checking, I'd like to think I answered it because I

know it was the takeaway I'd ordered, but in reality, my head so far up my arse I didn't even think about it.

I internally berate myself, as I grab the pizza box and a glass of whiskey before heading back to torture myself again with the journal.

Son of a bitch, I don't have solid proof, but everything my guy has found out points to Michael being a Russo. How the fuck did we not see it, how the fuck did we not realise who this fucker was beforehand.

Now it all makes sense, the missing shipments, the money, the attempts at trafficking in Ireland. Fucking Michael and that bastard son of his, they are in on it. Thankfully the rest of the clans and Syndicates are still against the skin trade, but how long can they hold out.

I need proof, solid proof before I take this to the boys. I can't destroy our family without it.

My phone beeping distracts from Da's words.

Margot

Hey there Irish man. I just got off work, you fancy some company.

I look at my watch, it's late, but I could use a little bit of light relief.

Me

Be there in 20.

I down the glass of whiskey, lock the journals back in the safe, then head to the kitchen, placing my glass in the sink and the uneaten pizza in the fridge.

As I drive over to Margot's, I find myself wishing I was back in Ireland with Nora. That woman relaxes me like no others can. Don't get me wrong, Margot is hot, and she's not clingy, but Nora knows me, she just knows what I need by looking at me. I have to guide Margot, and sometimes I just need to be led.

I pull up outside Margot's place, and just as I'm about to get out of the car, I get another text message.

Connor

She taken off. I need you all here, we need to find her.

Sam said there had been no movement all night, he failed.

Someone deal with him!

Me

I'm actually around the corner, be there in two minutes, then I'll track her phone.

Ronan

Headed to Sam's now.

Kill

Bells is trying to call her, we're headed over to her place now, be there in fifteen.

Finn

With Ma and Niamh, call me when you know what's going on.

I throw my phone on the seat beside me, not bothering to message Margot. I'll call her later and make it up to her, she'll understand.



I look at Connor when Bell's asked him what the note from Alex said, I know he hasn't read it, we all do. But she's trying to get him to face up to the fact she's ran, and we don't know why.

Ronan arrives letting us know that Sam has been dealt with, poor fucker. While Killian hands Connor the letter.

I let him read it as I type away on the keys on my laptop, trying to find her, but it looks like she's switched off her phone, so tracking her is proving difficult.

“Fucking find her, find her now, man, I don’t care how you do it, just do it,” Connor yells at me then storms off into her bedroom.

Ronan, Killian and Bella are all watching me. “I’m fucking trying, don’t look at me like that.” I dip my head back to my laptop, trying to access her phone or the extra tracker that I placed in her necklace. Not that I told the others I did it, in fact I’ve done with all the women, Bells, Ma and Niamh, I just haven’t told anyone, the women would kill me.

She finally calls Connor. Telling him that she had to take off, that she couldn’t drag our family through her shit. I’m sitting at the laptop waiting for her to ping an email across, one she was sent, by Liam.

The moment I open it, my stomach flips. Bastard, I look over to Connor, my rage clearly evident.

I see his face fall when she hangs up on him.

“Brother...he threatened us all. There are pictures in this email of us in Ireland, pictures of Ma and Niamh, there’s another email with pictures of us when we all got back to New York.... the second email just says ‘we see you’.”

“And what does the first one say?” Ronan is raging, his demon is pushing through to the surface.

I look to Connor and Killian, to make sure they want me to read it out. They both give me a nod indicating to go ahead.

“Alex, did you think that my cousins would be able to hide you forever? You know we knew you were in Connors apartment the day J and I were there. We were going to grab you when we first got there, but that little prick Rory had already put a call in to Connor, and we knew we wouldn’t have time to deal with him and get you out of there.”

Connor gets up storming into the kitchen, slamming doors. I’m starting to get a headache.

‘Little prick Rory’ ...cheeky fucker.

Once Bell’s sorts Connor out with a whiskey, he sits back down next to me and nods for me to continue.

I take a breath, before continuing, “Now I know what J saw in you, you’re hot when you come. I’m going to enjoy fucking you before I hand you over...you see, we had you as a sale item in our upcoming auction, but we were asked to remove you from sale, and you’re making me a very rich man. But one of my stipulations of removing you from sale was that I get to have another taste before handing you over. That and I get videos of Marco breaking you, because pretty little lady, believe me, he will break you in ways you can’t even imagine.”

I take another breath to stop my stomach from churning before continuing.

“Bit of advice for you, find a way to walk away from them, because if we have to come for you, we’ll kill them and take Bell’s too. Choice is yours pretty lady. You...or everyone.”

I reach over and down the whiskey Bella poured for me, “That’s it, there’s nothing else.”

The silence surrounding us is deafening, none of say’s anything for at least ten minutes, then Ronan stands. “Rory, tell me you got a location from her cell?”

I look up and give him a pained look. “I got the city but that’s it. She bounced off a few cell towers which indicates she’s still on the move, but I should be able to track roughly where she might be headed. Trouble is, if I know, then so does Liam.”

Chapter 7



It took me two days before I found her, tracked her to some shithole town in Louisiana. Now I'm sitting here in Connor's apartment, with the rest of the family waiting for Killian to bring him back from his fight.

It feels wrong waiting here in his home, ready to give him bad news, when we should be celebrating his win.

There's silence in the room, Niamh is next to me, staring straight ahead. Ronan opposite, I can feel the rage radiating off him, and Ma, not sure who's angrier her or Ronan.

Bells is over by the kitchen counter, she's busying herself making drinks, but the tears are quietly falling down her face.

I can't bring myself to comfort her. I should, someone should but we all feel more or less the same. Knowing Alex was taken, that we were just a little bit too late to get to her is hard to bear.

A little while later Connor comes storming into the penthouse, followed by Kill, who goes straight to Bells.

Ma tries in vain to convince him to not watch the footage, I know she's doing it because she loves him and doesn't want to see him hurt, but there's no way he wouldn't watch it.

Before pressing play, I give him a brief rundown of what I know, I need to try and prepare him, even just a little.

"Marco landed in Chicago four days ago. Both Liam and J left Chicago two days ago and arrived in Madisonville, Louisiana yesterday afternoon. Alex was grabbed outside of

the local diner at around ten p.m. last night. She was dragged into a dark coloured SUV-without plates. I'll play the footage, but before you watch it, I gotta tell you, it ain't pretty, but she put up one hell of a fight brother."

He gives me the go ahead, and I press play, averting my eyes from the screen. I don't want to watch this again.

Knowing roughly how long the entire footage is, I wait until it's done before turning back to my brother. "Con I have two more things to tell you."

He faces me and I see the tiny flicker of hope in his eyes, fingers crossed he has a reason to hope.

"Marco has a flight out of Chicago tomorrow morning, direct to Naples."

"FUCK," he yells into the room, he's starting to unravel, but the moment he turns back to me, I give him my best shit-eating grin.

"I did something sneaky...as long as she has that chain around her neck, we'll know where she is."

The room suddenly becomes silent. "I put a tracker in it."

He shakes his head, and he doesn't seem as pleased as I thought he would.

"Are you fucking serious? Why the fuck are you just telling us this now!?"

I can see why he'd be pissed, but he has no idea how long it took to activate. I'm surprised it even did to be fair, the tech isn't new, but it's new to me so I've had a lot of learning to do, a lot quicker than I originally planned. I get he's mad, but I'm still pleased with myself. I shake my head and smile up at him. "I wasn't sure it was active until a few minutes ago."



Finn and I had stayed in New York while Connor, Killian and Ronan had travelled to Italy to go get her back. I sent them

there with enough devices and knowledge to scope out a place and get a read on where people were located in a building. I didn't have time to do any recon worth its salt, so I ran through everything I could think of with Ronan.

It didn't take them long to locate her and bring her home, but it was too late to make sure she got out unharmed. I don't know the full extent of what she went through, I don't want to know, but I've seen the injuries, I know she was beaten and raped. But it's the eyes, she can't hide the pain in her eyes. And it fucking guts me to my core, that I was so slow finding her.

I know it's not on me, but she's one of us, she's family, when one hurts, we all hurt. It'll take time, but I know she'll be alright, she's tough, besides—she has an entire family of O'Farrell's at her back.

Chapter 8



I look around Finn's front room, surrounded by my family. My brothers clinging onto their women, Ma on the sofa with the baby in her lap, Seamus on the floor next to my sister, maybe a little too fucking close for comfort, although Niamh seems ok with it as she sits and colours with Maddie.

While we each have our own individual letters, Halliwell mentioned that Rory had told him it would be our choice if we shared them with the others, but he said Rory believed that there have too many secrets over the years, and without even realising it those secrets have almost torn us apart.

I'm inclined to agree with him, I know my brothers would too. I steal a glance at my woman, leaning into her just a little, I feel confused, hurt, frustrated and angry. She gives my hand a small squeeze, silencing the noise in my head and effectively grounding me.

Looking into her eyes, a small smile, and a slight nod from her answers the unspoken questions between us.

Taking a deep breath, I reach for the envelope with my name on, a small flash drive lands in my lap as I pull out the handwritten letter.

I give it a quick scan, then look to Lex, she nods again, confirming I should go ahead. Knowing she's ok with my choice, I read the letter out loud.

Connor,

Growing up, you were the brother that I wanted to be like the most.

Your fire, determination and compassion were faultless, no matter what happened, no matter what kind of shit we got into, or the trouble we caused, you were there smoothing it over. You were always so calm and collected, I admired that about you. Your ability to bring a sense of calm over any situation.

But you were always so guarded, so closed off to feelings, even from your family. Sure, you'd let us in, we were close, damn we were as thick as thieves, but you never let us all the way in, you always kept us just on the edge, the only one of us that got close enough to see your feelings was Killian, and that was only because he could read you, that weird motherfucker can read us all.

We all had our fair share of relationships growing up. But you would never let anyone get that close to you, I mean you weren't exactly a saint, but the moment a woman looked like she was getting just a little too close, you'd cut her loose. I honestly believed you would forever be a bachelor Until her... I saw it, that night in the club, as I walked to her table, I'd seen the way you looked at her, and it was then that I knew, you'd found her, the other half of your soul!

I hate what she's been through, what our blood has done to her. She told you, what happened to her, you heard it, but I witnessed it.

They made sure to video the things they did to your woman, (and others) the torment, the pain they inflicted.

I didn't watch it all, I couldn't even if I wanted to. I'd vomited within the first fifteen minutes of the footage.

The flash drive in the envelope contains the only remaining copies of those videos. I've destroyed everything else, and was about to destroy this, but I believe your woman should be the one to do it. She deserves the closure that I think it will bring her.

She is remarkable, and the strongest person I have ever met, give her the world Con, she deserves it, you both do.

Be brave and follow your dreams, branch out and take that risk. You're good at money, and stocks, you love that shit, running the Syndicate was never your thing, do what you want, because life is too short not too. Not to mention doing what you're really good at, makes us a fuck tonne of money.

Your woman has a dream too, you know it and so do I... she's gonna need your support, I purchased a small publishing company, and placed it in her name, Halliwell has the details and the deeds.

I wish that I could be there to witness you following a different path, starting a family and growing old with your soul mate. But I don't think that's my destiny, and I've made peace with that. Just know that I'll always be with you in spirit.

I love you brother! Tell Lex I love her too, and to reach for the stars.

All my love Rory.

I throw letter on the table and wrap my arms around Lex, letting her sob into my chest. It takes everything in me to hold my shit together.

Nobody speaks for what seems like hours, the quiet sobs of the women and the scratch of Maddie's pencil are the only noises that can be heard.

I feel sick, and stunned...he knew, he wasn't going to be here, he knew he wasn't going to survive. I hate that, I hate that the last few months of his life, he kept so much from us simply to protect us.

