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| RAPID CITY SD |

A
RENEWED RAGE

Book 11.5 of Rage MC

ELIZABETH N. HARRIS

A Renewed Rage.
Book 11.5 of Rage MC.
Elizabeth N. Harris

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A Renewed Rage.

Rage brothers have an annoying habit. They open their mouths, blurt out whatever they're thinking, and to hell with the consequences. This time there is no escaping what their actions wrought because Old Ladies took sides, and it wasn't theirs! In the doghouse, with only one brother straddling both camps, Rage isn't a nice place to be.

They weren't backing down, not until Rage learned their lesson and hell, they have a mansion they could hide in. No Rage is allowed except what is now called the exiles. Old ladies are laying the law down, and God help the husband or brother who doesn't listen!

Drake struggles to yank his brother's thoughts from the past to the present and future. He has a battle on three fronts to win: his brothers, the exiles and the old ladies. And just when Drake thinks he's finally made progress and things will settle... someone lets loose a hunter who returns with a hell of a prize!

Can Rage take that last step and make not only their new compound but address the issues of the past? Or will they lose themselves for once and all?

Books by Elizabeth N. Harris

Rage MC, Hellfire MC, Washingtons and Rage MC-The Prospects, all interlink with one another. For a reading order please see my website at www.elizabethnharris.net/reading-order or my Facebook group under pinned posts!

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Dedication.

To those donating to the Elizabeth Trusts, this book is for you with heartfelt thanks. To Christy and Jordie for helping the Trusts in the books become a reality. To discover more, please go to, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/elizabethtrusts>

Love

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This book was written, produced and edited in England, the United Kingdom, where some spelling, grammar and word usage will vary from US English.

A Quick Note!

After a couple of reviews and emails commenting on grammar and spelling errors, I thought I'd explain. My work is edited thoroughly, and some grammar and spelling will differ from US English. For example, color to colour or focusing instead of focussing. But I type as I imagine the characters speaking. I've been around several MCs and know many bikers; believe me, they don't watch their grammar! So you may find errors when one of the characters speaks; that's intentional! Even educated characters may drop their p's and q's from time to time, and we'll let them off because we love them so much!

Drake may use *don't* instead of *doesn't*, *it don't make sense* instead of *it doesn't make sense*. Or I *be* angry instead of *I am* angry! Or Phoe may say *me and you* instead of the grammatically correct *you and I*. They also drop words, possibly one of my own personal pet peeves! *You won't do it* becomes *won't do it*, or *it ain't right* turns into *ain't right*. However, typos are not deliberate; if you find any, I sincerely apologise!

I hope you enjoy the book because I write from the heart and genuinely love my Rage MC characters and the world I'm creating around them.

Rage had failed in more ways than one.

Happy Reading!



Elizabeth N. Harris

Prologue.

Drake

He stared in disbelief as half his club walked out the door, following the old ladies. Around him, his brother's jaws dropped open as Drake ran a hand through his hair and wondered what the fuck had just happened.

In church, he'd known in his gut this was going to go tits up, and it did. His brothers stood in the rec room with looks of betrayal. But whether that was from Calamity claiming Rosie and handing in his cut, or the other brothers following them, Drake didn't know. Hell, it could be because the old ladies turned their backs on their husbands and walked out.

Once again, shit had hit the fan, and Drake was lost for leadership. The buck stopped with him, and he had no idea how to correct this mess.

"That little prick!" Texas exploded as his eyes lasered in on the doors.

"Enough," Drake said, but it lacked fire.

"What? He just waltzed out of here with my baby girl!" Texas yelled, and Drake took a deep breath. Getting into a fight with Texas would do nothing except land the two of them with bruises and broken bones.

Damn it, he should have spoken up. Made them realise what was happening, that the past was controlling them, and he'd bottled it. Lost his fucking man card in wanting to keep the peace. The looks of disgust the women had sent at them bit deep.

"Who fuckin' respects me?" Drake asked, turning to face the brothers behind him.

Shocked expressions stared back.

"What do you mean?" Fish sought cautiously.

"I said, who fuckin' respects me?" Drake repeated.

They swapped glances amongst themselves, confused.

“We all do, Pres,” Gunner finally answered.

“Get your asses in church. You gonna have a come to Jesus moment,” Drake threatened and stormed towards the inner sanctum. Drake hated there was so much room with half their brothers gone. He glowered at everyone as they took their seats. He knew exactly what had happened. Now it was time to deal with it and not keep fucking running. If Rage were to have a future, then this crap needed sorting.

This was his MC, *his*. He forged it the way he wanted. Who the hell told him how to build his club and what was right and wrong? And that, Drake realised, was the point. He was trying far too hard to uphold the traditional idea of an MC. Well, fuck that. That didn't work for him and his brothers because tradition had wrought unnecessary aggravation. A family split in half.

Drake finally acknowledged he did not give a shit about what others thought. He had his father's ideals, and they needed to fit this era, not the past. Rage MC might not be like those seen on TV or read in books, but by every drop of blood in his body, this was his! And now he would create the club he had always foreseen, and he'd yank these damn Neanderthals into the present day, come hell or high water.

Drake squared his shoulders and prepared for battle. Because this was going to fucking hurt!

Chapter One.

Drake

“That was a total cluster fuck and a real screw-up on everyone’s behalf who voted,” Drake announced without preamble.

Brothers shot looks at each other and settled.

Texas’s glower darkened, and Drake fired him a warning finger. “Got every respect for you, Texas, but you are gonna sit there and fuckin’ listen! Hear me? Because you were a total asshole today, and you’re all going to realise it,” Drake warned.

Dark stares came back at him, but no one opened their mouth.

“Good. We took Rage from Bulldog and promised to get Rage straight. We’ve broken our backs doing that. Why? Yeah, assholes, I’m asking why did we want Rage clean?” Drake demanded.

“Because we didn’t want crime to be our lives,” Gunner replied, looking confused.

“And what else?” Drake pushed.

“Wanted a good life, one free and easy and with love,” Axel boomed. His intelligent eyes glowed. Axel knew exactly where Drake was going and nodded his support.

“To get the women you have and the love you earned, we had to be clean. Would Phoe or anyone have joined us if we were dirty?” Drake asked.

Head shakes abounded.

“Not fuckin’ likely,” Mac said, thinking of Vivie.

“Why did you vote no?” Drake demanded.

“Because the heart wants what it wants. And after I didn’t speak to you guys for a full week after what happened with Casey, I knew we were going the wrong way with Calamity.

Sorry, Texas, you're my brother, but so is that kid," Mac responded with a shrug.

Texas sent Mac a look that promised he'd not forget this for a long time.

"So, we got Rage clean. Worked our bollocks off doing so, spilt blood, and then what did we do?" Drake asked.

Confused looks met him again.

"Claimed our women," Rock finally replied.

"Wrong," Axel boomed, and everyone stared at him. "We carried on like nothing had changed when it had."

"Shit adjusted because we were clean," Ace mentioned, enlightenment dawning. "But we never looked at changing how the MC ran to ensure it conformed to our needs."

"Give the man a cigar," Drake spoke. "We didn't look at the charter to ensure it suited what we wanted. So, we continued, blinded by tradition, honouring the charter, and *living the rules expected of us.*"

"Like the whores boozing, having sex in the open, doing as we pleased without repercussions," Axel boomed.

"And what was the one thing, the tenant we all hold dear?" Drake asked.

"Family. We wished Rage to be a family club," Mac replied.

Drake pointed at him. "Mac's right. We all wanted wives and children, a chance to settle for beauty and not the ugly. But we didn't move with the times. Women are not obedient and submissive anymore. Fuck, I'd like to see one of you try to make Artemis or Lindsey, Autumn or Carly bend. They'd rip your balls off and feed them to you."

Chuckles met Drake's words.

He continued, "We made the first step when I claimed Phoe, and she, point blank, refused to wear a property cut. Phoe saw precisely what it meant: that I owned her, and people would see her as a commodity. Not as her own person. No, Phoe would be seen as the property of me. And Phoe will never be

owned again by a man. Phoe was my damn equal, and I recognised it. So Rage moved towards a future they wanted. We voted out property cuts and chose old lady cuts. That offered the women protection but also allowed them to remain individual and strong. Gave them respect.

“Lex went further, although we gave him shit. But he was right. Lex’s patch proclaiming himself Vivie’s old man was smart. It showed Vivie he was her equal and she his. It proved to Vivie how much Lex values and loves her. We dished out crap, but we saw how the women responded. It was another move to the future we desired so badly,” Drake said, looking around and giving Lex a respectful nod.

“I get what you’re saying. By us not wearing anything but a wedding ring, we don’t show we’re off limits,” Lowrider drawled, nodding.

“You want us to give up our man cards? Grow a pussy?” Texas sneered in anger.

“Want Penny to divorce you?” Drake shot back.

Texas paled.

“Exactly. Now shut the fuck up and listen. Rage had taken the first step to growing the club we wanted. No more property cuts and strong old ladies who proudly proclaimed we were their men. Where was our pride? That we were theirs?” Drake asked. “I’ll stand in the city’s centre and announce I belong to Phoe. Ain’t no shame in that. I love Phoenix as much as possible. She’s given me everything, but I didn’t do the same. Who gives a shit if someone sees a patch on us saying Phoe’s old man? I’d be fuckin’ proud to wear that because I am her husband. Phoe is my world. So why was I such a pussy and ridiculed Lex for seeing something I didn’t?”

Brothers shifted uncomfortably in their chairs.

“Yeah, it don’t feel right, does it?” Drake asked.

“I wouldn’t mind wearing a patch; it would keep barflies away. Well, most of them,” Ezra spoke.

“Got to claim a woman first,” Lowrider proclaimed, chuckling.

“But I’d still display one, saying I’m hers,” Ezra argued.

“Men don’t wear property badges,” Texas growled.

This attitude of his was shit, Drake thought silently. Ignoring the grumpy bastard, he continued.

“We made our next move when we banned the whores from being here at certain times. That moved us in the direction of becoming a family club because the kids were present. But that is also where we failed our females big time. We were amused that two women were fighting over us; we never once acknowledged the pain the old ladies felt that forced them to fight. How they felt seeing a woman, we probably fucked, swagger through the room. Bet it gutted them. Hearing the taunts, the skanks dished out that led to the fights, while we stood by and cheered. Not once did we acknowledge how hurt our women were by the slut’s actions,” Drake said and turned to Apache.

“I failed you tremendously when they hid Silvie’s phone. Your woman could have died, and I didn’t ban them from the clubhouse. What they did to Silvie was terrible, but I did shit about it, and neither did anyone else. We accepted it as part of the drama and watched as Autumn and Artemis put a beat down on them. While we got off on it.

“We were blinded to what they saw. The skanks intended to harm Silvie. And we gave the old ladies the ultimate disrespect. We kept on those who hurt them verbally, those who taunted them, bitches that wanted to kill or remove them and take their place. And every single one of us here is guilty of letting that shit happen. Without meaning to, we allowed the whores to mock our wives because we showed the old ladies contempt by allowing skanks to remain.

“Worse, none of us asked if the old ladies were okay after being disrespected repeatedly. It makes me sick to think of the pain they’ve sucked up. Because I would fuckin’ freak if an ex lover of Phoe’s walked in here and draped himself over her. Reverse the roles, assholes. Imagine how you’d feel if their ex-lovers roamed freely around the clubhouse and then groped them. Then consider how we’d feel when, after punching the

shit out of the guy, the women acted as if nothing happened. That being touched by a dude they fucked was fine.

“Wake the fuck up! We’ve paraded those bitches in front of the girls constantly. And laughed at the fights. The pain and humiliation we have created shows how much those women love us. Because they are still here. If I had to watch Phoe parade ex-lovers, I don’t think I’d have the strength to stick around. Especially if Phoe completely disrespected my feelings over it. Who says that we can’t wear a property of an old lady patch?” Drake asked, and everyone swapped glances.

“Nobody,” Mac replied.

“Tradition,” Axel boomed, and Drake nodded.

“Who says we have to have skanks at our clubhouse?” Drake questioned.

“Tradition,” Slick said. He leant forward on his elbows, interested in what Drake was saying. Drake noted the interest.

“You’re suggesting that we wear patches stating we are the old man of a pussy? And let the other MCs think Rage has become weak? That we’re ruled by women?” Texas yelled and hit the table.

Drake’s eyes narrowed on him.

“I want us to show patches that state we are off limits and claimed. If you don’t wanna display one, fine, but do not come crying to anyone here when Penny divorces you. Because, brother, that’s where your shit is heading. You’ve lost Rosie, and that girl meant what she said. You will lose the rest of your family next,” Drake growled.

Texas squared his shoulders.

“Rosie will do as she’s told. Calamity’s turned her head. She’ll come to heel,” Texas snapped back.

“And that is why you’ll squander everything precious. Because you think of Rosie and Penny as property when they ain’t. Fuck you, Texas. Never thought you’d be such a caveman about this shit. Why the hell did you fight for Penny

if you intended to disrespect her this much?” Axel boomed and thumped Texas on his head.

Texas flared up but shut up at Axel’s expression. Nobody argued with a founder.

“Somebody tell me why princesses can’t date a member of Rage,” Drake asked.

Everyone swapped glances, and no one answered.

“You all fuckin’ know, answer me!” Drake roared.

“Because Bulldog’s guys didn’t protect them and tried to claim them. They wanted to treat them like skanks or barter for power with them,” Manny responded.

“And when we cleaned the club, and only decent men remained? Take out Jacked and Gid,” Drake said.

“We never changed the rule,” Manny spoke.

“And why not?” Drake pushed.

“Because it had become tradition,” Lex replied.

Drake saw they were all thinking. Apart from Texas, who was digging his heels in.

“So once again, we snatched a decision from the women in Rage and chose for them. We taught them to be strong, loyal, respectful, and, in most cases, wilful and determined. And then spat on their rights to be individuals and live their life. We treated Willow like crap when she came to save our asses because we had judged her. Not one of us looked deeper into Willow’s story. And she went it alone for years. Willow was fuckin’ FBI, and we’d no idea.

“How did we become so out of touch with what’s happening with the women of Rage? How did we lose sight of our old ladies and daughters? We know none of them are weak. Fuck, some are a bit psycho, yet we treat them as if they don’t know their own minds and are fragile flowers. Look what happened with Serenity. Nobody saw that coming; the women didn’t even bat an eyelid. Meanwhile, we sat here and discussed behind her back what help she might need. Serenity carried on living and hasn’t let what transpired with Frenzy stop her.

“They are as brave and strong as any guy present. Consider what they’ve suffered and survived. And here we sit, not acknowledging that. It’s impossible a princess would fall in love with an asshole because we taught them what good guys are like. So, who says we must stop the princesses from dating a brother of Rage?” Drake sat back as he asked and looked around.

“Tradition,” Slick replied.

“Yeah, that fuckin’ word again keeps coming up, doesn’t it?”

“And the power the women carry? Are we to take that and strip them to a Stepford wife? Remove their personalities and make them robots? That’s going to happen because we’re disrespecting them constantly. So how do we stop? Nah, I don’t require answers now. I want you to fuckin’ think about it,” Drake said.

“Let’s discuss half our brothers and prospects walking out with Calamity and Klutz. Shut the fuck up, Texas. As your president, I’m ordering you to shut up!” Drake snarled, and Texas looked stunned. Drake had never spoken to him so roughly, but he didn’t regret it.

“We’re letting the past haunt us. Those actions of Bulldog and his cronies have stuck with us and colour our every move. Today proved it when only one of the old guard stood against a decision I knew was wrong. Mac saw what we didn’t. Who the fuck are we to say who loves who? We aren’t God. We can’t tell people they shouldn’t love each other. And that disgusted me that you all blindly supported Texas. It smacked of the old days when everyone backed Bulldog apart from us. We ain’t sheep brothers. We can choose, and if we disagree with the majority, then it doesn’t make us bad. That shit makes us unique,” Drake spat.

“What about them walking out? In the past, we’d boot them, strip their cut, and beat them down,” Gunner asked.

Drake noted the concern in Gunner’s voice.

“After the crap we dealt with in clearing this club, we diverted from the usual laws of a prospect doing six to twelve months to two years before being voted. We created rigid guidelines that candidates needed to complete two years, followed by a further two as a prospect. That has helped us whittle out motherfuckers like Nuclear, and Chainsaw, to name a few. The four-year rule works for us because of our past. It doesn’t work for other clubs, but they don’t judge us, and we don’t them. Instead, they look at us and see what we’re doing to keep our club safe. And I do not wanna change those rules. They are helping us tremendously,” Drake said.

“But you don’t want to take away their individuality, which is why we ain’t gonna go the old route, are we?” Axel asked astutely.

“Nah, we aren’t. No beating, no judging. They have to make their own choices, and we’ll support them. No matter how bitter it might be to swallow. They’re men, not sheep, not children, and they’ve earned our respect and fuckin’ loyalty. The old guard needs to get their minds straight because those guys who walked? They ain’t got our shit. They have their own history but not ours. And that’s what’s holding us back. The past. We wanna move Rage forward. We are moving, but not fast enough,” Drake said and held Texas’s eyes. He could tell Texas was against anything that may let Calamity off the hook, but his brother needed to listen.

“In other words, what holds us back doesn’t hold them back, and why the fuck should it? We’ve made strides. No more illegal stuff touches the club. We protect our own borders and help police our city. Rage is known for charity runs now and not crime. The kid re-created our patch, which shows we have left the old ways behind us. We’re building a secure compound, keeping skanks and whores away. Making it family-friendly. But this means nothing if we dictate who can love who. It’s bollocks that the past keeps the club trapped, and it fuckin’ has; you all know that. What we gotta do to prove we are beyond that now?” Axel boomed, pointing at the brothers.

Drake noted those who nodded and who didn't. Some were resistant to change, but others were open to it. It was a spark of hope. Of change.

"I don't give a fuck, like Pres, who gives me crap for wearing a patch saying I'm spoken for. Someone wants to throw me shit? I'll put them on their ass and show I still got my balls and man card. Acknowledging our fine women ain't a slur on our cocks and bollocks. It proves we're strong enough to ride anything coming our way, and we aren't ashamed of our wives. Several of whom could kill everyman in this room and walk away whistling. Do not fuckin' forget that," Axel continued.

"We got families, and I ain't returning to the old life. Let Rage lead the way in showing how to remain proud bikers and men while shunning the rules that state how we should live. Just because we now choose our own decisions, it doesn't make us weak. Makes us stronger for breaking from the crowd and walking our own path. I'm betting most of you are thinking the same as me. What about the other MCs? What they gonna think? Drake and Axel are correct. Who gives a fuck? They follow us, and both sides know it. We need to be trendsetters and not fuckin' sheep. Baaing and following the damn leader. I ain't no pack animal. I am the fuckin' alpha lion. Hell, I lead the herd!" Rock spoke up, and Drake listened carefully before nodding.

"Rock's right. Do we stay as we are, alienating our wives and kids just to stay traditional? Or move forward, grab what we want, and show people how to live free and easy, keeping some traditional shit but removing others that chain us to a role. I'm tired of the damn role. Bikers abuse women, cheat on old ladies, ain't bothered with girl children unless they can marry them off," Drake said, sighing.

"They drink beer and eat like animals, have sex in the open, and do not give a fuck about anyone involved in crime. All of them have police records. Ladies are property and have no rights," Axel continued.

"Are at odds with the law and legal system, beat women for daring to open their mouth, are people to be frightened of.

Bikers don't have nice homes and live in hovels or the clubhouse, do not earn clean livings," Mac added.

"They're to be avoided when seen in the street. Hide your daughters because if they fancy one, they'll just take her. Ride and carouse through the streets and beat anybody who disagrees with them. Take what they desire when they want it. Does anyone else think that's totally at odds with Rage?" Drake challenged.

Nobody said a word.

"One point, Rosie is my daughter, and a damn brother put hands on her. Without my permission. Calamity snuck around, hiding his feelings until he had his patch. What he did was wrong," Texas growled.

"The kid had no choice. As a candidate or prospect, he'd have been in the gauntlet. Met us all in the ring. Calamity honestly thought he could claim Rosie when he was a brother, and I don't think he touched her until then. I saw the honesty in his eyes. Calamity believed he had to be a full member before claiming Rosie," Drake replied.

Texas's meaty fist hit the table.

"I fuckin' saved my baby girl from Bulldog's gang. You all remember that? When she turned twelve and grew a woman's body. They eyed her up like a piece of ripe meat. Bulldog ordered her present every night, and I fought him then and won! He didn't think of throwing my daughter to his pack of hyenas again. And I swore then, after fighting to get Rosie safe, that no man who wore a cut or was called brother would ever touch my daughter. And instead, I fucking handed Rosie to one on a platter!" Texas roared and shoved his chair back with such violence it landed on its side. Texas moved towards the exit, and Drake rose to his feet.

"Walk out, and you're in the gauntlet and ring against us all! You do not fuckin' walk out on me. Me! Your president! Just because you dislike what you're hearing, you don't leave church. Some shit will change but conduct in church and towards your pres will never change!" Drake noted several of his brothers flinched, but his attention was on Texas.

Texas froze his hand on the doorhandle and slowly turned to face Drake.

“Pick your chair up and take your place at the table, brother!” Drake said icily, with a world of warning in his tone. Drake saw Texas’s inner battle as clearly as daylight. Texas wanted to tell Drake to fuck off, but the rules surrounding church stopped him dead. Texas gradually retook his seat, but the vibes coming off him made everybody flinch.

Drake slowly twisted his head to stare into the eyes of every brother. There was no doubt the President of Rage was present in church and in command.

“Anyone wanna challenge me?” Drake drawled silkily, and horrified gasps escaped a few mouths. Nobody spoke up, and no one seconded.

“Then you listen!” Drake turned on Texas. “I was with you when that bitch fucked you and Rosie over. Don’t forget it was me who watched your back when you took Rosie from that hovel. And I stood by your side, handing out beatings to those who thought to use Rosie to subdue and control you. Me, Texas, and I wasn’t your fuckin’ president then; I was your brother. You ever disrespect me in my house again, we’ll be in the ring, and it will be until the first falls unconscious!” Drake threatened.

Texas grimly held Drake’s gaze, but Drake couldn’t read anything in Texas’s expression.

“There’s been enough chat. Now I’m ordering you to get your asses out of here. Don’t wanna see any of you for forty-eight hours. Go and fuckin’ think about the shit we’ve discussed and get ready for a come to Jesus’ church. Because we are going to vote on a lot of stuff, and then we’re gonna make amends to those who matter to us,” Drake warned.

Several of his brothers nodded, while others appeared thoughtful.

“Get the fuck out of my house!” Drake exploded, and chairs scraped back as men rose and left. Drake watched them all from where he remained standing, noting Texas was the first

one out. Harleys roared in the forecourt, but Drake waited where he was.

“Feel better?” Axel sought, and Drake’s head snapped towards him.

“You gonna disobey my order?” Drake asked as the fight drained from him, and he sank down into his seat.

“Have I disobeyed when it’s not been needed, kid?” Axel boomed, and Drake felt about twelve again.

Axel sat in a chair and stared steadily at Drake. “Spit it out, son,” Axel urged.

“Am I failing? I dragged us through the shit with Bulldog because I knew what was right!” Drake exploded. “Da did not want Rage to become what it did, so I had righteous fury on my side. And those battles focused my mind. Only one path only available, and I saw the route we had to travel. But this? I ain’t equipped to deal with this, and I don’t know what is right or wrong. Did you see Texas’s face? I’ve never spoken to my brother like that before!”

“Drake, Texas left you no choice but to throw president at him. Do you lead us like a one percenter? Fuck no. There’s a lot more Bulldogs out there than there are Drake Michaelsons. And that is a good thing. You rarely use the president to force an opinion across, son, nor do you abuse the role. You’re content to put suggestions in the ring and let the brothers choose. Today you were the Rage President and not a friend or brother. Drake, you’ve led this club for years, and I see many more before you hand over to Dante. But make no mistake; you need to be hard, harder than before you were with Bulldog.

“They’ve got used to freedom, being themselves, and they are afraid of change. Change brings the unknown, and every fucker in the old guard is frightened of being unable to control the future. Son, the loss of discipline we had under Bulldog was extreme. We were little more than slaves. Don’t forget the daily beatings Bulldog dished out, and usually to one of those who just left. You’re going to have to drag those fuckers into the twenty-first century, and it ain’t gonna be easy. But don’t

let them fuck with you. You are the pres. They do as you command!”

Drake sighed.

“Shit, you don’t understand. I remember the times Bulldog tried consistently to break you, Ace, Gunner, and Rock? Think the rest of us didn’t notice you took beatings for us? Bulldog was too frightened of coming after me, Texas, and Apache, but Fish, Mac, Lowrider? Yeah, fuckin’ easy targets for him. Break them, and he’d have broken you. So, while not spoken, we know you four took punches for us. It made Rock and Gunner harder, more silent, and cultivated the urge to protect in both of them. You and I recognise Rock should be Enforcer alongside Gunner.

“But you weren’t prepared to insult Apache. And we understand that. But consider moving Apache into Road Captain or Treasurer; Apache would settle happily for one of them. And shove Rock into Enforcer. Then pick Manny as whichever position remains. That gives us a solid basis. Texas has picked up Treasurer long enough alongside his own role. And you’ve doubled as Road Captain for too long. But keep leading Drake because when you fuck up, at least you bend to make it right,” Axel boomed and tapped on the table.

“Deep down inside me, there is a part screaming I don’t deserve this, President, Phoe, the kids, my brothers being happy and having families. There’s a tiny voice screeching at me that there will be a reckoning, and it’s haunting me, Axel. I can’t get it to shut the fuck up. We’re clean, but in the eyes of the law, if they knew what was happening, we’d be locked up. Despite it being righteous, there are bodies in our recent past,” Drake said softly.