And I can't help but wonder if he would still be alive now if we'd known, if he'd confided in us. I look up at Ma and she gives me a solid shake of her head, a look of understanding showing on her face, she knows exactly what's going through

my head right now. I look at my brothers and see the same look I have, they are wondering the same thing.

“Stop it,” Its quiet but commanding, we all turn to look at our ma cradling Finn’s baby boy. She looks down at him, a look of unconditional love, then she gives the same look to Maddie.

“I know what you boys are thinking and I’m telling you to stop it, right now. I miss him just as much as you do, but this was always his destiny, nothing and nobody could have changed that. So, stop it, stop wondering what you could have all done differently to change the outcome.” She places a small kiss on the baby’s head and hands him to Finn.

She’s right, we know she is, but it still doesn’t stop us from wondering the what ifs.

We all look up as Seamus stands, putting his hand out for Maddie to take. Ronan tenses, as Seamus puts a hand up in a move to indicate it’s all good. “I’m just going to grab everyone a drink and maybe makes us all some food, figured Maddie could help me while you guys have a few minutes to process.”

Ronan looks like he’s ready to pounce, he hates anyone near Maddie that isn’t us, but Liv places a hand on his arm and within seconds his posture changes and his shoulders drop, he looks up at Seamus and nods, just as Maddie walks up to him.

She wraps her arms around his neck and places a kiss on his cheek, “I just in kitchen, it’s OK.” And without another word heads off to the kitchen, Seamus silently follows her as we all laugh, that little girl is the boss of my brother.

Chapter 9



I'm tired, God am I fucking tired.

I have spent so long trying to find the information I need to confirm Da's suspicions, about Uncle Michael, I've found links to indicate it, but no hard evidence as of yet.

I crack my neck and watch as Marcus heads toward me. "Sir, would you like a whiskey?"

"Yes, please Marcus, thank you."

"I'll be upfront if you need anything sir." I watch as he pours three fingers of whiskey in my glass and then smiles and heads to the front of the plane.

We haven't been in the air for long, which means I have several hours to do some research before I land in Ireland.

I reach for another one of my Da's journals and flip to one of the many pages I've flagged and read so many times.

I heard Marco was in the country yesterday, I'm not sure why that vile fucking Italian is in the country now, the Syndicates and Clans voted against the trafficking ring he's proposing.

We're all happy to trade in weapons and even drugs but not skin, not women and children.

I can only assume he's here to try and convince some of us to change our minds. He's been in the country for more than twenty four hours, knowing that and not hearing from him, means he isn't here to see me.

Paddy Murphy called me this morning, he has some people trying to figure out why he's here, having Marco in the country has us all on edge. So here I sit, looking out of my office window into the garden where my family are enjoying themselves. We've only been in New York a few months, but knowing how much the kids miss Liam and Bernie I brought them all back with me, while I took care of some business.

I was hoping to start handing off some of the trips to Killian, but despite his dedication to me and his training, I know he's not ready. He can't lead... he still relies too heavily on his brothers. But to lead he's going to have to learn that he's at the top alone, it's a solo seat, I know he loves his brothers, he has to learn the only person he can truly rely on when he is in charge is himself.

I down my glass of whiskey and hit the call button for Marcus, I need another drink.

I pull open my laptop and read through my emails. I have one from Niall Murphy, he's been doing some digging into the O'Malley's and the Doyle's for me. Based on notes in my Da's journals. It looks like Marco managed to sway the Doyle's into the trafficking trade.

The O'Malley's I stumbled across something when I was doing some digging, a couple of months ago, it looks like they are now in the skin trade, although I'm pretty sure that they are new to it. Everything else I've found on that family up until about five years ago indicate that they were only trading in weapons and drugs. I'm not sure what changed, why they suddenly agreed to take part in the trafficking ring, and quite frankly I don't care. They made that choice, and they'll pay for it either way.

Rory,

I have information for you, you're not gonna like it.

Call me when your wheels hit the tarmac, I'd rather not share what I have digitally.

Speak Soon

Niall

I let out a breath, and flick to another page in the journal.

I believe that Killian can't take over unless he learns to do it alone, but the stubborn shit is adamant that he needs his brothers by his side. I've told him he can't do it with them, but he's so damn sure he can't do it without them. I don't know how to make him see sense, he has to distance himself from them, having them so close puts him at risk, puts the syndicate at risk.

I love my family each and every one of them, but they are a weakness, having them so close puts me at risk, marrying and having kids was a mistake. I tried telling him that, but he lost his god-damned mind. He hasn't spoken to me for a week. While I think it was a mistake creating a family and falling in love, I don't regret it. I love my wife and the kids but loving them is a weakness. I can't always think clearly when they are around, I need him to realise that.

I throw the journal down on the table and grab my laptop. I'm pissed reading some of the shit Da wrote, he thinks having us close makes Killian weak, but he couldn't more wrong.

Needing to feel like I'm in control of something, I start digging more on the Italians, learning all I can about their operations in the skin trade.

By the time my flight lands in Ireland, I've got three different folders on my laptop of things I have found out. Most of it is information on woman and children that have gone missing.

I've found video footage of some of the auctions, like the ones Liam set up. I haven't yet found any that our Liam was involved in, but I have found footage of him as a buyer at one of those auctions bidding on some poor young woman. I can't work out if it's a good thing or bad that he lost, I have no information on her buyer or what happened to her after that, despite my best efforts.

My head is pounding, and I could do without meeting Niall, but I want to know what he's found out before I head to

see Aunt Bernie tomorrow. I need to know what she knows about Uncle Michael and where he comes from.

Grabbing my shit, I give a chin lift to Marcus, the Pilot and the co-Pilot before descending the stairs to the waiting SUV.

Once I'm in the car, I unlock my phone, searching for the number I'm looking for before hitting the call button. "Niall, I've just landed, I'll meet you in the bar in thirty minutes."

"Aye, I'm already here, see you in a bit." I hang up, there's nothing else for us to say on the phone, it's best in person.

"Murphy's please," I instruct the driver to take me to Niall's pub, then drop a text to Ronan.

Me

Just landed, meeting O'Malley in the morning.

Ronan

Glad you've landed safe

His shipment will be fulfilled.

Me

Wait, how? I thought we were short because of the theft.

Ronan

We were, it's sorted.

Me

How?

Ronan

André...fucker pulled us out the shit again.

Me

All these saves are gonna cost us our fucking fortune at this rate.

Ronan

He says not

But who knows

I pocket my phone just as we pull up outside the pub. I don't say anything to the driver when I get out, he knows to wait for me.

Entering the pub I see Niall, behind the bar, facing the barmaid. Her back to the bar, her long red hair in a French braid, she's wearing a denim shirt that's slipped, exposing her shoulder and the black strap of her bra.

Niall has his hands I'm hoping on her waist, as I can't see them over the bar counter, his face, inches from hers.

Other than the three of us there is nobody else in the bar, I cough letting them know I'm here...they look like they are about to start fucking right there on the bar, and while I don't have a problem with that, I don't have time.

Hearing me cough Niall turns to me, giving me a shit eating grin, the red head glances at me and smiles. She pushes off the bar, and Niall smacks her arse, as she heads into the back.

Niall grabs a bottle of beer each, and rounds the bar, handing me the bottle before wrapping his arm around me slapping me on the back, "It's good to see you pal, let's sit."

Sitting at the bar, I drink down half the bottle, before turning to him, "Tell me everything."

Chapter 10



I look down, my fingers are digging onto her hips as my cock slides in and out of her arse. After getting the information I'd asked for from Niall, I'd been too pissed, and headed straight to the gym, needing to punch something. But after spending the better part of the three hours there, I still didn't feel any better, so I'd called Nora.

She'd known from the sound of my voice I needed a release, so when I got to her she was already naked waiting for me.

I've fucked her twice already, but I'd needed more, so when she went to grab us water, I'd come up behind her and bent her over the dining table, and spanked her until her arse was so raw. I thought I'd hurt her when I'd seen tears falling from the corner of her eye, but then she'd begged me to fuck her arse, she didn't need to beg for long once I'd realised that her tears weren't ones of pain.

"Oh... Yes... Rory, harder...ple..." I grunt a laugh, this chick is fucking insatiable. Pulling almost all the way out and slam into her, again and again, the moment I feel my orgasm building I slide my hand round to her clit and nip and rub. I feel her body shudder as she squeaks, she's close, but I need her to be closer. Adjusting slightly to get a better position, I slide two fingers into her, pumping them in and out of her pussy, while my thumb rubs her clit, and I repeatedly slide my cock in and out of her arse.

Her hands grip the edge of the dining table, her arms shaking with the force of her grip, her walls tighten around my

fingers. She's almost ready to blow, so I curl them adding just the right amount of pressure to her g-spot. Her legs almost give out as she cries out with the force of her orgasm. I continue to fuck her arse, following her over the edge only a few seconds later.

Crying out my release, my other hand lands on her back holding her in place, as we both ride it out, before collapsing on to the floor, our bodies boneless lumps, landing in a heap.

I wake I don't know how long later, Nora's arm spread across my torso, her head resting on my chest, and my arms are wrapped around her.

Without even trying this woman gives me a sense of calm, that settles my demon, giving us both what we need to breathe.

"Your heart rate has returned to normal." I'm momentarily startled, I hadn't known she was awake.

"What?"

"Your heart rate, when you got here, I thought your heart was going to burst out of your chest it was beating so fast. It's returned to normal now." She moves to get up, but I stop her, pulling her in tighter, not ready to let go of this moment.

"It's a little chilly here handsome, I really need to put something on."

"I could think of better ways to warm you up beautiful, maybe we should try those."

Her hand gently runs up and down my torso. "As much as I love that idea, I really need to get a drink and eat something, and so do you."

"Spoilsport," I huff out, she laughs, pushing herself up off me.

"I'll tell you what, let's grab some food, then you can fuck me all night long." She winks, turning and grabbing my shirt from the back of the chair and heading into the kitchen to make us some food.



I'm dragging today, in a good way. Nora and I didn't get any more sleep last night. After she'd made us some avocado toast with poached eggs, I'd spent the rest of the night fucking her in every room, in every position I could.

She has to work tonight at Niall's bar. She told me to get some rest, and that she would see me tomorrow, knowing that I have a few things to do today, but I want to see her again. I intend on being at the bar to take her home tonight after her shift.

I down my coffee and shake thoughts of Nora from my brain, pulling up outside of O'Malley's house I put my business face on before heading inside.

Dressed in my black suit, white shirt and my black shoes, I take a seat in the chair opposite Brian O'Malley's desk. I don't wait for him to offer me a seat, I'm in charge here and I want to make sure that he knows that.

I unbutton my jacket, before sitting, my eyes fixed on Brian's face, watching for any changes in his demeanour.

He's still looks pretty good for his age, the cost of running a clan doesn't appear to weigh as heavily on him as it does most leaders, but that's maybe more to do with the fact he does very little and lets his men and his son do all the running around.

He runs his hand through his red hair, letting out a small sigh. He wants to seem like he's got it together, but I see it in the movement of his eyes, he can't focus on my face for longer than a few seconds, before having to look away.

I know how intimidating my brothers and I are when we are doing business, we pride ourselves on that fact. Brian is wary of me as always, but he seems more so today, and I can't help but wonder if that is to do with all of the secrets he's keeping or if it is just to do with how intimidating I am.

He gets up from his seat and makes way to the table with the decanter of whiskey on it, picking it up and he waves it at me and smiles. I narrow my eyes slightly, and shake my head, we've never taken a drink from him when we're doing business so the fact that he's offering me one now makes me suspicious.

He pours way more than he should then heads back to his desk, his grey slacks and white shirt way too tight. The man works out daily, and the stupid fucker thinks that wearing tight fitting clothes makes him look intimidating, it doesn't...it just makes him look like he's trying too hard.

Getting bored I lean back in my seat lifting my left leg and crossing it over my right knee.

I continue to watch him, not saying anything, I want to let him stew, I want to make him sweat.

It only takes another three minutes before he caves.

“So, Rory, how are you son?”

I scoff at his use of the word son, trying to belittle me, making me feel young. It doesn't work, he may have a few years on me but that doesn't make him better or smarter.

“I'm tired O'Malley, let's just get straight to business.” I say nothing more, giving him a small edge and letting him think he's still got some control over this meeting. He's about to find out he doesn't though.

“Ok son, is the shipment ready to transfer now? I'll call my guy at the docks.”

“Half of the shipment is being transferred as we speak, I called the docks before I got here to let them know to start.”

His face starts to turn an interesting shade of grey. “Hold up there boyo, they are my men at the dock, I give the order not you. And only half of the shipment, I was told I was getting all of it, I suggest you get the rest transferred by tonight...”

I raise my hand stopping him in his tracks.

“Firstly, O’Malley, don’t call me boyo, or son. Secondly, you haven’t paid in full for the previous shipment you’re lucky to be getting anything at all. And thirdly, you may think you own those men at the docs, but you’re wrong, we do. Along with the entire gun supply in Ireland. Now, you can either accept half of the shipment or I can pull the lot and you can explain to the other clans and Syndicates why we’ve chosen to strip this country of guns. The choice is yours O’Malley, make it now.”

Chapter 11



Today's meeting with O'Malley had panned out very differently to what was originally planned.

We knew he hadn't paid in full for the last shipment, but the plan was to still give him the full load this month, only making sure that we received payment direct from his buyers cutting him out as the middle man. We'd intended to give him a small cut, smaller than he normally takes for the sale of that half, but after I'd gotten the info from Niall I'd been so pissed I'd wanted to slit Brian O'Malley's throat where he sat. But I couldn't do that without starting a war...a war that I couldn't yet justify, so I figured the best way to piss him off was to cut him out of the arms deal.

Of course, I'd clued my brothers in before I entered the meeting, but I didn't give them the real reasons why...I can't yet. I just told them that I thought we should do business differently knowing he couldn't be trusted with our weapons or money, and they'd agreed.

He was mad when he realised he wasn't getting the full shipment, but there was a flash of fear, it was only brief, but I saw it. I'm fairly certain that fear has something to do with the Russo's, dumb fuck actually thinks he can double cross us, and we wouldn't find out.

Wait until he realises, the buyers' payments aren't being made direct to him. I just wish I was going to be around to see that, I actually think his head might fucking explode.

My mood instantly shifts when I see Aunt Bernie walking out of the supermarket, her brown hair wrapped in a bun on the back of her head. She's gained a little weight the older she's gotten, and I'm pleased, she was always so thin growing up. I was worried we break her whenever we ran into her.

Her head is dipped low, but I can still see her facial features, they haven't changed. She looks just like Da and the O'Farrell's. She has such a beautiful face, that makes you love her the moment you see her.

Getting out of the car I head straight for her, she's too focussed on putting one foot in front of the other that she doesn't see me until she runs right into me "Oh bloody hell sor...Oh Jesus Rory, my boy" She drops her bags on the floor and wraps her arms around me, pulling me in for a bone crushing hug.

I wrap my arms around her, pulling her in just as tight. "Hey Aunt Bernie."

"What the hell are you doing here?" Bending to pick up her bags and the spilled shopping, I stop her pulling her back to her full height, and hand her my car keys.

"You go get in the car, and I'll grab the bags...don't look at me like that, just do as you're bloody well told." She laughs at my use of the phrase she used to say to us boys whenever we were pushing our luck with Ma.

Once I've loaded everything into the car and we're headed back to her house, she turns in her seat to face me. "Is everything OK Rory, why are you here? Where are the others?"

I reach over and grab her hand giving it a reassuring squeeze. "Easy Aunt B, I'm here on business, I just wanted to catch up with you that's all."

"Hmmm," she hums. She isn't daft, she knows there is more too it, but I'm not here to upset her. I just want to know if she has answers to some of the questions I have.

Once we get back to hers, she puts the shopping away while I make us both a coffee. "So how come you were

walking to the supermarket, where's the car?" I ask as I place our mugs down on the dining table.

Wrapping her hands around the mug, she blows on the hot liquid and takes a quick sip before she answers, "It's in the shop, it wouldn't bloody start last week so I had to get it towed to Murphy's"

"Hold up, that was last week?" Fuck me I'm angry, she hasn't had her car for a week. How the fuck has she been getting to work and back?

She laughs. "Easy son, they are busy, said they'd get to it as soon as they could."

"Who? Who said they would get to it?"

"Now don't you go causing shit for me Rory O'Farrell, I'm too old to be cleaning up your bloody messes."

I pull out my phone and hit call knowing she won't tell me who's meant to be looking at her car, Niall answers on the second ring.

"Rory, mate, what's up?"

"Aunt B's car is in your shop and has been since last week, red Toyota RAV4, they told her they were busy and would get to it as soon as they could..."

"I'll sort it mate, she'll have it back tomorrow night, and if she needs a lift anywhere tell her to call me our Colin can drive her around"

"Appreciate that, thanks."

"No problem, and tell Bernie sorry for the delay."

We hang up without another word, and just as I'm about to tell Aunt B her car will be ready tomorrow, she blindsides me and clips me across the ear. "Ouch, what the fuck was that for?"

"You know full well what that was for you little shit." Despite the slap she's smiling at me. "So, care to tell me why you're really here?"

I watch my aunt for a minute, this is what I came here for, but I don't want to upset her, and I know talking about Uncle Michael will do that. I take a large drink of my coffee and then let out a sigh. "Can I talk to you about Uncle Michael?"

I see a flicker of sadness cross her face, before she smiles and give me a nod. "What do you want to know?"

"Do you know who his family was? Where he came from?"

"I don't, he never knew where he came from either. I asked him a few times, if he wanted to try and look for any records on him to see if we could try and track down any family, but he used to get really mad, says that he didn't want anything to do with a family who just discarded him like he was trash."

"Why did he take the O'Farrell name when you guys got married rather than use his?"

"His surname was Byrne; it was given to him by the foster family he'd been living with when he was younger. While they were a nice family, he said that he didn't really feel like he was part of their family, said he just felt like a guest."

"And you never met them, right?"

"What is this about son?"

"Nothing, I just found some old journals of Da's and I was curious about our family and where we're all from that's all. I have information on Gran and Pop, I just thought it might be nice to see if we couldn't find anything out about Uncle Michael, for our Liam."

She shakes her head gets up, pouring the remainder of her coffee down the sink. "You never were a very good liar, Rory. I'm going to assume that you're keeping the truth from me for a reason, so I'm going to be totally honest with you."

I watch her standing at the kitchen sink, looking out of the window into the back garden, she has her back to me, but her shoulders are slumped. I get up from the chair walking over to her, I turn her to face me, that's when I see the tears. Pulling her into me, I wrap my arms around her, placing a kiss on the top of her head. "Aunt, B, talk to me, what's going on?"

She sniffs, straightening her spine and putting her armour back on, and for a few minutes I think she's going to give me nothing, but she walks me into the front room and we sit on the sofa, she begins to tell me about her life with Uncle Michael.

She doesn't know anything about his past, or who his family might have been, but by the time she's finished telling me everything I find myself wishing the fucker was still alive so I could kill him.

Chapter 12



“And she never told anyone, not even a friend?” Nora and I are laying in the middle of the front room floor, she’s twirling her fingers around my nipple, her naked pussy resting on my leg.

After leaving Aunt B’s I came straight here, I’d needed to talk to someone, about what she’d told me. I could have called our Lawyer Halliwell after all he is helping me, with all of this, he’s the only person who knows everything I know.

But I’d needed to talk to someone who knows Bernie just as much as I do, and I can’t go to my family with this, not yet.

“Nope, for years she kept his abuse a secret. She was afraid that he would take Liam from her or hurt him, then our Aoife moved in with them and she couldn’t leave her.”

Starting to feel uncomfortable talking about this, I get up and head to the kitchen to pour us a glass of wine, Nora turns and lays on her back, her hands under her head.

“Aoife figured it out, the fact that Michael was abusing Aunt B. That was when she told her that her fella was kicking her about too. Aunt B told her she had to tell us and da or she would. Aoife countered her and said she would tell us, if B did...she never told anyone about what happened until now, but she did tell Da about Aoife...that was only a few weeks before they were both killed.”

I down my glass of wine, then pour myself another before heading back to Nora with hers. She turns back on her side,

and rests her head on her hand, taking the glass from me and having a sip.

I sit on the floor, a little away from Nora so I can rest my back on the sofa, not wanting her so far away, I crook my finger indicating for her to come closer.

Placing her glass on the floor, she gets to her knees and crawls to me, biting her lip. My dick is instantly hard, watching her crawl along the floor, her tits swinging in front of her. I fucking love that she has no inhibitions.

I spread my legs wide open as she moves between them, running her nails up my thighs I hiss when she scratches the skin, not enough to make me bleed, but enough that my skin tingles and turns red. She wraps one hand around my shaft, slowly, pumping up and down, while the other she curls around my balls, and I almost shoot off the fucking floor when she squeezes and rolls one in her hand. “Fuck beautiful, keep that up and this won’t last long.”

She smiles and bites her lip right before she kisses the tip, then runs her tongue along the tip and all the way down the top side, then swirls it around and runs it back up the underside. I reach out to grab the back of her head, but she catches my movement out the corner of her eyes and bats my hand away. She shakes her head at me then wraps her lips around my shaft and then drops her head all the way down, until the tip of my cock is touching the back of her throat.

My head tips back, as I breathe through the sensations of her teeth gently scraping up my cock as she slowly starts bobbing her head up and down. Her tongue trails the path for her teeth to follow, I clench my muscles trying to control the building orgasm, she continues likes this and I don’t know how long I’m going to be able to hold it.

I slam my hands onto the floor then grab the sofa cushion either side of me, gritting my teeth, as she increases the speed of her movements. “Fu..uck baby, I ca..” I can barely fucking breathe I don’t have a hope in hell of stringing a full sentence together. I’m a total goner the moment her hands cup my balls and squeeze. “FUCK YES,” I bellow as my orgasm explodes

through my body shooting my hot cum down her throat. Her mouth is fixed around my shaft as she drinks down everything I give her. I look down to see her eyes, fixed on mine her lips curled slightly at the edges.

I watch her breathless as she sucks the last drips from my cock, then pulls off with a pop.

“You feel better handsome?” She grins, knowing fucking full well what she does to me.

She leans back on her heels looking mighty pleased with herself, I move so quickly she doesn't have time to react. Pushing her back to the floor, and pinning her there with my body, I grin. “My turn beautiful.”

I swallow her laugh, when my lips connect with hers, pushing between her lips and licking her own. As she tries to control the kiss, I bite her lip, pulling it in my teeth, making her moan.

I grab both of her wrists in one of my hands and raise them above her head I place kisses along her jaw, down her neck and along her collar bone, my lips move down to her breasts, licking and kissing every inch.

I grab one of her breasts in my hand squeezing and massaging it, until her nipple is a stiff peak. Then I grab it between my finger and thumb and roll it between them as I lick her other one then blow. Her breath catches, and her back arches. “You like that babe?”

“Mmm,” she moans, as I suck on her nipple, and bite. I slide my hand down her body to her pussy, my finger rubbing her clit, then running along her pussy lips. “Jesus lass, you're fucking soaked”

“For you...” she breathes... “always.”

I tease her pussy, running my fingers up to her clit, then all the way down to her arse. I feel her clench in anticipation, I know she likes it when I take her there, but not tonight.

“Please,” she begs.

“Please what?”

“I need to come Rory, please.”