Axel nodded.

“Yes, and I helped put them there. Think I ain’t got that same voice? We all have, but we look to you to lead. There’s no one else who we want in that chair. Nobody else is fit to manage Rage. You still ain’t used to quiet, to not having to watch you back every minute. Yeah, brother, you’re getting there, and so are the rest, but Bulldog’s filth and venom

infected all of us. But each day that passes, we squeeze a tiny bit out and breathe that bit easier,” Axel said and rose to his feet. He looked at Drake with love clear on his face.

“I lost my boy; Keith’s been gone a long time Drake. But I didn’t lose my second son, and I have never been prouder of him than I was today. When he woke up and realised we don’t have to be what’s expected of us. Rage can be who and what the hell it wants!” Axel boomed emotionally and left.

Drake stared after him, speechless. Fuck, he loved that old man, even if he was an asshole at times. Drake wouldn’t consider the day Axel wasn’t around for advice. It was unthinkable.

Chapter Two.

Gunner.

Gunner swung his leg over his bike and headed out. He didn't care where he was going and just picked a road. He knew Autumn was at Reading Hall with the kids, and that hurt. Hurt him deeply. But he also understood his actions had caused his own pain. And he hated to admit it. He'd gone along with everyone else. Sheep, Drake called them all, and fuck if Drake wasn't correct. He'd noted at the time that Drake hadn't voted nor given any indication of which way to vote.

And as much as Gunner detested admitting it, Drake was right. They'd followed Texas like sheep. Not Texas's fault as such. It was all of their wrongdoing and only one reason why. Because they'd learned to stick together in the past. So when someone required backup, everybody stepped up. That left a sour taste in his mouth. Calamity hadn't deserved the reaction, and now calmer and separate from his brothers, Gunner was left with a sick sensation. He'd turned on their youngest brother, a kid who needed them.

No wonder Autumn looked at him with such disgust. She understood better than anyone how it was to crave and need a family. And Gunner had shown her how easily he could betray family.

Fuck! Of course, she'd gone to hole up in Reading Hall. Autumn would wrap the bonds of friendship and love around her as tightly as she could. Those brothers who'd followed, the prospects and candidates, Autumn required them all right now. Gunner yearned to turn the clock back, but it was too late. Autumn had seen their ugly, and now it was exposed like a festering wound and needed dealing with.

Somehow, he and his brothers would have to find the soothing balm to heal all the wounds that had been torn open. Gunner didn't know if anyone else witnessed it, but he'd seen genuine fear in Texas's eyes when the man erupted and banned Calamity. Whether or not Texas realised it, Bulldog's actions

had taken control of Texas, forcing him to react differently from usual.

Hell, they were all defensive of the princesses and children, but Gunner hadn't been present the day Bulldog tried to coax Rosie into his office. But he'd returned to the aftermath, and that was scarred deep in his mind. It had been the opening step for Texas to join them. While Drake watched Texas sitting on the side-lines and not taking sides, Gunner realised long before Drake that Texas was with them. Bulldog's move against Texas's precious daughter had sealed loyalty to Drake.

What remained unanswered now was how to heal his two families? Autumn and his children and his MC brotherhood. Gunner allowed the open road to swallow him up as he released control to fate.

Rock

Carly had fled to Reading Hall with the kids. She'd packed up and left him a shitty message, telling him to go fuck one of his whores and run. Rock screwed the letter up in his hand and threw it against the wall. His wife couldn't believe he'd want one of those skanks over her? Hell, why wouldn't she? Like the others, he'd not noticed Carly's hurt or acknowledged it.

Carly, beaten to shit when she escaped her whack-job brothers, flashed into his mind. Her strength and growth under his love and attention followed. But the wary look she constantly held in her eyes when on Rage and, while comfortable, the alert body language she used when in the clubhouse. How had he fuckin' missed that? It was a question he'd bet every brother with an old lady was asking.

Fuck, Phoe had been right. Whore cunt had taken priority over their old ladies and their pain. Shit, his single brothers picked barflies up at clubs more than they fucked the club whores. But their women came to the clubhouse, cooked, tidied, and shoved loads into the laundry while skanks lie around watching them. Rock stared out the window of the home he and Carly had built together. It was eerily silent. No kids running or screaming, Carly not bellowing for him to pick

his boots and jacket up. Or put his tools away before Harrison got hold of them.

Rock decided he hated the quiet now. For someone who once craved it, the lack of noise irritated him. Reminded him of what he was missing. He stared at his phone at the last message from Carly.

“Fuck you, asshole!” Rock read it aloud and shook his head. His Carly was soft and sweet, with a backbone of steel but never against him. Carly was beyond mad at him and when he tried calling her, the line cut off after two rings. His wife was avoiding him. He walked into their bedroom and picked up her robe, folded neatly on the bed, and held it to his nose. Sitting heavily on the mattress, Rock held it to him, a reminder of everything he considered precious and may have just wasted.

Instantly, his mind turned from that. Carly and the kids weren't lost to him. They loved one another. Rock needed to seriously grovel to Carly. But he wasn't sure if grovelling was the correct resolution. Carly had been let down so many times, and while she didn't doubt his love, Rock realised this situation created a wedge between them. He'd never forget the fear when her dickwad brothers pointed a gun at her. Drake had spoken to him about the hysterical state she'd worked herself into.

No... Rock needed to do something big. Something Carly would never imagine him doing. The question was, what?

Ezra

Holy crap, Ezra was glad he didn't have an old lady. The glares they dished out amongst Rage were killers. Lowrider and Ezra rode together, not just brothers but brothers-in-law as well. Lowrider's face was full of his emotions and thoughts. If Lindsey's looks could have killed both Lowrider and Ezra, they'd be twelve feet under. Lindsey was that mad. And despite his sister being all soft and gooey, she'd become a killer over the last few years.

Masterson had done a fuckin' number on Ezra's sister, and she refused to allow a man to own or command her again. No lie, Ezra mused; he and Lindsey butted heads a lot, but they

loved each other. Though that love definitely had limits, Ezra learned today. His sibling made him clench in fear, and he swore to sleep with one eye open.

But despite his humour, Ezra saw where the women were coming from. And Calamity? Nope, that kid shouldn't have been kicked. Rage had been searching for someone like Calamity, and when they'd got him, Rage treated him correctly and gave him rewards as he worked his fingers to the bone, proving himself. But when Calamity needed Rage to have his back, right or wrong, we'd chosen Texas. Ezra knew he'd made a critical error. The guilt drowned him. Calamity hadn't disrespected anyone and was honestly overjoyed he could give Rosie a wonderful life.

Ezra sighed as Lowrider opened the throttle. They'd seriously fucked up today, a grievous injustice that cost them Klutz, too. Fuck, both Calamity and Klutz were shining stars for Rage. Authentic, genuine, honest men. And Rage tossed one aside like trash and let the other leave. Ezra wondered if they could repair the damage they'd caused. The pain and trauma went deep, Ezra realised. Far deeper than Rage ever thought.

He'd hated being on the receiving end of Drake's disgust and anger but recognised he'd earned it. Ezra blindly followed the others and did not consider what they were voting for. Bile rose in his throat as he remembered Calamity kissing his cut with reverence. That cut meant everything to the kid, and they'd shit on that for him. Destroyed the meaning of Calamity's brother patch and stole the life Calamity had built for himself. And what of Klutz? Ezra understood the danger of Klutz being without support.

Klutz needed them, and they'd allowed him to walk. The club was split, and Ezra had no idea how to heal it. For once, the guy with the smart assed mouth was lost for words. But Ezra admitted one thing. No more playing sheep. Speak the hell up, even if he stood alone, like Mac! Fuck, only Mac stuck up for Calamity other than the new generations. The old guard completely turned their back apart from one man who had the balls to tell Texas you're wrong. Well, no more.

Calamity had shown bravery. Now Ezra would follow in his footsteps and hopefully find a solution to resolve this fuckin' mess.

Slick.

Slick hit the punch bag hard. This time, he punched the pain written across Calamity's face. He smashed it again, hitting the image of Calamity's squared shoulders as he walked away from his only family. No old lady for Slick, but the look on Artemis, Phoe, and Marsha's faces burrowed deep, and he punched the bag so viciously that something cracked in his hand. Slick welcomed the agony and wondered if it even touched on a little of how the old ladies suffered. Slick sincerely doubted it.

They made mistakes, and Slick accepted that. But this one was a doozy, worse than anything they'd done before, because it hit on multiple fronts. One Calamity, two Klutz, three the brothers, and four, the old ladies. Drake was correct. The past did rule Rage, and they'd not realised. For all their brashness, they remained insecure, and that bit deep. They shouldn't be worried at this stage of their lives. They'd earned being clean, but the past stung deeper than they'd understood.

Slick thought back to the beauty he'd seen and the ugliness. There'd not been harmony until recently when the old ladies and kids exploded. Now Rage showed a balance, and the scales would tip towards beauty and a wholesome life in time. Slick allowed a dry chuckle. Who the fuck would have expected that a Rage brother would end up a farmer like Blaze? Or a blacksmith like Harley. Those were moments of pure joy, and with them, the Rage, 'I don't give a fuck if you judge me', attitude won out.

But the sad part was they did care if they were judged. Their actions proved that with Calamity and the whores. None of them dipped their dick in them anymore, but MCs had skanks, so Rage had them too. No MC would allow women to claim them, so Rage hadn't either. And who honestly gave a fuck? Everyone understood that once a Rage brother fell, they were ensnared for eternity. So did a fuckin' patch matter? No.

Artemis's expression of sheer betrayal crossed his mind again, and the punch Slick let loose broke another bone in his hand. They weren't as close as they had been. What she'd done to him had caused him more pain and damage. But he would still lay down his life to protect her. And Marsha, who'd suffered through everything. Shit on a stick. It hurt him to know she was hurting. Everybody thought Phoe or Silvie was the glue that held the old ladies together. But it wasn't. It was Marsha. And he'd hurt a woman he loved dearly.

Like all his asshole brothers, Slick ignored what the women did for them. Turned away from the fact the women made the brothers stronger. And as for Calamity and Klutz, Slick couldn't bear to imagine the emotional scars he'd helped lay on those two men. This meant Slick was as bad as Bulldog because that POS never cared who he hurt. And Slick tonight hadn't considered the anguish he'd dished out.

Slick had seen Texas suffering and proceeded to soothe him. Nobody considered who they were voting against. Slick growled as bile rose again, and he released a vicious punch to the bag.

"That's enough, Slick. I count three broken bones, at least. Hospital now," Drake said from behind him.

Slick ducked his head and moved away from the punchbag.

"We'll fix this shit?" Slick asked, keeping his head down.

"Yup, brother, because there's no other way," Drake murmured.

Slick nodded and headed out to get his hand sorted. The physical pain didn't even touch his mental turmoil.

Lowrider

Lindsey's disgust and bitterness cut into him as he raced beside Ezra, trying to ease the tight ball in his chest. Lowrider's word had meant so little when he promised Lindsey she'd never feel pain again. And this time was worse because the agony Lindsey experienced had been caused by the man she loved and those she called family. Fuck his thickheadedness. How could he have been so stupid and blind

to Lindsey's misery? Worse, Lowrider had noted several of the old ladies were on diets, but he hadn't questioned why. Nope. Instead, he'd just carried on in his blissful ignorance. Well, that wouldn't wash today or in their future.

Lowrider saw the open stretch of road and throttled his bike. The powerful machine growled and leapt forward eagerly. His mind turned to his wife. He wouldn't be shocked to find her planning his death, and he probably deserved it. Lowrider was surprised at how blasé he actually was about his wife's temper. No, what concerned him was the fuck up Rage had just been involved in and Drake's ire at the lot of them.

Drake had never been one to hold his tongue and would often blurt out whatever he was thinking. But the last time Lowrider witnessed anger like that in Drake, they won Rage. What Drake was suggesting was an entirely new path for an MC. Men wearing owner patches, kicking skanks off, and hell, Lowrider didn't mind that part. He was sick of fending them off. But the rest of it? Huge steps away from the idea of a traditional club, and Lowrider wasn't sure he wanted that.

He liked the familiarity of knowing what to expect and just letting it all hang out. There and then, Lowrider admitted being a sheep, as Drake accused them of being. Lowrider enjoyed the comfort of recognising the rules and not liking change. And that had been the driving focus behind his position to vote Calamity out. Because Calamity bucked tradition, and Lowrider felt threatened.

He'd also experienced respect and envy. Calamity wasn't tied to the past like the rest of them. He could look forward and see a future. Lowrider wondered when he'd lost the ability to do that. He didn't even do that with his family. Just took it one day at a time because he was waiting for someone to snatch them. And there it was, Lowrider realised. The claws of the past still held on to him. Lowrider would buck anything that could lose him his family, and Calamity was a threat to them.

Except, in reality, the kid wasn't. Calamity was the damn future of the club, and oh boy, had they fucked up. They'd never move forward without Calamity and the fresh blood

brought into Rage. The old guard would be forever trapped in a grey world, unable to understand what was wrong. The younger generation saw more clearly than they did, and Lowrider also resented that.