I suck on her nipple with enough force to mark her. Running my fingers through her lips once more, before pushing two fingers into her pussy. I thrust them in and out, my thumb rubbing her clit and my mouth sucking and biting her nipple. Her body shakes, and her legs tighten around my arm. She arches her back, and she moans between breaths.

“Oh, God, Rory...Oh.” I let go of her wrists, and grab her other breast, twisting and pulling her nipple. Just as I feel her about to come, I move down to her pussy, clamping my lips around it just as she cries out in release. Her cum coating my tongue and my throat as I drink and lap at her juices. Loving the taste of her.

My mouth still around her pussy, I look up. Her head is tipped back, and she’s gripped both of her breasts and squeezes them so tightly it has to hurt.

I pull my fingers out of her pussy and place them into my mouth licking her come off them while I give her a few seconds to catch her breath.

I’m already hard again, I reach over grabbing a wrap and ripping the foil and sliding it over my hard cock.

Before she has a chance to fully recover, I climb over her, position myself and then slam my cock into her.

She cries out in pleasure, her legs instantly wrap around me, gripping and pulling me into her. Her hands grabbing at my shoulders, digging her nails in as I pull almost all the way out then slam back into her.

And that’s where I spend the next day and half buried inside Nora.

Chapter 13



I've been back in New York for almost a week, and I hate to say it but I fucking miss Nora. I tried to convince her to come back with me for a few days, but she has to work.

I'd said I'd cover her bills, so she didn't need to worry about them. But she's too damn proud to let anyone help her, she's never in her life asked for help from anyone. She's made it to where she is now, because of how hard she's always worked.

Shaking Nora from my thoughts I focus back on Halliwell. "What have you got for me then?"

He looks up from his laptop, and I notice how tired the guy looks. "Are you good?"

"Yeah Rory, I'm good. It's been a long week, had a few cases that weren't as easy as I'd hoped..."

"You win?"

He rolls his eyes at me, and shakes his head. "Did you seriously just ask me that? Of course, I won...what do you take me for, an amateur?"

My laugh echoes around the room, it's good that he knows me and doesn't take offence.

"So, I have the evidence you requested to prove that the O'Malley's and the Doyle's have moved into trafficking, it's all on that flash drive there."

"Thanks...I can't believe those fuckers went behind the treaty and moved into skin...there will be hell to pay when the

clans and syndicates back home find out.”

“Rory...wait, there’s more...”

I look at him, narrowing my eyes. “I’m not going to like this am I?”

He gives me a small shake of the head. “Nope...on that same flash drive you will find your Uncle Michael in footage three years after he is supposed to have been killed, I wasn’t sure it was him at first, but the more I looked, the more images I found. He thought he was being careful, I guess they all did, given the meetings he’s attending in those images and videos are auctions...”

“Son-of-a-bitch.” I stand and pace the office, my hands gripping my hair. I can’t believe the fucker faked his own death, I mean at least we get to kill the prick now, but still... how the fuck could he do this.

“Can you prove he’s a Russo?”

“I’m still working on that. But there is more...Liam knew he was alive, he’s in a number of the images taken.”

I stand in the middle of the office, I feel sick. ”Are you serious?”

“Rory, I’m gonna need you to stop cutting me off and let me finish I have more to tell you, and it just gets worse.”

“For fucks sake...ok, I’m listening.”

He waits a minute to see if I’m going to sit, but I don’t think I can, not yet anyway.

“I have traced some footage of Liam and Michael meeting up with a man in a casino about six months ago, after doing some digging I have that man’s identity, along with call records, emails and text messages between the three of them... the man in the image is Bella’s father...the content of the emails and text messages clearly indicate that her father is to worm his way back into her life, and try and separate her from Killian. The only thing her father has asked for is her fortune to be transferred to him.”

“Oh my god, so he wants to take his daughter and her fortune...”

“Rory!”

I raise my hands in apology and wait for him to continue.

“The ONLY stipulation her father made was for her fortune to be transferred to him... the instruction given to him that he has agreed to, is to split up Killian and Bella. He has made it clear to Liam and Michael, once he has her money, he doesn't care what happens to her. Seems he's pissed she chose Killian over him years ago.”

I walk back to the sofa and sit before my legs give out. I drop my head in my hands. I can't keep this from Killian he deserves to know the truth. My head is spinning, I feel sick and confused.

“Do you have any idea when he intends on trying to split them up?”

“Following the death of Marco, they've told her father to wait until they have re-established the Russo Mafia. They've told him they need a year, or their plan won't work. He seems more than happy to wait given they are funding his gambling habit”

“I need to figure this shit out sooner, rather than later, I can't keep this to myself for too long, Kill and Bell's don't deserve to be torn apart.”

I watch him typing something out on his laptop before looking back up at me. “I've arranged for a couple of men to watch her father, they'll report any moves he makes the moment he makes them. I do have some other news...the auctions we looked at before you went to Ireland, I have names for almost all of the victims, who were bought and sold. I'm afraid not all of it is good news however...”

He throws a flash drive at me, without warning. I manage to catch it before it hits me in the face, holding it out I raise my eyebrows at Halliwell.

“On that drive you will find the names and dates of births of the ones I have been able to ID, the files also include their

family members, any missing persons reports and their current whereabouts. There is also a file of those that we are too late to save.

“I have contacted a team of mercenaries who are in the process of extracting some of the woman and children from those auctions. I have arranged for some friends of mine to take care of them and find them safe places to stay until we can take down those responsible”

My phone rings on the table in front of me, reaching for it I see it's Nora calling, I can't help but smile. And then a feeling of guilt washes over me, I can't be happy when so many people are suffering.

“Don't, you're allowed to be happy, even if others aren't. One thing this job has taught me, enjoy the moments while you can. Because not everyone is guaranteed. Now go, answer your phone and let me do some work.”

I gather up my shit and head to the door, I turn to Halliwell. “Thank you, for everything that you are doing to help me, I appreciate it.”

“You pay me to help you dumbass, now get the hell out.” He faces his laptop, leaving no room for anymore discussion. Shaking my head, I turn and leave him; we both know I'm not paying him enough for what he's doing for me right now.

Chapter 14



I sit staring at the letters on the table, mine is next in line. Connor read his out to us, but I don't know if I can do it, I'm not even sure I can read it at all.

I don't want to know what he's written, I don't want to know what words of fucking wisdom he's left for me.

I glance at Connor and shake my head, I can't do it, I'm not ready. Getting up I walk out the front room, and head into the garden. I need a minute to breathe.

"Babe," Bella calls out to me, as she places a hand on my shoulder and squeezes. Lifting my hand, I grab hers and pull it to my mouth, kissing the tops of her knuckles.

She doesn't move, doesn't say anything. She just stands to my right, letting me know that's she's here for me.

Bella's is my rock; she has been from the moment I saw her all those years ago.

She may not know it, but she holds me together when I feel like I'm about to break, and right now it's taking everything in me not to shatter into a million pieces.

I should have pushed, I should have made him tell me what was going on, I should have been able to save him.

I don't know how long we stay like that for, but the longer we do, the calmer and stronger I feel. I feel like I can take anything on with her by my side.

"Kill?" I turn to see Ronan by the door, I didn't even hear him come outside, for such a big fucker he sure is quiet. I

don't say anything, I just watch and wait.

“I get it, believe me I get it...but you should at the very least come back inside. I know you may not want to share your letter or even read it, neither do Finn and I, but we're going to. Because it's what the little shit would have wanted.” I see the ghost of a smile on his face, and it makes me snort out a small laugh.

I rise and stand in front of Ronan, and it's only then that I realise how much harder it must be for him. Pulling him in for a hug, I'm surprised as shit when he lets me and even more so when his arms wrap around me.

Another few seconds and we pull away. I go to reach my hand out for Bell's but she's already there, lacing her fingers into mine.

Everyone's eyes are on me the moment I walk back in the room, but my eyes focus on Seamus, sitting on the floor, his arm wrapped around Niamh. What the fuck. Turning to Connor I see the same look on his face, giving each other a small nod, and silent conversation passes before us. We'll deal with that later.

I grab the letter off the table then take a seat next to my woman.

Taking a few deep breaths to ready myself, then I rip open the letter and read it out loud for everyone to hear.

Killian,

Before I get into it you should know that Bella's da is kicking around...Liam has been to see him, to ask for his help to get close to us and use Bell's to do it. Be warned, from what I understand her Da will ensure she signs her fortune over to him but has told Liam he doesn't care what happens to her. I'm sorry Bell's, I really am.

After that meeting, her da went off the grid again, so I have no more information to give you, but Niall has someone trying to track him down, he'll let us know if they find him.

I am sorry that I kept you in the dark for so long, that I chose not to tell you what I had found until I knew more.

A month or so into digging you asked me what I had come up with, and I told you nothing, I told you that I kept coming up against dead ends...But that wasn't entirely true. I had so many different snippets of the truths we were seeking, and not all of the information I had I could prove, and I didn't want to come to you without answers, or at least with only some of them.

Growing up, being the oldest you always had the world on your shoulders. You took it upon yourself to carry our troubles, anything that Connor couldn't smooth over, you would bear it, and carry it around with you until you could fix it.

You did your best to protect us from Da, and the Syndicate. But we saw it on your face, the pain, the fear, the stress. We saw how tired you became with each passing day.

We know Da tried to tell you that you should lead alone, and he tried to get you to accept that, but you fought so hard against it.

None of us ever knew how hard he tried, nor did anyone of us say anything to you about him trying to distance you from us. But he wrote it down. His journals are full of his thoughts and beliefs, and the conversations he had with people.

You may not have told us, but his journals do. They have told me the things he said to you, the things he made you keep from us, to 'protect' us. He believed that being so close to us made you weak, he couldn't be more wrong brother... being so close, makes you stronger, it makes us stronger.

When he died you were adamant that you didn't want to lead alone, that you couldn't do it, but you're wrong.

You were born to lead, the person you are, isn't because of what Da taught you to be, it's because of who you are, of who inherently strive to be.

Despite what you might think, leading does in fact come naturally to you. This Syndicate is yours it's meant to be yours. As your brothers we're just your partners, we're there to support you, to stand beside you when you need it.

We have our own paths to lead, and yes, we are always going to be part of the syndicate, but there will be times that our paths will simply run alongside yours, rather than on the same one as you.

Trust us, and more importantly trust yourself. You can do this; you should do this. It's time for you to take the lead and let the rest of us take the paths we choose to take.

Oh, and stop messing about big brother. Marry that fucking woman of yours, it's about time you made her an O'Farrell.

All my love Rory.

I keep my eyes low, I can't look at Bell's we've been arguing for months about her da being back in her life. I said he was up to something, but she was so sure that he just wanted to be here for her, and now Rory has confirmed what I always believed...I wanted to be wrong, fuck me did I want to be wrong. I hate that I wasn't and now Bell's had to hear that from a letter from my brother, and in front of the rest of the family. I need to support her, but the guilt I feel in this moment is crippling, the guilt from being right and the guilt for her hearing it in front of everyone.

I feel her shift, and I think she's going to walk out of the room, but she doesn't. She moves closer to me, her hands resting on top of mine, and then, barely a whisper, "I'm sorry"

My head spins to fast I almost give myself whiplash. "What?"

"You were right, and I'm sorry, I'm so sorry babe."

Cupping her face, I rest my forehead on hers. "No gorgeous, I'm sorry. I never wanted to be right, you have to

know that. And I'm sorry that you found out here, now, in front of everyone."

She opens her mouth to speak but Connor cuts in. "It's shitty news but she's in the best place for the truth to come out, surrounded by us, by her family. Because that's what we are, we're family."

"Rory was right though brother, you were born to lead...it comes naturally to you, I know you don't see it, but we do, and let's be honest how often am I wrong." He wiggles his eyebrows and bellows out a laugh as we all roll our eyes at him.

I nod not knowing what else to say. I didn't want to read that letter, and part of me wishes I hadn't. But Connor is right about us being family, and doing it here surrounded by everyone gives us the support we're all going to need to get through this.

Among the papers, the flash drives, and the photographs on the table, are two more letters. We all look down at the table, when Maddie asks the question on everyone's minds. "So who's next?"

Chapter 15



“Niall is waiting for us in London, he’s tracked down two of the victims from the last sale, they were purchased by some rich businessman. I don’t know any more than that right now.”

I’d not even had a chance to sit down on the plane before Halliwell was telling me why I was here. I get why I’m going, but knowing he’s coming with has me confused. “Err... Halliwell, why are you on my plane?”

He shakes his head and pulls out his laptop. “I’m just as invested as you are, I want these victims safe, and I’ll do whatever I have to do to help.”

I nod impressed by his determination, as we both settle into a comfortable silence for the first hour of the flight.

Halliwell called the flight and arranged the flight path, so we’re flying with a pilot and a co-pilot. Not that we need any cabin crew, but it would be nice to have someone bring me a drink rather than me having to get it myself.

“You want anything?” I ask Halliwell as I get up and head to the galley at the back of the plane.

“Coffee please,” he calls after me. Shaking my head, knowing I would have preferred whiskey, but opting for the sensible option, I make us both a coffee.

“So, what do we know?” I place our cups on the table and take the seat opposite him.

He places his laptop on the table pushing to the far side of the table and turns it so we can both see it, I watch as he leans

forward and hits the call button.

I raise my brows confused, until Niall's face fills the screen.

“Rory, Halliwell...how long before you land?”

Checking my watch, I calculate the time we took off with the current time before answering, “About five hours, ish. What do you have?”

“Cool.” His eyes aren't focussed on the screen they are watching something behind the camera, but he responds, “Two friends, made their money working in finance. They have a... penchant for the darker things in life.”

I sit up straighter, “What do you mean?”

“Found some documents relating to an assault of a woman in soho after a night out last year, she'd been raped and beaten to within an inch of her life. There was a witness, who ID'd them both but they mysteriously changed their statement before it got to court, the case was then dropped.”

“Fuck's sake.”

“Turns out one of them is the kid of a pretty influential Judge over here. Looks like he tried to have their arrest records scrubbed, but whoever did it, didn't do a very good job. My man was able to find it in the space of a few hours. And then he found these fuckers a few hours after that, along with the two women they purchased at the auction three weeks ago. We have had eyes on them ever since.”

“I figured you would probably want to be here in person, hence your last minute flight. I have arranged for a car to be waiting at the airport for you both, no driver. Halliwell knows my location, I have men on standby and a van ready to grab the woman when you get here.”

“Thanks man, I appreciate it, but are you sure we can afford to wait to rescue these women?”

“Yeah, the shitheads aren't with the girls right now. I have men watching the little fuckers, we have time. Get some rest

on that flight man, you look like shit. I'll let you know if anything changes. See you in a few hours."

Niall cuts the call as I blow out an exaggerated breath, and look to Halliwell, he shakes his head and then lets it fall to the back of the seat. "I know man, I want to see them safe just as much as you. I'm working on a safehouse for them, Niall has already arranged for a doctor and nurse to be there when we get them out." He doesn't say anything else, just stays with his eyes closed and I decide coffee just isn't going to cut it and head to the back to grab a whiskey.

We spend the rest of the flight researching, trying to find the rest of the victims of the last auction.

We'd tried to stop the auction, we'd tried to shut it down, but we couldn't. No matter what we did the organisers found a way around it.

A few hours later and Halliwell and I are on the road on our way to the safe house when my phone dings with a message.

Liam

You are becoming a pain in my arse.

You need to back off cousin, stop trying to find me and stop messing with my business.

You don't, and you're going to regret it.

I scoff, and shake my head. "Everything ok Rory?" Halliwell gives me a quick sideways glance, before casting his eyes back on the road.

"Aye, just a bug that needs squished." I'm vague, but I can feel his eyes on me.

"Talk to me Rory." I ignore Halliwell's request and hit reply on the text.

Me

Stop doing shady business and I'll stop interfering.

I'll find you Liam, I won't stop until I do and then, I'll keep going until I've destroyed your so-called business.

I turn in my seat so I can watch Halliwell's face, I want to see his reaction when I tell him.

"I've been getting messages from Liam for about the last month, telling me to back off, and stop messing with his business. The whiny little fucker thinks he can threaten me."

"Are you serious? He's been threatening you? Rory, why didn't you tell me?"

"Because there isn't a single thing we can do about it until I find him."

"We should bring your brothers in on it, I think it's time to clue them in."

"No." I leave no room for argument; he knows how I feel about this.

"I don't have all the answers yet, they all have their own shit going on, I'm not ready to bring more misery to them. I need to know more before I drop this shit on to them."

We pull up behind Niall's car, cutting our conversation off.

Before we've even had a chance to get out of the car, Niall is out of his rounding on the passenger side. I roll down the window, I give him a chin lift. "What's going on?"

He looks to a large, detached house at the end of the street then looks back at me. His expression full of worry. "We gotta move, the fuckers got back about fifteen minutes ago, I was just about to head in with my men."

"Alright, get your men gathered, I'll meet you at the door in two minutes." Niall walks away pulling out his cell, and I turn to Halliwell as I pull out guns left in the glove box for us. Thinking he won't want a weapon, I move to place it back in the glove box, but his hand lands on mine, stopping me then grabs the gun from me.

"You go in...I go in."

"You're a lawyer Halliwell, not a fucking gangster."

"I served in the US Army for six years, I can handle a weapon. You go in, I go in."

I smirk and give him a nod.

Getting out of the car, we give each other one last look before jogging across the street to where Niall and his men wait for us before we breach.

Chapter 16



We breach the house and split off in different directions. Niall and three of his men take the upstairs, and Halliwell, two of Niall's men and myself, take the downstairs. We clear the rooms on either side of us, trying to be as quick and as efficient as possible.

The fuckers will know we're here; we weren't exactly quiet when we kicked in the front and back doors. So we need to be quick, we can't risk them hurting those girls any more than they already have.

I'm heading into the kitchen when I hear a noise behind me. Spinning my gun raised, I let out a breath and drop my weapon when I realise it's only Niall.

"Upstairs is clear, no sign."

"Same, I'm just about to clear the kitchen."

Giving me a nod, he moves to my right. The house is huge, and the kitchen is no exception. I round the left-hand side, as Niall takes the right. The kitchen is large open plan, so there really isn't anywhere to hide. I shake my head then look over to Niall who gives a chin lift toward a cupboard door.

I furrow my brows, and make my way over to him, he points to it and whispers "Basement"

"Really?"

"Yeah...together?"

I nod and raise my gun just as Halliwell and the rest of Niall's guys enter the kitchen behind us. Just as we are about

to reach for the door, three of his men step forward and move us out of the way. Giving Niall a look, he nods and his men take the lead, opening the door then heading down the steps on the other side of it. Well, fuck me, he was right.

Heading down the corridor in the basement, we can hear men's voices at the end, and the whimpers of at least one of the women. My rage builds, and I'm done waiting. Storming ahead with the others hot on my heels, I make it to the back of the basement, to find both men standing over the women, laughing.

When I look down, I see one of the women is out cold, the other tears streaming down her face. They are both covered in cuts and bruises, dried blood coating parts of their bodies.

I cut a glance to Niall, as he does the same to me. One look and we charge for the fuckers in front of us, they realise we're there seconds before we reach them.

I catch a glint of a blade in one of the fuckers hands just as he moves to one of the women with it. Before we have a chance to do anything to the piece of shit we hear a gun shot and the knife slips from his arm. His other hand goes to his shoulder, where a bullet just tore through it.

I pistol whip the fucker across the head, knocking him out cold as Niall takes down the other guy. "Tie this fucker up," I yell to nobody as I yank his arms around his back, not giving a shit about the bullet hole he already has, the son-of-a-bitch has a lot more coming.

One of Niall's men comes over with rope and duct tape, as I move to check the pulse of the woman who's out cold on the floor. But before I get there the other one screams and launches herself at me. She doesn't get far though, she's shackled to the wall and I see her shoulder is already dislocated, but she doesn't look like she feels it. The look on her face is feral, she just wants to protect her friend.

Not wanting to scare her anymore that she already is, I raise my hands up in a defence motion. "Please, I need you to breathe and listen to me, we're not going to hurt you. We're

here to help you, but I need to check your friend here for a pulse, I need to know if she's alive. Can you let me do that?"

The room is silent as all eyes are on me and the woman, nobody wants to move and scare her. Giving her another minute, I lean back on my haunches. "Please, trust me," I whisper.

She takes several deep breaths and then her shoulders sag, and she nods at me, giving permission to check her friend.

"Thank you." I reach forward trying to find the pulse point on this woman's neck, but there is so much blood I have to clear it before I can hit the right spot.

The room is thick with tension as everyone waits to see if she's still alive.

We let out a collective sigh when I give them a nod letting them know she's still alive.

"Her pulse is weak man; we need that doc now." I look across at Niall, he has the other fucker on the floor, a boot in his neck. He's alive and awake, but a little beaten. It's nothing compared to what he'll receive later.

A few minutes later, the doc arrives as I'm loosening the shackles on the unconscious woman. The doc starts to give her a quick examination. When the other woman puts her hand on my arm, I shudder at how cold her fingers are, removing my jacket I place it around her shoulders, then look at her.

She's pretty. Her hair beneath the blood and dirt is a blond colour. Her eyes are a mix of blue and grey, but they look so dull and lifeless, like her soul has just given up. It's her features that surprise me. Getting a closer look at her now, I realise how young she looks. I look at Halliwell, silently asking if he's managed to ID these woman yet, he shakes his head fully understanding what I'm asking.

Turning back to the woman, I place her hands in mine. "Can you tell me your name lass?"

Her breath catches, and I see her lips crack as she speaks, "It's Amy, she's Jenna."

“We’re gonna get you girls out of here. Then we’ll find your family, OK?”

“Thank you, please tell me she’s OK?”

“The doc is looking at her now, he’ll let us know as soon as he’s checked her over. Why don’t you let me help you upstairs and we can get you some water?” I go to stand, but she pulls me back down.

“No, please I don’t want to leave her, I promised I wouldn’t leave her alone.”

“Hey.” I brush the hair away from her face, then tilt her chin so she’s looking directly at me. “She’s not alone, we won’t leave either one of you alone. We’ve got you.”

The tears roll down her face, and she throws herself at me. I lift her into my arms, tucking my arm under her legs. She pulls her face into my chest, grabbing at my t-shirt and sobs. Halliwell follows as I carry her up to the kitchen while the doc works on her friend.

Chapter 17



Almost three hours later and we're in the safehouse. The doc has Jenna in one of the rooms upstairs where he and two nurses are treating her injuries. He'd wanted to get one of the nurses to check Amy over, but she'd refused until they made sure the other girl was OK.

The safehouse is small, only big enough to hold a handful of people. There are two bedrooms upstairs along with a bathroom. The front room is through a door on the right-hand side of the corridor as you enter the front door and the kitchen is through a door straight ahead.

Amy is sitting curled up on the sofa, with a blanket wrapped around her. I'd given her a glass of water when we arrived, but the doc asked me not to give her anything else.

Halliwell is sitting on the chair in the corner trying to make himself look as small as possible.

I on the other hand am sitting the arm of the sofa, about two feet from Amy, waiting. I want to start asking her questions, but I don't want to scare her off.

I look down at her, she has her head cast down low, her hands trembling around the glass of water she's holding. Looking across at Halliwell, he just shrugs his shoulders, fucking helpful.

I shift, so my body is angled a little more toward her. She surprises me when she speaks first. "When can I go home?" Her question is a little more than a whisper, her voice is laced with fear.