But not now.

Now it was time to beg for Lindsey's forgiveness.

Fish

He walked into the house he and Marsha called home and stood stunned at the emptiness of it. No kids were bellowing, and Marsha wasn't chasing them about making threats. Unease settled between his shoulders. Had Marsha gone somewhere? He strolled to their bedroom and stopped at the sight of their missing suitcases. Fish yanked open the wardrobe doors and saw Marsha's jeans and tees were gone. Fuck!

Fish ran into the kid's rooms and found some of their clothes had disappeared too. He yanked his phone out and dialled Marsha. She didn't reply. Hitting redial, he rushed downstairs, looking frantic. His cell cut off, and a text message came through. His eyes widened as he sank to his ass in their hallway, unable to believe what he was reading.

"You want skank pussy around? Then fine. You have a choice, skanks or your family. I've sucked enough shit up over twenty years. I ain't dealing with no more. Choose Fish, whores or me," Fish whispered.

Disbelief settled in his body.

"What the hell?" Fish roared into the silent house and threw his phone at a wall. It shattered into pieces as Fish stared at the emptiness in his home. And it was a visible vacuum, with no kids running around, no signs of mess or cooking. The building felt dead without his family.

"Why the fuck would you think I choose skanks over you, baby girl?" Fish asked the silence. But that sickening feeling in his gut knew why. Because although Fish hadn't fucked a skank since getting with Marsha, the temptation was right there. She'd had to suffer them coming on to him, thinking he'd want something different. He'd watched her fight them

off and pretended he was the man. And screw his bastard ego. He'd got off on watching Marsha argue. And not once did he understand what Marsha had sacrificed in all their years together.

Fish slammed his head into the wall. Drake was right. As much as it galled him to admit it, Drake was correct. He always fuckin' was. Fish didn't want to transform the MC; he liked it as it was. But he could see through Drake's eyes, and, as much as Fish loved Rage, he cherished his family more. But Marsha and the kids didn't believe so. They assumed they came after boozing, partying, and skanks.

Fuck! The word roared through his mind. He'd been so blinded, so cocksure, so fuckin' stupid. And now his wife had walked out on him. Taking his heart with her.

Mac

Fuck, Mac thought, he was walking a thin line. Texas spat on the ground in front of him as they approached their bikes. But Mac wasn't backing down. Rage was unfair to vote Calamity out, and Mac suspected the brothers were realising how wrong. Some would immediately, others would need persuading, but they'd come around. The fly in the soup was Texas. Mac had witnessed Texas's infamous temper before but never aimed at a brother.

Mac feared for Calamity's safety; he'd believed Texas would kill him. Yet something held Texas back from taking that step. Maybe deep down, he understood he was in the wrong. Mac didn't know and wasn't ready to pry. The dude was primed to explode, and the last time Texas came remotely close to losing his temper, an asshole burned alive in a shed. Mac rode aimlessly around for a while, knowing Casey and Blue weren't home because she'd sent him a message.

Mac quickly explained he'd not voted against Calamity but for him to stay, and he was off of Casey's shit list. Fuck, he didn't want to end up buried in a desert with fire ants

crawling over his head. And his woman could fully create such a nightmare! Yup, not pissing off the daughter of a Delta Force commander was at the top of Mac's list. His balls tightened in sympathy, and Mac gave them a nod. Casey had totally unmanned him in their first meeting, so Mac was well aware of her skill set.

Casey announced she was going to be spending some days at Reading Hall in a show of solidarity with the women, although none were mad at him. She also texted that Phoe said Mac could stay with them as he'd had the balls to do what was right. Mac grinned at that and felt sorry for Drake. Phoe has his balls in a vice and was tightening her grip. Although Drake hadn't voted, he'd not stopped them from being asses, so Phoe would punish him for that. And the skank shit would have riled Phoe up, so Drake was firmly in the doghouse.

Casey also informed him that Vivie kept lapsing into French and speaking so rapidly that nobody could keep up with her. Lex had lost the extra points he'd gained by wearing his woman's patch. He was well and truly in shit if Vivie was jabbering in her native language. For all her Americanism, Vivie would lapse into rapid French when annoyed. Mac finished his ride and made his way home. He passed a car weaving on the road and sent the driver a stern glance. Mac nearly came off his bike as he recognised the woman driving and performed a quick U-turn.

"What the fuck!" Mac exclaimed as he studied the pale, battered face. She hadn't noticed him as she concentrated on squinting at the highway.

He pulled up alongside her passenger door and blasted his horn. The woman jumped and glanced at him. She latched onto his cut, and then his face and relief crossed hers. Mac's eyes narrowed at the signs of her being severely beaten. He waved his arm for her to pull over, and she obeyed.

No sooner had she done so than Mac parked behind her and jogged to her car. He yanked open the door just as she tried opening it, and she fell into his arms, sobbing and breathing heavily.

“They know where Blue is!” she gasped.

Mac’s body stiffened as he looked at the woman who’d been Blue’s mother’s best friend. Kendara was back, and she’d been beaten black and blue.



“Kenny, sit down,” Casey demanded as Kendara tried to rise to her feet.

“I needed to warn you,” Kendara replied as she obeyed Casey.

Every few minutes, she rose, determined to escape before realising she was safe. Mac had driven Kendara to his house while asking a prospect to pick up his precious Harley, which he’d left on the side of the road. He’d been tense until Calamity and Jett brought it home. Calamity drove one of the SUVs at Reading Hall and swiftly took Jett back. Blue remained at Reading Hall, and Mac had asked the guys to surround him and ensure he was safe.

“I’ve texted Doc Gibbons; he’s coming out. Has she said anything?” Mac demanded, approaching Casey.

“Nothing apart from she needed to warn us.”

“Kendara, we’ve got a doctor coming. Please sit down and rest. You’ve been beaten black and blue, and I don’t know what injuries you have. Can you tell me what happened?”

“I was walking from my office to my vehicle, which is parked in a local communal car park. On the way, I sensed somebody was watching but couldn’t see anyone. When I reached my car, someone hit the back of my head, and I was bundled into a truck. I remember little after that. But when I came to, I was in a basement with a metal bedframe, a thin mattress, a bucket, and a small window. Four men surrounded me. A fifth sat in a chair and watched me. Without a word, the four beat me until the fifth stopped them.” Kendara’s breath hitched, and Casey wrapped an arm around her.

“They didn’t ask me anything, just hit me. Then when he interrupted them, the fifth leaned forward and said that if I

didn't tell him where his son was, this would continue. I pretended not to know where Blue was, and he didn't speak, Mac. Just raised his hand. They thrashed me until I passed out. When I awoke, the fifth guy was present. He told me this would be my life daily until I gave up where his son was hidden."

Mac knelt by Kendara's feet. He didn't want to rush her, but if Blue was in danger, he needed to know.

"I didn't tell them, Mac. They kept me for three days, and I didn't say a word except for Lucy, and the child had died. On the fourth day, one of them told me that they would cut things off if I didn't tell the boss where his son was. That panicked me. Terrified me. I can handle a beating, but having my fingers and toes chopped off terrified me. When he left, I started trying to find an escape route. I discovered a piece of metal that had broken off a chair frame they hit me with. I used it to carve out the putty around the small window. It was an old wooden one, and I was surprised they'd overlooked this."

Mac and Casey exchanged glances. They didn't believe that was a coincidence.

"I removed enough that I pried the window loose and fled. It was hard because I was so injured, and the grounds were crawling with guards and cameras. But I found an exit that the staff used, and when they left, I hid behind them and caught the gate before it locked. I didn't have my phone or anything, and I was so hurt I stumbled away until I found a car lot. A woman was working, and I explained I'd been kidnapped and beaten. She wanted to call the police, but when I told her who was involved, she understood. She drove me to her cousins to heal a little while she organised a car for me. That was two days ago. As soon as she got a car, I rushed straight here."

"Do you know if you were followed?" Casey asked.

"No, I kept a sharp eye out, looking over my shoulder. Despite my wounds and lack of sleep, I'm not stupid. They won't know where I am, and the woman helped me change my clothes and bathe, so there are no trackers on me."

“Kenny, give me the woman’s name. We’ll let her know you’re safe and get the car back to her. We’ll use another female, so if they tracked you, she could explain that one of us had it. Artemis will send Simone,” Casey said with a glance at Mac.

Mac nodded. No fucker could handle Simone, and it made sense.

Mac sent Artemis a text saying they needed her favourite female assassin. Artemis didn’t ask but told him Simone would meet them at his home. Mac sat back on his haunches. When the shit hits the fan, it fuckin’ hits the fan, he thought and texted Drake.

Chapter Three.

Apache

When his woman was mad, she was beyond handling. Apache sighed as he stared at the note Silvie had left. Silvie made no bones about how pissed she was, and her language supported her point. Of course, Apache didn't think with his cock, nor did he consider his dick was enough to keep her happy. Although he was pretty chuffed, Silvie called it magical until he read the following sentence. She told Apache she hoped one of the skanks gave him herpes and caused his penis to rot and fall off.

Then Silvie wrote he should take his manky (Apache had to search for that word, the English version of rotting. Sin's influence) cock and shove it where the sun doesn't shine. Shit, Silvie was mad. The following line about how she'd love to shaft Apache like he'd done her spoke volumes, and Apache's butt clenched as he imagined Silvie, a bat and his ass. Not happening.

The bedroom looked like a whirlwind moved through it, and Apache grimaced to see Silvie run her wheelchair through mud and tracked it over his clothes. Silvie was also spitefully inventive, he noted. Apache bent down to pick up his jeans and froze before snorting. Silvie cut the crotch out in a hole no bigger than an inch. He got the message; he had a tiny willy. Apache continued laughing as he checked all his jeans and found the same. Fuck, the only jeans he had intact were what he was wearing.

The woman hadn't only hit his ego and dick size but also his wallet. Shaking his head, Apache walked downstairs. His house was eerily silent and felt off. Silvie brought so much light and colour to his life; it seemed grey without her vibrant presence. And hell, she was vindicated in being pissed. As the old ladies pointed out, a whore had nearly killed Silvie. His daughter was born on the side of a road in his eldest son's panicking hands. Apache's concern had been firmly focused on reaching Silvie and Halona at the hospital.

He hadn't bothered to find out what skank hid Silvie's phone or left her in such pain she couldn't even crawl to the door. And that was his oversight. Apache had been so fixated on his wife's health and his daughter's dramatic birth; he'd ignored the fact a whore had nearly murdered them. And that was on him. How the fuck he'd overlooked it, Apache didn't know or understand. Perhaps the relief of finding them both alive and well overtook everything else.

But the old ladies were right. The skanks had come close to killing his wife. And Apache would take revenge for his old lady. Someone had touched what was his, and he was unhappy, to say the least. His mind swapped to Calamity, and he shuddered. That was a cluster fuck he didn't want to touch. As far as Apache could remember, no brother had been voted from the club for touching/dating a princess. In fact, no brothers had been kicked from the MC full stop. It had been Apache's natural instinct to back Texas up as soon as he realised Texas was beyond upset. It's what they did.

What Apache hadn't considered was he was going against another brother. That hadn't even entered the equation. He did precisely as Drake accused and voted blindly. Now a kid who Apache highly admired was left drifting in the wind. Apache wanted to call church and take a vote to reclaim Calamity and Klutz, but he wasn't sure of his brothers. Each one of the old guards was stubborn as fuck. They'd had to be to survive. And Drake was correct; they were still profoundly mired in the past.

Not as much as Drake believed, Apache challenged the idea and ducked his head. Or maybe they were. Apache jabbed at Calamity's number on his phone and wasn't surprised when it rang straight to voice mail. He tried Silvie's and received the same. Apache was in the frigid cold, and it was a lonely place to exist.

Ace

"Gone hunting," Ace said aloud. Two short words to inform him where his wife was. Hunting who? He saw a second note and grabbed it.

“Kids are at Reading Hall. Only approach if you want a bullet in your ass. Akemi has orders to shoot,” Ace read and scowled. Goddamn his woman. Artemis was a bitch at the best of times. But being heavily pregnant and leaving Akemi behind to guard the kids was a bad choice. Ace spied a third letter and picked it up.

“Forget Akemi. Master Hoshi is watching the kids. Go for it. I’ll collect the pieces of your body when I return,” Ace growled and screwed up the note.

Shit! No way was he getting near his children until Artemis said so. And as Artemis was hunting, he’d no idea where the fuck his beloved wife was. Ace wanted to talk over what transpired with her, but no, Artemis was doing her own thing and had left him with his thoughts.

And Ace didn’t like his thoughts very much. He knew what he’d accepted and had done couldn’t be undone. But when shit developed, he used Artemis as a sounding board. But she was furious this time, and he’d have to work through his head alone. And that was highly uncomfortable.