Reaching over I take the glass from her and place it on the floor. “We need you to answer some questions first lass, but we promise we’re going to get you home as soon as we can, you and your friend.”

“Sister...”

“What?” I’m not sure I heard her right.

“Jenna...she’s my sister.” Finally looking at me, her eyes glistening with tears, but she refuses to let them fall.

“Amy.” I take a chance and reach for her, she flinches when my hand touches hers, but she doesn’t pull away. “Can you tell us your surname, and where you’re from, then can you tell us what happened?”

I see her visibly swallow, as a single tear falls down her face. “We’re from Manchester, our surname is Peters. I don’t know when, maybe three months ago, some men broke into our house in the middle of the night. Our father was beaten before we were dragged out of the house and thrown into the back of a van. I don’t even know if our father is still alive, I couldn’t get a look at him, but there was so much blood.”

I hand her the glass of water and let her take a couple of sips, letting her catch her breath as I look over Halliwell who’s tapping away on his laptop, I’m guessing trying to find out more about her.

“Do you think Jenna is going to be OK? I’ve tried so hard to keep her safe. Everything they wanted to do to her, I let them do it to me, as long as they left her alone. But today those men, they just wouldn’t stop, they just kept hitting her. I tried, but I was chained up and I couldn’t get free...”

“Hey...I need you to breathe, can you do that for me?” I move from the arm of the sofa to the seat next to her, and pull her into me. I’m relieved when she leans into me letting me comfort her. “The doc and his team are doing everything they can to take care of her, I’m sure they’ll let us know what’s going on as soon as they can.”

Glancing over at Halliwell I notice he has a look of pure rage on his face. Raising my eyebrows in question at him, he

looks Amy, then to me and shakes his head.

Just as he's about to speak, one of the nurses appears in the doorway. "Your friend is stable, the doctor is just finishing up with her, you can go and see her soon. But...only after I have checked you over, OK?"

"She's my sister, she's going to be OK?"

"I won't lie, she has a lot of injuries, and long road ahead. But she's doing ok at the moment. Now, how about I check you over then we can get you upstairs so you can sit with her."

Amy nods, and uncurls her legs from under her. I quickly get up and help her to her feet. As she goes to walk away, Halliwell stops her, "Amy."

She turns to look at him, "What's wrong?"

"You've been missing for a little over four months, your father...he's alive, and has been looking for you since you were taken."

I grab her before she falls to her knees. "Wait, he's alive, he's OK?"

He simply smiles and nods, as Amy breaks down in my arms. The nurse takes her from me after a minute telling me. "I've got her." Before leading her upstairs to her sister.



Ten hours later and we're in the air headed back to New York. Neither one of us have spoken much since Amy divulged what her and her sister had been through. Thinking you know what happens to victims of trafficking and actually hearing it first-hand are very different. They've both got such a long road ahead of them, but I am in complete and utter fucking awe of how strong those two girls are. When Halliwell told me Amy was only twenty and Jenna just seventeen, I lost my shit. I was glad when Niall called and asked if I wanted in on teaching a hard lesson to those worthless fuckers who we'd rescued the girls from.

I'd thought about stopping off in Ireland for a couple of days to spend with Nora but torturing and killing those guys didn't soothe my demon enough, and I don't like being around her when I'm this angry. So, I'm headed home to wallow. At least I can get in the ring with Ronan, he'll help me relieve some of the tension I feel and won't ask me a shit load of questions.

I can't settle. I'm going to be stuck on this flight for another five hours, without any space to breathe is putting me on edge. Every time I try to relax, my mind instantly goes to where those girls were held, and the torment they've been through.

Deciding I need to find something to focus on, I reach for my bag with Da's journals in.

Pulling one out I flick to a random page and start reading.

Today wasn't a good day, I'll never get over the look of complete hurt that Mary had on her face after I'd accused her of having an affair.

But I just can't seem to shake the feeling the Finn isn't mine, the kid looks nothing like me. Sure he looks like my wife, he even has the look of his brothers, but he's the only one that has that fiery red hair and bright green eyes.

Every time I look at him, I see my wife, but I see nothing of me in there. Even Darragh has raised it. He's questioned me so many times if Finn is mine, and I've defended Mary every single time, but the more he ask's the more I wonder.

I know she loves me, but I'm always busy with the Syndicate, what if she has found someone else and just doesn't want to leave me for the sake of the kids.

I know I've hurt her I'd screamed in her face about her whoring about and Finn not being mine. She'd begged me to believe her, but when I said that he was no child of mine and he would get nothing from me or the Syndicate, she stopped, she looked so hurt and beaten.

And then Finn, he's just a boy. Telling him that he was a bastard and he'd never be part of this family might have

been a bit harsh. But if he isn't mine then I can't risk him getting his hands on everything I've worked for. I won't allow it.

The sooner Darragh figures out who the kids father is the better, then I can beat the shit out of him. He can have his bastard kid and they can fuck off.

I throw the journal down and pick up another flicking through the pages looking for anything on Finn. I can't believe that's what Da believed. I can't believe that's what Darragh believed.

I stop flicking the moment I see what I'm looking for and read on.

Jesus, I'm the worst. I can't believe I've wasted so many years hating Finn and resenting Mary, accusing her of having an affair.

When he came to me today with that paternity test my fucking heart broke. But not as much as Finn's...

He showed me the results, plain as day. I'm his Da, but because I have spent many years believing he wasn't, my pride fucking won out. I accused my boy of having the results fixed, I accused him of lying, and then told him he'd never be a part of this Syndicate.

All because I was too proud to admit that I was wrong and have been for so long. I watched his face change and his heart shatter into a million pieces before walking away from me.

Oh fuck, that's why he was always so distant with us, why he always stood on the side lines. He never felt like one of use, because he was never treated like one of us.

Our Da broke him, he cast him aside like he was nothing and then when he realised he was wrong, he was too fucking proud to admit it.

We need to fix this; we need to make sure Finn feels like he's one of us. We need to make sure he knows that he's our brother, always.

Chapter 18



I'm next, it has to be me. Ronan isn't ready for his letter, but the truth is neither am I. I don't want to know what's in that letter.

I know that Connor and Killian seem to be getting something from theirs, but there is nothing he can possibly say that would give me any closure or make me feel any better.

I stare at the letter sitting on the table, not sure what to do. I can feel the eyes of every person in the room on me, watching, waiting to see what my move will be. I know they want me to open it, but I'm not sure I can.

"You don't have to do this brother," Killian's voice pulls me from my thoughts, I look up at him, my eyebrows pinched.

"You don't want to read it, then don't. You don't want to read it in front of us, you don't have to."

I swallow a lump in my throat, I know shouldn't be this scared to read a letter, it's just a goddamned piece of paper. I look across at Ronan, his eyes locked on my face, I open my mouth to speak to say I have no idea what exactly, but he beats me to it.

"I know what's going through your head right now, stop it, don't go back there. If you think there is a chance reading that letter will take you back to that day then don't do it, wait until you're ready."

"If you need to read that letter in your own time on your own, then you should. You have to do what's right for you, not

want you think is right for us, or what you think we want you to do.”

“Ro...”

“No...I don't know what I'm going to choose to do, I'm not there yet, but I will do what I feel is right for me. And it's what you should do too.”

Cara gets up from the sofa, then heads into the kitchen with Alex. I have no idea what she's up to, but I can't think clearly enough to ask.

The rest of us sit in silence for several minutes, including Maddie. They all wait patiently for me to decide what I want to do.

My head starts to spin, and I feel like I'm starting to lose control. Clenching my fists I stand and go head out the door just as Cara reappears with Alex, they have drinks for everyone.

I step aside to let the women in, but Cara steps with me, and guides me back, effectively stopping me from leaving the room.

Once she's handed out drinks and placed what I assume is my whiskey on the table she's back in front of me. She places one hand on my upper arm, the other she places on my chest over my heart.

“I'm here...no matter what, you've got this.”

I can feel my breathing start to slow as I place my forehead against hers, I can do this. As long as I have her, I can do this.

She guides me back to the sofa, handing me the glass of whiskey as we sit back down. As I take a large sip, I can feel everyone watching me. But none of that matters when she's in my space.

As I reach down to place the glass on the floor next to my feet, Connor hands me the letter, then takes a seat next to me.

With my wife holding on to me, and the strength I gain from my brother's proximity, I open the envelope and pull out the letter, along with two journals that have pages marked.

Finn,

Hey baby brother.

There are so many things that I want to teach you, so many things that I need to show you, but the universe has decided that I'm out of time.

I can't explain how I know this, but by the time you read this letter I'm not going to be around to show you those things.

I've put together a pack, of some things that will help you. Halliwell has it, he will give you it when he hands everything else over.

You're good at computers and hacking. You're a bloody quick study, and with a little hard work you're gonna be better than I am. So, I know that I'm leaving everything in good hands.

I know you and I both know that you won't feel comfortable sitting my space at the club, but I also know that you won't want to change it. But I'm telling you to change it. That space is no longer mine, it's yours and you should make it yours. A space that you're comfortable working in.

I know what you went through growing up, what Da believed and how he treat you.

Please don't for one minute think that I am condoning how he treated you or Ma when you were growing up, but I can tell you that he regretted it. He was just too stubborn and proud to admit he was wrong.

I have included two of Da's journals in with your letter, the pages that I have marked link specifically to you. Trust me when I tell you that you need to read them. He was sorry Finn, he really was, even if he couldn't admit it.

I need you to know that no matter what though, you always were and will always be one of us. You have a place, you belong in this family.

I never understood you growing up, you were so polite and respectful of us. But you would never let us in, and you never got too close to us. Now I know why, now I know why you behaved like you did always with Ma or alone.

I hate that you felt like you couldn't be around us, I hate that Da made you feel that way. We have a lot of making up to do on his behalf, and I'm hoping that one day after you've read his journals, you'll maybe find a way to forgive him.

Find your feet in the Syndicate, get to grips with the security side then you need to find yourself a good woman and settle down. You have so much love and compassion to give you should find someone to share that with.

You are one of us, you always have been, and I'm so goddamned lucky to have called you family. To have called you, my brother.

I'm so proud of you and the man that you have become.

You have an incredible future ahead of you, one that includes your brothers.

I love you baby brother.

Rory.

Cara's hand grips mine, and I hear her sniff. Glancing at her, I reach up and wipe away the tears running down her face. I give my woman a gentle kiss on her lips, tasting her salty tears, and I'm instantly calm.

Looking at the journals on my lap the I look to my brothers, and shake my head. "I'm not ready to read those, not yet."

I look to Killian; he gives me a chin lift then stands, casting a quick glance to Ronan, he looks back at me. "Con, Finn, Ro...lets go get some air."

Without hesitation we all stand and follow him out the back, knowing that he's giving us all a breather.

I need to get my head around my letter, and what Rory said about Da being sorry, but not able to say it.

And Ronan needs time to decide what his move will be. He needs this breather more than any of us.

The four of us sit on the back porch, a bottle of whiskey between us. No words are spoken, but the silence say's everything that needs to be said. We're family, we're brothers, always.

Chapter 19



I haven't been able to sleep properly since I got back from London. I keep thinking about Amy and Jenna and the shit that they have been through. I know they are safe, we moved the girls and their father to a safe house, and we have security team with them. We want to take care of them, before they go home.

Turns out they don't want to go home though, they have too many bad memories of the house they were taken from. So, Niall is sorting out somewhere new for them to live with new identities.

Liam was pissed we'd interfered again, and that we'd rescued two of the victims, right out of the clutches of two of his best clients. He won't be getting their business anymore, there was nothing left of them. Not once Niall and I had finished with them.

He's so damn pissed off; he's been sending me images and videos of the pain and torture that is being inflicted on the victims we haven't been able to save.