Ace stormed into the kitchen, pissed, hungry, and guilty. He made himself a thick sandwich and viciously took a bite. He didn’t want to think about his actions. Ace wanted to bury his head in the sand and let somebody else find the solution. But that wouldn’t happen. Ace was VP and the one everyone looked to for leadership after Drake. But none of his experiences had prepared him for this, and he was floundering. A thought crossed Ace’s mind, and a grin lit his face. He devoured the rest of the sandwich and headed out for his bike. Drake had banned them from Rage, but there was one place to go. Throttling his Harley, Ace drove toward someone who’d have solid advice.

“Fuck me! Did Rage burn down?” Magic boomed as he glared at Ace. Ace froze at the entrance. “Get a fuckin’ face mask and sterilise your hands, motherfucker. And then sit with the rest of your sorry assholes who think I have the answers to the universe!” Magic pointed at a table, and Ace bit back a laugh as he saw Gunner, Rock, Lowrider, and Ezra sitting

there. With no access to Drake or Axel, it appeared they'd had similar thoughts.

Ace did as commanded and headed for them.

"You fucked up, Ace. Make shit right; ain't good for Rage to tear themselves apart. We look to you to see what's possible," a soft voice spoke, and Ace glanced at Inglorious sitting with Mouse and Razor, two of his brothers.

"Think we all screwed up," Ace muttered.

"No doubting that. But we're watching to see what Rage does. We watched when you claimed women so we can avoid the crap you went through," Inglorious replied cheekily, and Ace scowled. He nodded once and marched to the table his brothers sat at.

"Both clubs keep away from each other. Ain't fuckin' messing with ya. Social distancing will be observed!" Magic boomed.

"Magic's on one," Gunner noted.

"He'll be like this until the pandemic ends," Rock commented.

"We gonna talk?" Ace demanded, and they all exchanged looks. Each of them held guilt and shame.

"Yup," Rock replied and picked up his beer. "Got shit to fix."

Ace nodded and took a seat.

Manny

Unlike the rest of Rage, Manny didn't own his own house. Manny slept and lived in the clubhouse. He'd not yet settled into a home. Manny had been waiting for the correct woman to share his life. Manny turned his bike and headed towards Sturgis. He hoped to find some answers on the ride because standing still never helped him think. Despite not having his own old lady, Manny was close to Sin. And he hated the devastated expression on Sin's face as she watched the entire scene go down.

Manny was relieved that Jett hadn't failed Sinclair, but he knew he had. Jett had manned up, and Manny envied him it. They could bring in cleaners for the clubhouse. Most brothers were content with takeaways, although that would get tiresome daily. Could they hire a chef for Rage? Two cooks? One for the morning and lunch and one for the evening meals? There were enough brothers, claimed women, and kids that Rage could absorb the cost of a cook. The old ladies often finished a day's work and then hurried over to make a quick meal, but it tired them.

Yeah, Manny was going to suggest cleaners and a chef. And a nursery nurse? Every day, worn-out mothers tried to clean the clubhouse, cook meals for ungrateful fuckers and look after their children. Then they went home and repeated the entire process. It would be easier for the women to finish work and relax at the clubhouse. That would be great for everyone. The kids would run riot as they did anyway, but a couple of childminders watching them could keep them out of trouble. Manny added that to his mental list.

Once Manny decided he'd resolved that issue, he turned his mind to Calamity. Manny had felt betrayed by Calamity's actions and then by Klutz's. He thought, like Texas, it was a foregone conclusion that if you could not date a princess as a candidate and prospect, then it was pretty apparent that you couldn't as a full member. But Manny dug deep into why. And knew it was because Bulldog played merry hell with any girl over sixteen who belonged to a brother. Bulldog hadn't been above forcing a brother to give his daughter to someone else as an old lady. That's where their rule had started. But Calamity and Klutz weren't those guys.

But both men should have shown honour and stayed the fuck away from Rosie and Aurora. But not knowing how it felt to be in love, Manny shouldn't pass judgement. It was something to consider because nobody could have stopped Texas from claiming Penny. Nor Drake Phoe. Manny would like to see anyone attempt to stop one of Rage from taking their women. They'd have been laid out flat. Nope, Manny didn't understand what it was to be loved up. He understood and witnessed the looks between Rosie and Calamity, Klutz

and Aurora as the four stood firm against Texas and the club though.

Manny wasn't prepared to watch Rage tear itself apart again. He aimed the bike towards Axel and Ellen's house, hoping Axel was home. The big man often had ideas on how to fix shit. They needed his genius now.

Texas

The image of Rosie as a young teenager bled into his mind. Texas never allowed Rosie to wear skanky suggestive clothes, so she wore jeans and a tee. But Texas remembered the look on Bulldog's face when he'd spotted Rosie one night. Bulldog had commented what a fine piece of meat she was, and Texas was forced to realise his little girl was no longer little. Nor was his baby safe. Texas had spun on Bulldog and snarled Rosie was underage, and he gave no man permission to touch her. Bulldog laughed and taunted Texas before turning his back on him. That one act showed Texas that Bulldog would go against his wishes. He'd no respect for Texas or his rights as a father.

Texas had hurried Rosie from the clubhouse and told her it was not safe. She'd understood. His daughter wasn't stupid. She'd also seen the looks thrown her way and was terrified. He'd decided to cut his time at the club to ensure he was home with Rosie at a decent hour each night. Texas also made plans that she would stay with a friend until he picked her up each evening.

Bulldog had noticed Rosie's absence before he'd realised Texas wasn't spending as much time at the clubhouse. Mad Dog and Crow had been eyeing up Rosie, and Drake informed Texas that he'd overheard them complaining to Bulldog that she'd not been around. In addition, Prince and Mayhem were heard throwing their hat in the ring to claim Rosie. It would never happen. Those fuckin' perverts were never gonna get their filthy disgusting hands on his beautiful girl.

Texas had been called to heel in church, Bulldog laying down the law that Rosie, as a princess, belonged to the club and, therefore, would be there each night. Texas denied Bulldog, not knowing if he had support. Bulldog threatened

Texas, and he refused to bow. Never would he allow one of those filthy animals to touch his daughter, and he told Bulldog that outright. Bulldog threw him into the gauntlet, and Texas still refused to give ground. With a sneer, Bulldog decided on a vote on whether Rosie needed to be present.

He won but was shocked when Drake and his men sided against them and informed them they would stand the gauntlet with Texas. And whoever was left standing would decide Rosie's fate. Texas had sweated buckets as, one by one, he and his real brothers fought for Rosie, and finally, it came down to him and Bulldog. Every inch of him had been sore and in pain, and Bulldog was fresh as a daisy. Bulldog expected to waltz in and claim Rosie. And Texas knew Bulldog planned to break Rosie in for his brothers. It would not happen. Texas fought with everything he had and beat the shit out of Bulldog. They'd won. Rosie was safe. But each brother who'd sided with Drake had been noted, and they were a minority.

Texas raced home that evening, packed Rosie up, and sent her away to Shotgun's gran. Bulldog and his men might look for Rosie in Hellfire, but they wouldn't look at Shotgun's grandmother. Texas snuck out to see his baby for the next six months until he'd secured his house to be safe enough for her. Texas then laid out he'd be home with Rosie each night but be at the clubhouse at weekends. And anyone who disagreed could meet him in the ring. No one did, remembering the power of his fists. So Rosie came home and spent weekends at Shotgun's grandmother's house.

His skin still crawled to this day when he thought of the looks those motherfucking assholes had sent his baby. He'd pushed for the law that made princesses off limits, and he'd never regretted it. Not even now. Only a father facing what he had could understand his emotions. And Texas didn't give a fuck that he'd blown up at Calamity. The kid had betrayed his trust.

Maybe Calamity genuinely thought it was okay for a brother to date a princess, but he'd never asked. Just assumed. Calamity snuck around his back, making bonds and dating his baby. The one thing that Texas held above all else. He'd bled

and nearly died for Rosie. No, she wouldn't court a biker; that could and did go wrong all the time. It didn't matter that people thought Calamity was a decent kid. Let them give their daughters to him if they thought that way. Rosie was his daughter and his to protect. His baby would realise that and come home soon, and Calamity would fall into the gutter where he belonged for betraying a brother's trust.

Lindsey

I was laughing as Mac approached Reading Hall with his hands held high. Phoe was waiting at the top of the steps, tapping her foot with her arms folded and a dark glower on her face. Mac waited until he got close, reached into his cut, and whipped out a box of Phoe's favourite toffees. And that did it. Phoe broke out into a smile and kissed Mac on his cheek. She winked and sauntered back into the Hall where a thousand kids, or so it appeared, were rioting.

"How's Kendara?" Mac asked straight away.

"Resting, she has a broken wrist and ribs, and she's covered in cuts and bruises. Kenny's kidney is inflamed from where she took several kicks, but Doc Gibbons is happy with her so far," I replied and motioned Mac to follow me.

We walked upstairs to where Kendara was currently on bedrest with Casey standing over her. Kendara had created a fuss at first until Casey and I shoved her into the bed and sat on either side of her. She finally got it when Phoe said if she moved, she'd have security cuff her to the bed. Kendara did not make a great patient.

I heard squabbling as we approached Kendara's bedroom. What on earth were she and Casey fighting about? I wondered. The two women had initially hit it off until Kendara realised Casey was as stubborn as her.

"And Jack O'Neil is a sex God!" Casey stated firmly. Ah, Stargate. They'd both discovered their passion for the programme and its sister show, Stargate Atlantis.

"Ronon Dex was hotter!" Kendara exclaimed.

“Because he’s a muscle-bound dude. But Jack had humour and those sad eyes!” Casey snapped back.

“Well, you’re in love with Mac, so humour must mean a lot!” Kendara quipped, and silence fell in the room.

Mac raised an eyebrow, and I snorted. Gales of laughter broke out from the bedroom.

“Don’t make me laugh; it hurts,” Kendara wailed.

“That’s your own fault!”

“Seriously, girl, you hit the lucky streak with him. All that hotness, humour, and a heart of gold. I did right bringing Blue to him,” Kendara expressed when they stopped laughing.

“Blue’s our son. No asshole is going to take him,” Casey replied, and the fierceness in her voice made me smile.

“And he’s your nephew too, Auntie Kendara,” Mac stated, stepping into the bedroom. Kendara jumped a little and winced as she clutched her right side.

“Yes, you were Lucy’s best friend, and you had more claim to Blue than us. That was a sign of genuine friendship that you didn’t keep Blue but put his needs first,” Casey said gently.

Lucy, Blue’s mother, had been kidnapped while walking home from Rage one night. She’d been sold to a wealthy man and held captive as his sex slave. When she got pregnant, she escaped and gave birth to Blue, giving her own life in the process. Kendara managed to smuggle Blue to Mac, keeping a promise she made to Lucy to keep Blue safe.

“Yeah, I’m his auntie, and I’d do anything to protect him,” Kendara whispered. Blue stirred in Casey’s arms, and Casey walked to the bed and laid him in Kendara’s. Pure love crossed her face as she stared at the baby she’d been beaten half to death over.

“Tell me stories from you and Lucy growing up. I want Blue to know everything about his birth mother,” Mac said, and Casey responded in approval.

Fuck, there wasn’t a jealous or insecure bone in Casey’s body concerning Blue. Casey knew she was honoured by

raising Blue and meant to make the most of it. I tilted my head towards Casey and the door, and she nodded.

“I owe you a long overdue explanation. Casey, I offered a brief one at your mother’s but never really dug deep into it.”

“You owe me nothing Lindsey,” Casey said with a wave. “We’re cool now.”

“No, I honestly want you to understand why I acted the complete bitch,” I insisted.

“Oh, go ahead!” Casey waved a careless hand and winked.

“I was married to a very evil asshole; my aunt and uncle forced me to marry him. Back then, I was estranged from Ezra through no fault of our own.” I walked outside with Casey and took a stroll around the gardens, explaining what had happened to me. When it came to the betrayal, I took a deep breath.

“When Mac betrayed me and got the wrong end of the stick, it hurt. This was someone I’d trusted, and he’d literally ripped my heart out alongside Ezra and Lowrider. If I’d been stronger, I would have probably shot the three of them,” I said.

Casey laughed.

“I could see you doing that, Lindsey!”

“They were lucky, I’m telling you. Then, when Thomas found me at home, and I was caught in the middle of a gunfight between him and Santos, Mac appeared from nowhere and saved me. He took bullets for me and nearly gave his life to save me. That brought us even closer than ever. And over time, our trust and friendship grew into a true alternative relationship. So much so that when Mac hurts, I hurt; when he’s happy, I am.”

“And when I upset Mac by judging him, you were hurt on his behalf and wanted revenge,” Casey stated.

I nodded.

“Yup, I longed to rip your throat out. Mac is such a good guy, and I know you’re aware of how great he is. But back then, I was livid. How dare you? A man who’d nearly given

his life to save me. I was beyond furious. First, you'd beaten Mac, and I could excuse why, I'd have acted the same. And then you shit on him, and that just kept digging a hole for you.