Every time I close my eyes, I see the faces of everyone I've failed. I see their pain, and torment, the guilt that runs through me at times brings me to my knees. But it's that guilt that fuels me to keep going.

I have to do what I can. I know I can't save them all, but I can try, and I will do everything in my power to bring Liam and his organisation down, I don't care what it costs.

My phone ringing clears the thoughts from my head. I swipe answer on the phone with a smile. “Hey baby, how are you?”

“Hey handsome,” Nora responds, but she seems a little quiet and I’m instantly on edge.

“What’s wrong, are you OK?”

“I’m fine Rory, relax. I heard about London, and I wanted to see you. How about you let me in...”

Before I have a chance to respond there’s a knock at the door, it can’t be...she wouldn’t, would she?

“Nora?” I get up from my seat and head to the front door. She doesn’t say anything on the phone, and just as I reach for the handle the phone cuts out. Swinging open the door, I’m greeted by the beautiful smile of my woman.

She steps over the threshold and drops her bag at her feet. Before I even have the door closed I have her in my arms, her legs wrapped around me.

Our lips connect and my mind settles. She may not know it, but this woman is my fucking home.

I walk forwards, pinning her back against the wall. One hand under her arse, the other roaming up her body, pushing her shirt up toward her neck, exposing her fucking amazing breasts, her already taught nipple pushing on the lace of her bra. I clamp my mouth around it and suck, hard. Her fingernails scrape the length of my scalp as she runs her hand up my neck and holds my head in place.

Slowly letting her legs drop to the floor, my other hand moves to the waistband of her leggings. Using one finger to tug at it, I slide my hand inside both her leggings and panties and cup her mound. I run my middle finger down her already soaked pussy lips, before pushing it into her and curling just a little. She bucks into my hand with surprise then digs her nails into my head and neck.

I let go of her nipple and move to the other, making sure I give it the same amount of attention as I did the other.

Pulling away, I slide my hand around her neck pinning her to the wall, her hands resting on my shoulder.

My eyes never leave hers as I slide another two fingers into her then slide them out before pushing them back in with force, her breathing stutters, and her pupils dilate.

She digs her nails into my shoulders as I fuck her with my fingers, gliding them in and out, twisting and turning them. Then I curl them inside her as I feel her walls clench around them, her body tenses and shakes.

I slam my lips onto hers, my tongue licks hers holding it down in place as she cries out her orgasm into my mouth.

I continue to finger fuck her until she rides out her orgasm to the end, her body relaxes into my hold, completely spent. Sliding my fingers out I bring them to my lips and put all three in my mouth sucking her taste from them. Her eyes darken, and I think she might be ready for more, but she closes them, taking a little too long to re-open them, and I know my woman needs a rest.

I pick her up into my arms and carry her upstairs to my bedroom. Gently placing her top of the covers, I place a kiss on her forehead and whisper, "Get some rest, I have a little work to do."

Her eyes flicker as she offers me a tired smile. I can feel her eyes on me as I make my way over to the door. Turning I give her a wink, before closing the door, letting her get some rest after her flight.



"Oh fuck," I call out, Nora moans around my cock. Her tongue rolling around the shaft, I wrap her hair around my fist, holding her in place.

Her hand grips my thigh, her other rubs and massages my balls. I feel them pull up, the tell-tale tingle in my spine. "Nora," I warn her.

“Mmm,” she groans, the vibrations send shivers up my spine, and I can’t hold it. “Fuck,” I call out as I cum in her mouth. She drinks my cum down like her life depends on it, she continues to massage my balls until there’s nothing left in me for her to take. I loosen my grip on her hair slightly, pulling her off my cock. She licks the last drips from the tip, before licking her lips, then kissing me. I love tasting myself on her.

I track her movements around my kitchen. She came downstairs a little while ago, completely naked. Before I’d even had a chance to acknowledge it, she’d wrapped her mouth around my cock.

She grabs a glass of water then walks back to me, her hand trailing gently along the white countertop. Handing me the glass, she climbs onto the counter placing her feet on my thighs, and opening her legs giving me an unobstructed view of her wet and ready pussy.

I run my tongue along my lips, then bite the bottom one. Taking a deep breath, I somehow manage to look away from her beautiful pussy and fix my eyes firmly on her face.

“Why are you here babe?”

She smiles, leaning forward, placing her hands on my shoulder, so she can slide her arse closer to the edge of the counter. “I saw Niall in Ireland, he mentioned that you guys had been in London together. The guy looked haunted...he finally told me what went down...”

“I’ll fucking kill him.”

“Calm down there Rocky, he didn’t go into too much detail he just gave me the basics. I figured you could use the escape.”

Before I have a chance to respond my phone beeps with a message. Casting a quick glance at the screen my mood instantly changes as I swipe it off the counter, turning it away from Nora.

Liam

You’re a fucking prick, you know that right?

Me

You might have mentioned that once or twice.

Liam

You're fucking dead Rory...I'm going to enjoy fucking beating the fuck out of you, before watching you take your last breath.

Me

I'm getting a little bored with your threats Liam. How about you just grow up and come and face me, or are you too scared?"

Liam

I'm not scared you dick.

Me

You say that but...

Liam

Your days are numbered.

I'll have one less cousin to worry about by the end of the week.

Done with his shit, I don't bother responding. I turn off my phone then throw it on the counter.

I look at Nora, naked and ready for me on the counter. "I need you to make me forget baby."

"Then fuck me Rory."

I place my hands behind her knees, pulling her so close to the edge she has to use my body to stop herself from falling.

Leaning forward placing one of her legs over my shoulder, I place my mouth over her pussy, and clamp my teeth around her lips, sucking as I bite.

She falls back on the counter as I slide my tongue in her pussy, and my thumb on her clit, one finger alongside my tongue, and my little finger rimming her asshole. I feel her clench, then relax as I slide my little finger in.

She grips my head holding me in place, and I smile the only thought that crosses my mind, is if I'm going to die then

I'm going to fucking enjoy having my woman here.

Chapter 20

Halliwell

Since being back from London, I've hardly left the house. After seeing what those girls had been through, I haven't wanted to be away from my wife and kids.

I'd slept in my daughter's room for the first two nights. Every time I'd tried to sleep in my own bed, I'd had nightmares about men trying to take her away from me.

I didn't tell my wife what was going on, she knew I had seen somethings that I was struggling to get my head around, but she hasn't pushed for me to talk about it.

I called the office again this morning and said I was working from home again; I know I need to go in at some point but everything I need to do right now I can do from home.

I don't have many cases on my docket for the next couple of weeks, I've made sure of it. I want to follow through with this research that Rory as asked me to do.

He doesn't think we'll have the answers before something happens to him, and as much as I would love to give him what we're looking for, I have a feeling he might be right.

I know about all of the threats he's been receiving he's told me all about them, I wish he'd tell his brothers, but he won't. He doesn't want them to know anything until we have all of the answers.

“Daddy.”

“Hey munchkin.” My little girl comes flying into my office, a smile on her face, a paper in her hand.

“Mommy said you were sad...I drew you a picture.” She climbs up into my lap and I close my computer and hide the papers on my desk. She places a kiss on my cheek, and wraps an arm around me, shoving the drawing in my face.

“Is that us at the park?” I ask her, moving the paper a little bit away from my face so I can actually see it.

She grins at me, and nods so hard her hair tie falls out. Giggling, she climbs off my lap. “I love you daddy” and runs to the door. “Mommy, my hair.”

And just like that, she’s gone.

My mood has improved slightly, having her in my space always puts a smile on my face but knowing what I have to dive back into makes me feel sick.

Four hours later and I’m no further forward. I know Michael is alive, I have images of him in the states, Ireland, England, Italy, France, but I can’t seem to find anything recent. The last image I have is from four months ago when he was on a boat in the waters just off Monte Carlo.

Needing to do something else, I move onto the next thing Rory has me doing.

I set up the safehouse, I’m the only person who knows where it is. Even Rory won’t know, his stipulations. He doesn’t want to risk her safety, especially not now.

Once I have the safehouse arranged and secured, I move onto her identity. It won’t be a permanent change, only for the sake of her travel arrangements. We can’t risk anyone figuring out who she is, or who she’s connected to.

Three name changes, with dates and places of birth all different too, her travel is set. Flight out of Ireland, into London, then a ferry into France. From there she’ll travel by road into Italy.

Having her travel into Italy is a bit of a risk, but they won’t be looking that close hopefully. She’ll take a flight from Italy

into Morocco and that's where my involvement ends. My sources will stay with her and get to the destination a week later.

Everything for her temporary life is set up. She's not happy about it, but she knows it has to happen. She knows this is the safest thing for her. Rory won't have it any other way.

I pick up my phone to drop him a text to let him know it's all taken care of, but he call's my phone before I have a chance to open the app.

"Perfect timing, everything is taken care of, she leaves tonight..."

"Good...listen, Halliwell, my time is up..."

"Wait, what do you mean your time is up?"

"Liam, he's on he's way here..."

"Then get the fuck out of there Rory, fucking run."

He sighs down the phone. "You and I both know it's too late for that. One way or another it ends today. Listen, I need to know you remember everything you promised me..."

"Rory, please just run."

"Drake...for fucks sake man, I need to you to focus. I'm done... I can't run. I have to try and end this, but I'm almost certain fate is not on my side. So, I need you to follow through. Find Michael, you don't tell my brothers until you do. You understand?"

"I understand," I can barely get the words out; my breath catches in my throat.

"Make sure you confirm Anjelica's involvement in the trafficking ring, even if she isn't directly involved, she knows about it. I need you to confirm either way."

"I need you to find Michael, find that worthless piece of shit. Find out where he and his spineless son are hiding out, then lead my brothers to him."

There's a few seconds of silence before he continues, "Shit...they're here."

“Rory...”

“No...Nora, you make sure she's safe, you make sure nothing happens to her. And when my brothers ask, you bring her home to them. Do you hear me? You fucking bring my girl home.”

I don't get a chance to respond. I hear the obvious noise of a door being kicked in, then shouting, I hear Rory yelling something about needing back up, then I hear a scuffle before the phone cuts out.

I try to call him back, but it just goes to voicemail. Knowing this is it, he's not going to make it, I do what I agreed to do and call 911 instead of his brothers.

Chapter 21



The calls, texts and emails from Liam are relentless.

Over the last couple of days, he's none stop harassing me, sending me fucking images and videos of woman and children I've failed to save. I tried so hard to save so many, but it feels like I've not tried hard enough.

He'd started with the constant threats, but he soon realised that they weren't getting to me. He figured out he gets a bigger response if he threatens the others or sends me the shit, he's been sending me.

Having Nora here was good for a little while, but then after she told me what she did, the anxiety fucking crippled me. I've got Halliwell doing everything to make sure that she's safe.

I need her away from this mess until it's sorted out. I can't put her at risk, I won't.

It took some convincing, she's so bloody independent. I thought she was going to turn me down at first, so I told her, I told her more than I've ever told anyone before. I didn't tell her everything, I couldn't, I didn't want to put any unnecessary stress on her.

My laptop beeps letting me know I'm almost out of time. I've dealt with everything; I just have two more calls to make. The first I'm not yet ready for, but I have to do it, it's now or never.

Picking up my phone I hit call, it only takes a few seconds for her face to fill the screen.

“Hey, Rory.”

“Hey, baby.”

My voice breaks, and I take a deep breath before continuing, “I don’t have long. I need to tell you something and I need for you to just listen, can you do that for me?”

“Yes.”

I see the tears fall down her face, and all I want to do is reach out and wipe them away.

“Halliwell will call you as soon as he has sorted the arrangements for you to be moved into the safehouse. I need you to do everything he tells you to do.”

I wait for her to acknowledge, like the amazing woman she doesn’t interrupt, she just nods.