"I wanted Mac to be happy, and in love like I am with Lowrider. Even though Rider's in the doghouse. And I thought you were Mac's chance, and then the dinner from hell happened, and Mac collapsed into himself, withdrew and was hurting, and I couldn't help. All I could do was focus my anger on you! So I did. I wanted you to hurt as much as Mac, and if it meant playing the bitch to a hilt, so be it."

"Yeah, I can understand that, Lindsay; when people I love get upset, I want to lash out, too," Casey replied.

"It was more than that, though. Mac, like the rest of the brothers, craves love and acceptance. He thought he had found it with you and then discovered you assumed the worst of him without knowing him. That was what really dug deep, and I acted to protect Mac, even if it meant alienating Mac. Mac understood where I was coming from, but I didn't back off when he asked me to.

"Because I love Mac so much, I wanted to soothe his pain and hurt. Which couldn't happen because you kept popping up, which meant the memory stayed fresh in his mind. If you ask any old lady, they will tell you the brothers don't feel they are worthy of the love they have. History still haunts Rage even though they have been clean for years. I sometimes think that they strongly believe they'll never be done paying for their past crimes. Which is pure, unadulterated nonsense.

"I wish, Casey, they could see themselves the way we do. They would be so shocked to understand how much they are genuinely loved. They don't see how admired and respected every single one of them is. But know this, sister, we'll always be friends, and nothing should tear that apart."

"Thank you, Lindsay, for your honesty. You didn't have to tell me why, but I appreciate you did."

"Casey, I'm happy you're together and have Blue and are moving forward. I hope you can forgive me one day for how I acted," I said honestly.

“No need; it’s already been forgotten, moved past, and we’re heading in the right direction. Although I reserve the right to take you training one day,” Casey gloated, and I winced.

“I imagine that is deserved,” I whined, and Casey let out a beaming smile.

Ah, fuck!

Chapter Four.

Drake

“**Y**ou need to wake up, Texas. You’re in danger of losing everything. And I ain’t gonna stand by and watch,” Drake spat as they faced each other across his desk. They were in Drake’s office and going at it with hammer and tongs. Texas had no intention of backing down while Drake was ready to bust his brother’s head open.

“Shut the fuck up. You may be my president, but you got no say in my family!” Texas bellowed in return.

“No, when Penny hands you divorce papers, what do you think will happen?” Drake snarled, just as angry as Texas.

Those words hit home; Drake saw them stab deep into Texas as he balanced himself with one hand.

“Penny’s gonna divorce me?” Texas whispered, his face rapidly paling.

Drake wondered whether to come out with the truth. He’d no idea how to stick to his guns and shock the fuck out of Texas. His mind made up, Drake ploughed ahead.

“What do you think will happen? Penny’s a strong woman, and you’re disrespecting her every right and need. She won’t stay with another asshole!” Drake snapped quickly, shoving the guilt deep down. It was time to stand firm.

Texas wobbled and sat heavily in a chair. The anger drained from him as fear rose in its place.

“Ain’t gonna let her divorce me,” he muttered.

Drake saw his shot and dived straight in.

“No? Think you can stop her? Penny will walk with the kids while keeping Rosie and Calamity in her life and your grandchild!”

“It’s true? Rosie’s pregnant?” Texas whispered.

“Yeah, and considering the stuff those two have suffered, they more than deserve it!”

“Fuck, a grandbaby,” Texas murmured, and Drake noticed a shake in his hand.

Should he soften up now?

“One, you won’t see if Rosie and Calamity get their way. You’ve shit all over them. We could have resolved this mess weeks ago if not for your stinking attitude. You’re existing in the past, not the present, or looking forward to the future. The past is gone, us and the princesses are safe, the old ladies and legacies are fuckin’ God damn secure, Texas!

“Is Calamity planning to bargain Rosie’s pussy to get a better role in the MC? The fuck he is. He’ll slit any asshole’s throat that makes a move on her. Is Calamity forcing Rosie to whore herself out to calm brother’s down? Calamity gonna get Rosie hooked on drink and drugs so he can control her and make her more pliable? Get real. That kid loves her and worships the ground she walks on. He gave up his cut and his family to be with her. And no matter how far up your ass your head is, you can’t deny how much he needed and loved us as family.”

“He disrespected me by going behind my back,” Texas growled, anger surging.

“Like what? Protecting Rosie from an asshole at college? Him, being her friend for years when she lacked one? My son was also that; wanna beat the shit out of Fanatic too? Calamity never laid a finger on her until he was a brother and brought it to the table. That’s honour. Produce another man out there who knew he’d found his soulmate and delayed four fuckin’ years. *Show me!*” Drake roared.

Texas jumped a little and glared at Drake.

“None of you raging assholes waited like Calamity did, and that brother is respect! Did you look at the kid when he was telling us about the inheritance? He was all happy about what it could buy his woman. Not himself. Calamity believed himself worthy because now he had money and, therefore, was

worth something in his eyes. Don't matter how much praise we gave that kid, he still thought he was trash, and you drove the knife deeper into his heart.

“You heard his latest plans? Calamity is giving up design and opening a school for children like him. That was never on his radar before. But now Calamity wants to ensure those kids get a shot at a decent life. And one day, don't confront a motherfucker stuck in the past calling them trash!”

Texas sat back, absorbing the blow that Drake was landing on him. His mind, cooling off from the red-hot anger, was finally thinking straight. Every time his fury seemed to cool a little, he'd got news something had happened to Klutz, Aurora, Calamity, and Rosie, and he'd been set off again. Ranting that the girls wouldn't be in danger if they'd stayed away from bikers.

“Penny's heard about how you think the princesses deserve better than a fuckin' brother in an MC. Says a lot about her status, doesn't it? How low on a scale of one to ten does Penny rank?” Drake kept after Texas, knowing he had him on the ropes. “So, Penny warrants a biker because she's less of a woman who deserves good shit than your daughter? Fuck you, I call bullshit, and I can line Penny up with twenty bikers tomorrow who'd worship her and break their backs doing so.”

“Anyone goes near my wife; I'll bury them,” Texas growled.

“Won't have a choice when she hands you those divorce papers!” Drake shot. “Weeks ago, the brothers wanted to end this shit, but no, you had to be the motherfucking asshole and hold us all back. That's done. You got twenty-four hours to get your head straight, or I'm busting you down to candidate. And don't even think of blacking your ink because I'll fucking tattoo every part of your body with the patch,” Drake threatened.

“You are one sorry bastard, Drake,” Texas snarled.

“And you're pathetic. All because your baby girl had the audacity to fall in love!”

“It’s not that! We saw what happened to princesses!” Texas erupted.

“And that shit doesn’t wash. It’s been over fifteen fuckin’ years. No princess has been in danger from a brother since Rage got legal! I recognise Bulldog planned to rape and pass Rosie around. I took the blows with you to save her. She’s as much mine as yours, and I give Calamity my blessing because no one else I know for sure would lay his life down for her. And that kid would. He’d die before anyone laid a hand on her. So, wake the fuck up before you become a sorry, bitter old man hooked on drugs, cheap booze, and easy pussy. Because that’s your fucking future! Now get out!” Drake shouted and sat back as Texas rose to his feet and drew himself up.

Texas glowered and walked out.

“Church in the morning. Be in a better frame of mind, or we’re facing you in the fuckin’ gauntlet!” Drake yelled after him.

The slamming of his office door was his reply.

Drake sighed but knew he’d got through. He picked up his phone and dialled Calamity.

“Meeting tomorrow night; bring everyone,” Drake announced as the kid answered.

“If he ain’t under control, Rosie and I walk,” Calamity responded and hung up.

Fuck me, that kid would make a great president one day.

Texas

He slammed a leg over his motorbike and ignored the movement beside him. He rode off without looking over his shoulder and headed to the hills. They all had places in the mountains that they fled to, and Texas was heading towards where he could think. He knew someone drove behind him but didn’t acknowledge them. They chased him until he parked. He sat on his bike as the person dismounted and then got off his own.

A right hook caught him on the chin, followed by a left to his eye. Holy fuck!

“What the hell, Gunner?” Texas spat as Gunner moved.

“Come on; asshole, hit me. Let’s bleed you of that insane anger!” Gunner snapped, stepped forward, and threw another roundhouse that sent Texas two steps back.

Texas bellowed his pain, shot a fake left, and smacked Gunner on his chin with his right fist. Gunner grinned and taunted Texas with his fingers.

Texas knew it was a mistake getting into a fight with Gunner. The dirtiest and nastiest fighter Rage had, but fuck him. He launched at Gunner, fists flying.



Half an hour later, they sat on their asses, huffing and puffing and trying to catch their breath. Gunner’s face was a mess of bruises, and Texas assumed his own was too. Shit, even as he thought that his right eye was swelling shut. Texas spat out blood and checked his teeth were still intact. The fact two wobbled meant he required a trip to the dentist. And he hated the dentist.

“Drake send you?” Texas finally spoke.

“Nah, sent myself. Knew you needed to blow,” Gunner replied, wiggling his hand, which was bruising. “Autumn’s gonna be pissed I can’t use my fingers on her.”

Texas snorted. Yeah, he could see that.

“Now talk, asshole,” Gunner said.

And Texas did. Angrily blurting out his old fear of Bulldog’s men getting hold of Rosie, his terror of losing her. How betrayed he’d felt when Calamity wanted to date her, how lost he’d been in the past and how he’d recognised they’d changed but not accepted it. Every poisonous thought came spilling out. Including the fact it had just been him and Rosie for so long. He assumed Calamity would steal his place in her heart. That Rosie may not want her daddy anymore.

“Rosie is always gonna need you. That’s never going to change. Think she isn’t hurting? But you put the wall up between ya’s. Texas, you gotta make shit right. And trust me, Rosie’s your daughter. She’s going to make you work for it.”

“Well aware of that, brother!” Texas exclaimed softly. His thoughts were open and not churning around in his head. He could see how wrong he’d been. How moving on from the past was more complicated than they’d believed. They thought changing a few things would resolve everything. But it hadn’t. Because history haunted them, and it needed exercising from their body. Dumping his fears, Texas could finally look to the future.

A weight lifted from Texas’s shoulders as all his hidden fears were cleansed, and he could acknowledge his daughter was safe. The drama that found Rosie and Calamity had been because of Rosie’s choices. Becoming a vet who had stopped a dog fighting ring and ended up with her in trouble. Her recent situations were about that and saving Calamity from his parents. Nothing to do with Rage, and Texas accepted that, and it was easier than he realised. Gunner shoved an elbow into his bruised ribs, and Texas groaned.

“Feels good, don’t it? Just let it all go. Drake’s right, we’re free, Texas, and while we recognised it, we didn’t embrace it. Trouble will always find us because we are an MC and clean. Yeah, brother, there are assholes who are dirty and seeking a pipeline through our city. Don’t mean we roll over and die; it means we fight to keep what we want. In the end, those fuckers will stop coming because they’ll know Rage will put down any threat.”

“Freedom. Something I expected when I joined Rage and discovered a prison instead. But we left there fuckin’ years ago. And I kept protecting my girl and brothers, even when it wasn’t needed.”

“Texas, that ain’t gonna be something the old guard can train outta ourselves. We’ll always be alert to the potential of danger, but in time, it will fade. And when we’re old men, we’ll sit back with a beer and watch our legacies run the club and laugh at the decisions they make. We will walk through

fire to ensure they don't suffer like we do. Simple as. Now, do I need to knock more sense into your skull?"

Gunner flexed his fists, and Texas blanched. Nah, that wasn't needed.

"I'm good. Freedom, it feels amazing," Texas declared.

"Being free is beautiful, brother; it's about time you realised that. You gotta fuckin' grovel to a lot of women, and they're gonna make you pay through the nose," Gunner said with a wicked grin.

Texas groaned.

Drake

Drake looked around. He'd given his opening speech, and everyone was watching him. Calamity's eyes kept flicking to Texas and Rosie. Klutz was on edge.

"Ladies, while you are welcome to voice an opinion, you don't get a vote. But today and today alone, you can speak freely without worrying you're shaming your old man or fear of repercussions. We require your opinions and thoughts," Drake said and swallowed hard.

"Why now?" Jett demanded.

Oh, that clever little prick. As much as Drake loved that kid, he hated him occasionally.

"Because we're renewing Rage. New clubhouse, ground design, different garage layout, etc. But we forgot to look at the charter and the behaviours that drive the charter we swear allegiance to. And sometimes, we need a sledgehammer over our heads, Jett, to remind us of stuff. We screw up, and then we fix it, as you know," Drake said.

Jett's eyes narrowed. He knew Drake was referring to the number of times he'd screwed up with Sin and wouldn't take advice.

"Fair point. What do we get out of it?" Lindsey demanded.

"This is your chance to help stamp out the shit that annoys the fuck out of you. Either use it or lose it," Drake retorted.

Lindsey's gaze tightened.

"Simple, ban sluts, barflies, whores, club bunnies, and any bitch who doesn't belong to a brother." Autumn looked at Drake.

"These proposals have been voted on by brothers. Now they're being put to the old ladies, older princesses, candidates, and prospects. First, there'll be no skanks, bunnies, or barflies attending the clubhouse. Not now, not ever. A brother, prospect or candidate wants to fuck, do it at their house. No need for easy pussy anymore. They can get that at a bar or club," Drake stated.

Old ladies exchanged glances, and Drake felt the tension ease drastically.

"I'm voting for that!" Phoe said, and one by one, the women agreed.

"Anyone disagree with this?" Drake asked, thinking that would be easier.

"Only females visiting Rage are old ladies, friends, and those the brother's date. No more bringing one-night stands. You wanted a family club; now you fuckin' earn it," Penny spat, and everyone heard the anger in her voice.

"Not arguing," Drake soothed, and she sat back with a suspicious glare.

"What's your end goal?" Rosie demanded.

"My MC made whole. We've spoken a lot over the weeks and realise that we sided with Texas for several reasons. One because of the old rules. No brother dated a princess, but I explained we forgot why. And two, because it's conditioned in us to stick together. Which is why we felt so fuckin' betrayed when Calamity and Klutz resigned. And why it hurts like fuck Blaze and the rest refuse to wear their cuts. Rosie, girl, we're trying to create a club we can be proud of. Just because we shove our head in the sand and say that's the way we have always done shit doesn't mean it's right," Drake replied.

"Not a bad answer. So why are Calamity and Klutz here?" Rosie demanded.

“Because we want them to rejoin us, take their rightful cuts back, and everyone else as well. But Calamity and Klutz won’t do crap until we hash this mess out. So, can we continue?” Drake asked.

“Sure, but don’t get pissy if you hate what we say,” Artemis drawled, eyes narrowed on Drake, looking for a trick.

“The next item, brothers who’ve claimed an old lady will wear a patch with their woman’s name on. It’ll state, ‘Claimed by Phoe’, for example. This is voluntary, but everyone agreed who has a woman. You’ve as much right to claim us as we do you. Any nays?” Drake looked, but nobody replied no.

“Next. We will hire a cleaning crew to come in three times a week, every Saturday and Sunday. But that doesn’t mean candidates will get out of certain shit. You’ll continue to man the bar and take the trash out. You’ll mop up puke or other shit; the kids may spill if the cleaning crew has gone home. You’ll tidy quickly each morning, which shouldn’t take long because the clubhouse will already be clean. Brothers and old ladies are expected to place a basket of dirty washing outside their room if it needs doing. You are to collect it and bring it to the laundry room.

“Prospects, you’ll do sentry duty alongside the candidates. You check the weapons in the armoury weekly and test them monthly. You’re responsible for the maintenance of the grounds and walls. Prospects will fetch and carry like candidates when a brother wants something, and you’ll escort the old ladies on trips. We’ve taken away the cleaning, cooking, and food shopping aspects of the roles, but mainly the rest remains the same. Anyone got issues with that?” Drake looked around, pleased to see no one argued their role.

“We’re also hiring a cook...” Drake said.

“Thank fuck!” Penny interrupted as people laughed.

“Yeah, thought you might like that one. Rage is bringing in a woman in the morning who’s gonna do breakfasts and lunches. We’re employing another lady who’s going to do our evening meals. Marsha has agreed to handle the shopping each week. So, if you want a certain meal, you can write it on the

whiteboard in the kitchen, and the cooks will consider it. No fucker commands what they cook; they work for us, not enslaved by us. The women will be treated with respect, and God help anyone who pisses them off,” Drake said.

The old ladies were talking amongst themselves and looking much happier.

“And Rage is hiring and paying for four babysitters, or nannies, whatever you wanna call them. Everyone here works hard and puts in long hours. Now you can collect the kids, come to the clubhouse and relax, and the brats can run riot while being watched by a responsible adult. We’re also employing a lifeguard for the pool each evening, and a prospect or candidate will be in attendance.

“Apache has found a way of erecting a frame around the swimming pool in the winter so the kids can keep using it. The building will trap the heat inside, which frees up the pool for the winter, and we’ll remove it in the spring. We hope four nannies are enough, but we are open to hiring more. There’ll be a nursery nurse for the babies in their room.”

“What do you mean, Drake?” Sin asked.

“We’re opening a nursery on the ground floor of the clubhouse; it’ll be soundproofed, so the noise in the common room doesn’t disturb them. It will also have enormous glass windows so we can see in. We think babies up to a year or eighteen months should be able to nap there. A candidate or prospect will guard the nursery the entire time the kids are inside. Their job is to protect the babies from what may breach the walls, not that I expect anything to,” Drake said. He observed as the old ladies exchanged glances and murmured between themselves. He waited patiently as they tossed ideas about for ten minutes, and then Phoe gave their agreement.

“Our rides have been chaotic recently. We are going to dedicate two weekends a month, and we are drawing up a rota who stays each weekend. Two brothers, two candidates, and two prospects will remain behind to guard the children. I know pregnant women don’t like to ride after four months, so you’ll just be extra bodies here or ride in a cage. It’s the fairest way

we can think of that ensures everyone gets to ride. To ensure this happens, Apache is taking a sidestep into Road Captain,” Drake’s announcement was met with gasps.

Apache nodded and patted his cut, which already displayed his new patch.

“Apache will work with Phoe as well to organise quarterly charity runs for the Trusts. This leaves Enforcer open, and we need two. Rock is stepping up into that role. And Manny is going to become Treasurer, freeing up a lot of Texas’s time as he did the roles of Secretary and Treasurer. Also, frees up Fish to carry out more of the Sergeant at Arms duties he should attend to around the candidates and prospects.”

“Holy fuck!” Lindsey exclaimed.

“There’s Lieutenant; we gonna have one?” Harley asked.

“I might have someone for that. But ain’t certain about his loyalty yet,” Drake replied.

No one said a word. It wasn’t rocket science to know who Drake referred to. There was only one missing member of Rage, and no, they sure as fuck weren’t sure of his loyalties.

“Any questions so far?” Drake asked.

“Get on with it,” Marsh demanded, but Drake felt a softening in the women. They understood the brothers had put a lot of thought into making changes and amends.

“Princesses can date brothers, and there will be no sneaking around behind our backs. If a candidate or prospect is interested in a princess and she returns the feeling, then he needs to go in front of the inner circle. Followed by the full attendance of church. What we decide there, goes. We do not expect any arguments on the decision from either party. It could be the candidate won’t make a prospect, or the prospect won’t make brother. Our reasons are our own, but we ain’t slamming the stable door shut. We wanna work with you,” Drake announced.

“I disagree. You don’t get to decide who I date,” Rosie snapped.

“One word, Frenzy,” Ace said, and Rosie’s gaze turned to Ace before she nodded.

“I’ll give you that, but you must hear the candidates/prospect and the princess. That’s fair. Otherwise, you’re treating us like property,” Rosie fought.

“Anyone disagree that if a candidate or prospect is interested in a princess, then both parties involved go in front of the Inner Circle and then full church?” Drake asked.

People swapped glances, but no one spoke in disagreement.

“The ring and gauntlet will remain. I know this disturbs some women, but it is our way of discipline. We ask you to respect that,” Drake said.

“Then we expect you don’t involve yourselves in our regulation of old ladies. And that also includes if we put someone in the ring and gauntlet,” Phoe snapped back instantly.

Drake felt his brother’s baulk; oh, this could be bad.

“Ain’t no different to what we do now,” Artemis taunted.

“She’s got a point,” Ace admitted.

They finally agreed that the women could use the gauntlet and ring if needed. Although it was begrudging. That was when his wife stood up.

Phoenix

“We want a few moments Drake, to discuss what you’ve announced and offered. The old ladies need to be in agreement,” I said rising to my feet.

As one the old ladies and princesses followed me outside.

“We need to talk?” Marsha asked.

“No, we already discussed what we want, they’re giving it to us. But we gotta let them think we’re considering their words and make them sweat,” I replied.

“We going to agree to what Drake’s saying?” Sin asked.

“We’ve had our chats girls, knew what we wanted. Unless someone has another demand then we’ll agree. Although I have a wonderful idea for a team penance,” I said grinning.

“Oh?” Rosie asked as my gaze lit upon her.

“Oh yeah, gather round girls,” I said and began whispering.

Drake

He waited patiently for an hour as the old ladies took their sweet time outside. He knew it was to make them sweat, and also a form of payback. Finally the women walked in and took their seats.

“We agree, but if we have a concern you have to promise to listen to us and not dismiss it in the future,” Phoe said. Drake glanced around as the brothers nodded.

Drake spoke briefly to Phoe before walking to the bar and placing a box. He opened the lid and removed the first cut. Drake gazed at the name and handed it to Texas. His large hands clenched it tightly, and he turned to face everyone.

“I acted like a motherfuckin’ asshole and wouldn’t admit I was wrong. I’d like you to accept your place in Rage with my nomination and support,” Texas stated, looking at Calamity.

“Seconded!” Axel boomed.

A soft chuckle left Drake’s lips. Axel had been a bear with a sore head since Calamity walked out. With the chance of putting our family back together, Axel was in favour of anything that made that happen.

“I’ll not give Rosie up,” Calamity added into the silence.

“You got my blessing,” Texas rumbled.

Calamity’s gaze shot to Rosie, who stood stone-faced by his side. Sadly, Drake noted the damage had been done to their relationship. Rosie would no longer turn to Texas for help, and he’d helped facilitate that. She’d never trust her father one hundred per cent again. That shit hurt. Calamity exchanged glances with Rosie, and Drake could see their unspoken communication. Hunter had been correct when he called them soulmates. Calamity stepped forward, his face expressionless.

“I’ll accept,” he said, and Texas beamed; Calamity twisted, and Texas helped him put the cut on. Calamity ran his fingers down the front of it and stopped as they caught on a new patch. With a frown, Calamity studied the patch. Embroidered on it was a single word, Conscience.

“I don’t understand?” Calamity asked, puzzled.

“Because you and Klutz are the club’s conscience, and we never realised it until you both stood up to us. One a boy, barely a man, and one a prospect bordering on a brother. That badge is a sign of respect from all of us present. And should you choose to share your wisdom, Rage will always be better with you,” Drake explained, his throat tightening.

“Thank you so... oof,” Calamity broke off as Rosie hit him full length and dragged his head down for a kiss.

Calamity waved a hand, telling us to continue while we chuckled at him.

“Klutz,” Ace called.

“Seconded,” Axel boomed, and we laughed.

No one else was getting a word in tonight. Klutz swapped glances with Aurora Victoria, and they moved together.

“I won’t give him up if he’s a prospect,” Aurora stated.

“Not giving her up, so I’ll pass,” Klutz said.

Ace and Axel exchanged a look, and then Axel shoved Klutz into a headlock while Ace wrestled his cut on him. Axel released him immediately as Aurora stared at Klutz.

“Oh!” she exclaimed happily.

Klutz peered at the two new patches. Brother, the top one proclaimed, and the second matched Calamity’s patch.

“Ain’t you meant to vote?” Klutz growled as he rearranged his tee.

“We did. And it took a real brother to force us to realise what we needed. And that’s the type of man we want here, building our future. You keep your head down, are quiet, and

get overlooked. But you have the same qualities Calamity has, Klutz, and we missed that. Not anymore,” Drake said proudly.

Nope, Drake would not fuck up leading this group of amazing people again. President was his legacy, but he'd believed he made the role. Drake didn't. The role shaped him.

One by one, brothers stepped up, holding cuts for those that had taken them off in protest. And one by one, they were slipped back over shoulders and sighs echoed through the room. Drake nodded. Now perhaps the healing of Rage would be complete, and the drama would settle.

“You motherfuckers have penance!” Phoe spat.

Drake sighed. Or maybe not.

Chapter Five.

Lindsey

Lowrider had given me his card; there were some very expensive shoes I intended to buy. Penance was going to be painful. I chuckled. Beside me, Casey pushed Blue in a stroller. I was putting in a genuine effort at making shit up to her, even though Casey didn't seem to hold a grudge. But guilt remained in the back of my mind. We both knew now why I reacted the way I had; it was because I loathed seeing Mac hurt. But the vindictive way I'd gone after Casey was nasty, especially when she'd saved Mac, been stabbed by a piece of wood, and had her eardrums blasted open. I was in awe of Casey's actions. Fuck, I could fangirl on Casey all day and not be ashamed.

Casey was pushing Blue proudly, and I loved that. That Casey was so in love with the cute baby boy and proud to be his mama. Blue would never have to feel fear because Casey would nuke anybody who upset her child. It shows how wrong I was about this wonderful, loving woman. With us was Ezra, who was scowling at anyone who stumbled into our path. It was fun shopping with my brother because I enjoyed teasing him by showing him sexy things and asking him if Lowrider would like them. Ezra, more than often, freaked out, which amused me even more!

We were crossing the road when two black SUVs caught my eye, with a limo between them. Limos were rarely seen in Rapid City, so they immediately captured my attention. My spine prickled, and I elbowed Casey and saw her gaze in the same direction. Casey swapped a glance with me, and Ezra yanked his mobile from his pocket.