“Nora, I know we took too long to get here, and I know that it’s too late for us. But I need you to know that I have loved you since we were fifteen years old. You were the dreams to my nightmares, the right to my wrong, the peace to my chaos, you were and will always be my home. You need to stay safe for me and take care of that little package. I love you baby, and I will love you even in death.”

“Rory...”

“I have to go; I need to call Halliwell.”

“Wait,” she sobs on the screen, and struggles to catch her breath. “I’m never going to see you again, am I?”

“I’m sorry baby, no.”

“Then I need to tell you, I love you too. I have always loved you. Our time may have been short, but these last few months have been the best of my life. I wish things could be different, but I know that they can’t. I promise I’ll stay safe; I’ll do everything you ask.”

I blow her one last kiss then cut the call. I need to stay strong, and watching her break is killing me.

Pulling myself together, I hit the call button one last time.

“Perfect timing, everything is taken care of, she leaves tonight...”

“Good...listen, Halliwell, my time is up...”

Before I have time to finish the call Liam comes crashing through my door with J hot on his fucking heels...

“You fucking spineless son-of-a-bitch, you couldn’t even come alone. You need your boy here to help...”

His fist connects with my face, and I swing back, catching him on the side of the head. He stumbles and J darts for me, but I run at him. My shoulder connecting with his stomach, he grunts, and rains down punches on my back as I push him backwards. I manage to get him on the floor, but Liam grabs me from around the neck and pulls me off his friend. I grab at his arm as he squeezes. I can hear him laughing as J lands punch after punch into my stomach, my chest and my face, I kick out, but I’m not making much headway.

Liam’s grip around my neck eases a little and just when I think I have a chance to move, he throws me slamming my head into the side of the counter. I’m momentarily stunned, I shake my head to try and dust away the clouds when I see something silver in the corner of my eye, I move just in time as J swipes at me with a blade. The fucker misses and I launch for him again, pushing him back then swiping his legs out from under him. He hits the floor again and I spin, and duck just before Liam clocks me across the head.

I punch him in his balls and he doubles over, taking the opportunity while I can, I land a quick punch into the side of his head and he goes down. He looks like he’s out so I turn my attention to J, but he recovered quicker than I thought and he elbows me on the side of the head that already took a knock. The sudden pain and the feeling of sickness overwhelms me, I turn just in time to see Liam raise his gun.

I don’t feel the bullet, but I hear it leave the chamber.

I see the smirk on his and J’s faces, then I hear them laugh.

I stumble back, grabbing for the counter to steady myself. My breathing becomes shallow, and I suddenly feel cold. I feel

my strength ebb away, as my knees buckle. Then Liam is there again, in my fucking face. “I told you your time was up.”

I laugh, “Yeah, for once in your miserable fucking life you were right.” My knees finally give out and I hit the floor, kneeling I look back up at him.

“You may have killed me, but you’re a coward, you couldn’t do it alone. And by the time my brothers are finished with you, you’ll wish you were dead.”

He places his boot in the centre of my chest and pushes me, so I fall on my back. I’m losing feeling in my body, there’s nothing I can do to fight him off.

He kneels beside me, his face inches from mine as he whispers in my ear. “Here’s one last thought for you, I’m off to Ireland tonight, and I’m going to have some fun with your little whore before I sell her to the sickest bidder I know.”

I hear him and J laugh, as my eyes flicker closed, the darkness calling me. He thinks he’ll win, he’ll never get his hands on her. He doesn’t have the reach to get to Nora, I’ve made sure of that, he has no idea one day he’s going to lose it all.

I hear a voice calling out to me, it feels like I’m under water. I know someone is calling to me, but I can’t make out who it is.

Then hands, I feel hands on my chest pushing down. Oh fuck it hurts and try to suck in a breath only my throat feels like its full, I cough and something wet hits my face, forcing my eyes open. Everything is blurry around me, but I can make out a shape kneeling over me, it’s familiar, but I don’t know who.

The shape above me calls my name again. “Rory, hold on brother the paramedics are almost here, I need you to hang on...please...”

Then it hits me, Finn...no, I forgot he was coming for me today, shit, he shouldn’t be here. I feel a crippling level of guilt wash over me; he was never meant to see this.

I want to apologise to him, but I'm fading too fast, I whisper the only thing I can manage, "Liam." Before the darkness consumes me, and I die on my kitchen floor. Knowing that my woman is safe, and that my brothers will one day have everything they need to take this fucker and his organisation down.

Chapter 22



As much as I don't want to do this, I know I have to.

The grief I felt over losing Rory almost consumed me, all because I wouldn't open up. I can't allow that to happen again, not now.

Now that I have a family, I have Liv, and Maddie to think about. They are my life.

"Brother..." Killian gets my attention.

"You don't have to do this. Take it home, read it with Liv. Then call us when you need us, we'll be there."

I look to my left at Liv, my beautiful woman. She is my light, my hope. She places her hand in mine, my grip tightens, and she squeezes back, then her thumb runs across my knuckles. Settling back in her seat, she doesn't say anything, she doesn't need to. She already knows my choice, hell the woman probably knew it before I did. I know she won't let go of my hand, her constant touch will ensure I stay in the light. It will ensure that my demon won't take hold.

Looking back at Killian I shake my head. "Nah brother, I'm gonna need you all beside when I read this. I can't read this alone."

I can feel my demon waking up. This isn't good, I haven't even started to read the fucking letter, I can't lose it. But then Maddie appears in front of me.

"Daddy..." I look down at her, she started calling me her dad not long after she called Rory uncle at his grave. She

knows I'm not her real Da, but she said she wanted me to be her other Daddy. I couldn't say no, this kid blows me away every fucking day and she's only four.

She climbs into my lap and settles back, tucking her head onto my chest and placing her little hand over my heart. "You not alone, I'm here." Then she hands me Rory's letter.

My demon settles, and I breathe a sigh of relief. Kissing the top of Maddie's head I take the envelope from her and rip it open, pulling out the letter, I swallow then start to read.

Ro,

God I am so fucking sorry!

I know you felt it, the day that I died, and for that I am beyond sorry. There are no words to express just how sorry I am.

Fuck me we were trouble growing up, I'm surprised we didn't turn Ma grey.

Remember when I stole that bottle of whiskey from Da's office, and you took the blame so I wouldn't get a hiding...he knew. He wrote it in his journal, he knew it was me all along, but he believed that if you were prepared to take the shit for my little act of thievery then he wasn't going to let on. He knew you'd find a way to blame yourself for him figuring out it was me, even if he told you, it wasn't on you.

He knew you were different; he knew you felt things on another level, that's why he tried to hone your skills. He was trying to give you an outlet to control the demon inside of you.

Da was one of the most stubborn men I have ever met, he never really showed us much love growing up. But that was the pride, he wrote it all down though. He was so fucking unbelievably proud of each and every one of us. But you brother, you held a special place in his heart. It was because you were different that he nurtured you more.

You see the thing is his brother was like you...yeah you read that right, he had a brother, who you were exactly like in every way.

His name was Eoin, they knew growing up he was different. But back then they didn't know how to help him. And in the end his darkness consumed him, he started one wrong fight. A fight that he couldn't win, and a week after his fifteenth birthday he was stabbed to death.

Da never forgave himself for it, he believed he should have done more for him. He believed he should have saved him, which is why he spent so long teaching you what he could.

But he didn't know that I was your anchor. He didn't know that I was the only one who could bring you back from the brink.

I have one regret in this life, and that is that I wasn't able to help you find another anchor, another way to control your demon.

What he did know, was that you are the family protector, but that doesn't mean you have to protect us all, all of the time.

And it doesn't mean saving us from our fate, destiny has a plan for each of us and you can't intervene. There is nothing you can do that will change the outcome of our destiny. Remember that!

Unless you're the one pulling the trigger, our deaths are not on you!

There are a few things I need you to do for me.

Number 1, let our brothers in, talk to them... they need to help you now, they need to keep you tethered.

Number 2, find the fucker that killed me and give him hell.

Number 3, let Connor have his moment with Liam, you need to be the one to end it. You're the only one that can handle it but let Con ease his woman's pain.

Number 4, you need to talk to Halliwell, and then I need you to make sure he brings Nora home. She's tucked away, safe and only Halliwell knows her location. I know you're asking yourself why I need you to make sure he brings her home, but brother, you know I have loved her all my life. It took me way too long to figure that out, but I finally did.

I need you to find her, because she has something that belongs to us.

And lastly, find someone to love, who loves you, you deserve to be happy. I promise there is someone out there for you, someone who can anchor you the way I do. You just need to find them and let them in.

Do this for me, I can rest knowing you're safe and happy.

Remember you can make it through anything that life throws at you as long as you have our brothers at your side.

I love you brother, and I'll always be with you.

All my love

Rory.

I feel Liv lean into me as Maddie's, little hand wipes away a tear I didn't know I had shed. I look up as each of my brothers stand and walk toward me, holding Maddie I stand meeting them, as they wrap me in their embrace.

I hate that I lost my brother, I'm not sure that I'll ever get over it. But knowing I have my brothers, my woman and kid at my side, I know I'm going to be OK.

Coughing I pull away before I start balling. "We need to call Halliwell, Rory wants us to find Nora."

"He's in the kitchen," Cara tells us as she takes the baby from Ma.

"What?" Killian and I question together

"Yeah, he never left, he said he had to wait, I'll go get him."

We all stand in the front room looking at one another confused, we have no idea what the fuck is going on right now. I pull Maddie into me, embracing the unwavering love she shares, I breathe in her calm, when Halliwell walks through the door.

“I’m assuming you want to know why I have waited?”

We all turn to Halliwell, but it’s Killian who responds. “Rory told Ronan that he has to find Nora, that she has something that belongs to us, and you know where she is.”

He nods and takes a step forward. “I do, and I have already placed a call for her to be brought to the states, she should be here in two days.”

“Two fucking days...Rory wants her here...you fucking get her here quicker than that...”

“Ronan, I understand your frustration, but I can’t get her here any sooner. Rory asked me to ensure her safety no matter what, I will keep that promise. There was a threat made against her, before he died, he set everything in motion to ensure her safety. I can’t just get her on a plane straight to the states, they need to cross several borders to get here.”

Maddie’s arms grip me tighter calming the raging storm I feel inside me. Killian watches me ensuring I’m not about to blow before turning to Halliwell.

“What is it that Nora has that Rory thinks belongs to us?”

Halliwell visibly swallows, then glances around the room. “Rory convinced Nora to go into hiding the day before he died, he was worried about her safety. He knows Nora can handle herself. But the week before he died, she came to New York to spend some time with him after we’d been to London, the news she brought with her sent him into a tailspin. The only thing that mattered to him was protecting her.”

“Halliwell, what are you trying to tell us?” Connor grinds out, frustration clear in his voice.

“When Rory died, Nora was pregnant, with his babies. She had twins about fourteen months ago.”

The silence in the room is deafening, none of us speak. None of us know what to say. Our brother is gone, but a part of him still lives on.

The four of us look at each other and nod.

They belong with us; we're bringing Nora and those babies back where they belong. We're bringing them home.

The End

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Emma, thank you for listening to me and running my Facebook group, you've been amazing.

‘Buddy Read’ babes...just, thank you!

And finally, to my readers who started with Connor and have chosen to stick with me. I hope you love the rest of the family as much as I do, and I hope you stick around, I have so much more to tell.

About the Author

Toni Kelly lives in the northeast of England, where she spends long days at her day job, but in her free time, loves to write dark romance.

When she's not writing she has her nose buried in a book, reading pretty any genre that piques her interest.

Toni loves getting lost in stationery stores and has more notebooks than she can use.

Also by Toni Kelly

[Connor, The Syndicate](#)

[Ronan, The Syndicate](#)

[Finn, The Syndicate](#)

[Rory's Last Act, The Syndicate](#)

Coming Soon...

Killian, The Syndicate