“Need back up near Windfells. I'm taking the women and Blue into there. Three suspicious cars, two SUVs and a limo,” Ezra said quietly into the phone. He got between Casey and the road and steered us towards the enormous department store we loved. My good mood evaporated, and I began cussing myself for bringing Blue. We were close to the doors when the sound of bullets being fired echoed, and people screamed and

ran in all directions. Worried, I clutched Casey, who was grabbing Blue from his stroller, when something smashed into my side. Cursing, I let go of Casey and grabbed at the old woman who'd fallen into me.

“Get the fuck down!” Ezra roared, his gun pulled.

I took the old lady to the ground while searching for Casey. Shouting came from the street, and I leapt to my feet as I watched three men shoving Casey into the limo. I didn't hesitate, not even after seeing bodies lying on the road. Casey had taken them down, but I ran for my SUV. Ezra yelled something as he fired bullets after the fleeing cars.

“Ezra, call Rage, track the SUV!” I screamed and scrambled into the driver's seat. I slammed into drive and pulled out, hitting one of the bodies. Ezra had stopped firing, but the rear car had crashed. As I flew past it, I saw several injured men climbing out of it. Pipes roared in the distance, and a little tension left me. I'd felt terrible leaving Ezra alone to deal with the mess, but I could be tracked. Casey and Blue couldn't.

I wouldn't let Mac down this time, and I'd bring home his woman and baby.

Casey

I recognised the noise of bullets being fired and covered Blue's stroller with my body. No fucker was hitting my son today. I started unclipping Blue frantically, yanked him from his cosy position, and held him close. Two hands grasped me and began pulling me towards the road. Carrying Blue, I was handicapped but not out. Angrily, I struck out with my left hand, making it into a flat palm, and hit the first male in his throat. He gasped and dropped instantly. The swelling in his trachea would take care of him. He was down and not getting up. The second guy hesitated, and I shifted Blue into my other arm and slammed my elbow upwards. I angled it just right, and I felt the crunch of cartilage, and it moved, slamming into the guy's brain. Two dead.

A third and fourth man came at me, and someone grabbed me from behind. I stiffed and lifted my feet, which made him unbalanced as he struggled. He stumbled backwards and

allowed me to elbow him twice in his throat. He also dropped, and I turned to fight off the fourth and stopped. A gun was held straight at Blue. I pulled him close to my chest as a fifth guy approached and, after a tussle, snatched Blue from me.

Fuck that! I didn't care about being shot, but they weren't having my son. I moved when a voice spoke from the limo.

"Bring the bitch," a man commanded.

I fought against my capturers but realised if I escaped, I'd not know where my boy was. And that was unacceptable. I climbed into the car, seeing Ezra gain his feet and begin to shoot. Lindsey was running down the street, and I guessed we'd be okay. Doors slammed shut, and the limo pulled away with a screech. I slid into a seat, and a bodyguard shoved me back into position. Angered beyond belief, I curled my lip at him and snarled.

"Take this," a cultured voice ordered, and Blue was thrust at me.

"His name is Blue, and he is not a this," I snapped, grabbing Blue.

Blue was wailing and fisting his mouth in distress. I pulled him close and rubbed his back, soothing him. Blue settled into a hiccupping cry before calming down a few minutes later. He laid his head on my shoulder and curled a hand into my top.

"His name is not Blue. He'll be called after his father," the cultured voice spoke.

I finally lifted my head and stared. Shock hit my system as I recognised the impeccably dressed guy in front of me.

"Well, now. Who'd have thought that Kane Thirst would be so impotent he can only get it up by kidnapping and raping women?" I jeered.

The famous man glared back. Oh, I knew him, alright. Kane Thirst owned the International Networking Service. An IT company that set up networking for businesses and pioneered several recent technological breakthroughs.

“Watch your mouth, bitch,” he snapped and flicked some lint from his cuff.

“Yeah, whatever. Take this moment because you’re all dead men walking. Do you know Blue’s father is in an MC? They’ll come for Blue and me,” I jeered.

“By the time they discover who I am and where I’m staying, we’ll be on my plane flying to my private island. You’ll fight like his mother did, and I’ll enjoy breaking you, just like I did her,” Kane gloated.

“Slight difference. Lucy didn’t have an MC coming for her. I do, asshole, and that’s without my dad’s guys, who happen to be ex-Delta Force. You kidnapped the wrong woman, you motherfucking rapist asshole,” I said, strangely calm.

“Do you know what happened to Lucy once she got onto my plane?” Kane asked me.

Yes, I did. It had been horrific for her. The rich man had given Lucy to his men for the entire flight.

“You’ll die for what you did to her,” I snapped.

“Last time, I only had four bodyguards when I purchased Lucy. This time I have twelve with me. We’ll see how long you last until you break.” Kane smiled coldly.

“Longer than you give me credit for. I’ll rip your fucking throat out.”

“Much harder and tougher women than you have fallen. Seriously, you are no threat to me or my guys. You’ll end up just like Lucy and do as I command until I bore of you. If you have made me happy, I shall find you a nice new owner. Should you fail, I’ll hand you to a whore house. Meanwhile, enjoy the time left with Kane Junior because once we’re on the plane, you’ll never see him again.”

“Keep believing that, and when I rip your throat out, I’ll remind you who won. And while you die, I’ll whisper in your ear all the things Blue will have in his life without you breathing his air. Blue won’t know who you are. All Blue needs to know is his mommy and daddy love him very much.

Blue will grow up in Rage as Mac's legacy, and you won't even be a random thought."

I could see my words angered Kane. Kane expected me to collapse in fear and beg for mercy. But this man was desperate for a son and wouldn't hurt Blue, so he held nothing to control me. As soon as I got a chance, I planned to tear him apart. And I'd kill as many as possible until Rage came for us because they would. That was what made them Rage.

Drake

"Move out!" Drake roared, racing through the new compound and heading to the garages. Jett, Calamity, and Texas all glanced up from the bay they were working in. Ace and Apache were on Drake's heels. Mac ran down the street toward them, Gunner and Rock by his side.

"What's happened?" Texas asked as they approached their bikes.

"Casey and Blue have been taken. They were fired at and thrown into a limo. Blue's rapist sperm donor came for him and took Casey too. Lindsey's on him, and Ezra's tracking the SUV Lindsey tore off in," Drake yelled and slung a leg over his bike.

"Axel's coordinating everyone and directing us towards Lindsey. She's still moving, so she's clearly on their tail," Ace said.

Manny raced out of Made by Rage as Harley and Slate escorted Silvie and Carly to HQ. The women were being locked down; no point in giving this asshole more ammunition. Marsha was already at HQ, calling all the women. Moments later, Penny and Sin entered HQ as Drake roared past at the head of a line of bikes. Rage had a legacy and an old lady to rescue; there was no time to waste.

Lindsey

I accelerated the SUV, staying back enough on the highway so I did not lose the convoy in front, but not so far up their ass that they saw me. We were heading towards Sundance on the I90. We'd flown past Sturgis and Spearfish and crossed into

Wyoming. This was now across state lines, and even if I didn't kill the asshole who'd kidnapped Casey and Blue, it was a federal crime. A couple of bikes had taken up my shadow, and as they were behind me, I couldn't tell who they were. But considering they came out of Spearfish, it had to be Hellfire. Which meant Ezra had called for help. The convoy passed Beulah, and I wondered if we were stopping at Sundance.

As we approached the town, the cars in front slowed down and took the exit. Determined not to lose them, I kept two cars between us. Quickly, I stopped as they turned into a gated residence, and the gates opened. The bikes behind me were now three, and I recognised Bear, Shotgun, and Diesel. I pointed to my eyes and the gates, and they nodded. Then deciding to hell with it, I floored the SUV and drove straight at the gates stopping me from getting to my friend.

Casey

I was dragged from the car without a fight. Kane held Blue, and I believed Kane would hurt him. Kane wouldn't care about dishing out a few bruises as long as Blue lived. I was stumbling up the steps when I heard a roar of an engine, and I stared in disbelief as Lindsey's SUV crashed through the gates. The wheels spun as her car got stuck on top of one that was knocked down, and she jabbed the accelerator down again and finally broke free. The kamikaze attack left the gates wide open for the three bikes that roared in, their riders firing.

Lindsey leapt from the car with a war cry and started shooting at anything that moved. I began laughing helplessly as Kane froze in horror before he yanked me inside as his bodyguards fired back.

"Told you!" I yelled as Kane dragged me towards a flight of stairs. Three of his men manhandled me up them as I struggled and made life as difficult as possible. The gunshots outside sounded like the battle for the O.K. Corral. A helicopter started, and my mind raced into overtime. If Kane got Blue inside, we'd lose him. Now, I needed to fight! Kane was running ahead with my son. I jammed my heel into a man's foot and twisted, breaking free of another's grip. Without a

second thought, I shoved one down the stairs, and the way he landed, he'd his broken neck.

The second smashed a fist into the side of my head as I thrust my thumbs into his eye sockets, slamming his companion's weight into him. There was a startled cry as he flew over the balcony on the landing and fell to his death below. The last guy landed another punch, and I hit the floor and took his legs out. Rolling on top of him, I slammed a knee into his groin, and as he cupped himself, I yanked his weapon from his holster and shot him once. I grabbed the gun the second man had dropped and ran after Kane.

He was not getting my son.

The stairs ended on a landing, and I peered around, wondering where to search. There were multiple doors, and I screamed in frustration and began kicking them open. A blur of motion came at me from behind, and Lindsey ducked, me just missing taking her head off. Together, we raced through the hallway and discovered another set of stairs. Heart racing, I took them two at a time, knowing Blue must be screaming by now. He'd be so frightened.

Lindsey and I burst onto a roof, saw the helicopter, and started shooting. Kane was inside, and the pilot was getting ready to lift off. I didn't hesitate as Lindsey shot at the rotors and raced forward, leaping on the landing skids. I slid the door open and fired into Kane's body. Kane jerked forward as I snatched Blue from his arms and fell backwards. I crab crawled backwards as the pilot took off, with Lindsey throwing one gun on the floor and firing with a second. The copter gained lift and began hovering to fly. There was smoke coming from the blades, and the pilot seemed to have trouble controlling it. That made it urgent. I got out of the blade's way.

The wind from the blades helped blow me backwards as I clutched Blue tightly. Blue was wailing, red in the face, but I couldn't hear him over the noise. Focused on Blue, I kept moving as suddenly the copter lurched, and I realised Lindsey had made a lucky shot. I scrambled to my feet and began running towards her as she motioned me on, screaming something. We heard a grinding commotion and a bang as I

dashed back into the stairwell. Lindsey slammed in behind me, and we shoved the door half shut as we watched the helicopter lurch from side to side. A skid hit the roof, and I saw the pilot open his door and jump out. Kane struggled with his own belt when a minor explosion rocked the craft.

Flames burst out where the pilot had been sitting, and Kane screamed as he couldn't free himself. Aw shit, my bullet hadn't killed him. Lindsey and I watched in horrified fascination as the copter exploded again and then hit the roof one more time before catching its skid and crashing down to the ground. The resulting explosion forced us to shut the door and run down the stairs. The fireball tore through the glass windows, shattering them as Lindsey and I crouched in the stairwell, our bodies protecting Blue, and my hand covering his tiny ears. Once we heard the glass stop breaking, we rushed out to the landing, coming face to face with a bodyguard.

Lindsey raised her gun and shot him in the face as I followed her down the stairs. Dark smoke filled the mansion, and I guessed it was burning from the explosion. We coughed as we raced out the front door. Diesel was running in, and we collided. The big man grabbed us both and yanked us away from the building. Smoke began rising high in the sky, and we knew the cops would be here soon.

My stunned gaze took in the scattered debris. The main bulk of the copter was immersed in flames and lying on its side, the blades bent, and its tail broken off. Flames had caught the mansion alight. The tail lay beyond the cockpit, bent and buckled. A door had blown off to one side, varying pieces of metal, and to my amusement, a life jacket floating around the lawn. Fat lot of good that did. There were also bodies which I didn't care about.

"In the SUV, now," Diesel said as we ran towards it.

I doubted it would drive, but it didn't matter; police vehicles darted in, blocking us all on the drive. I supposed the firefight had made neighbours call the cops. The burning helicopter didn't help matters. The officers yelled at us to get down on the ground, and Hellfire and Lindsey obeyed. I awkwardly

managed it with Blue in my arms, and the police hurried around, cuffing them. One bitch snatched Blue from my arms, and I began fighting. Another SUV, lights blaring, raced into the drive as cops loaded the others into cars, and I was screaming for a woman to give me Blue back.

Lindsey started laughing, and I thought she'd lost the plot. She tilted her head, and I saw Willow and Grey marching towards us, flashing their badges and ordering our release. The captain of the police began arguing, and Willow's voice drifted across the wind to us.

“Kane Thirst kidnapped that little boy there, thinking it was his son. Rage MC and RCPD called in the kidnapping. As soon as Thirst crossed state lines, it became an FBI problem. Instead of arresting those who came to rescue the baby and captured women, set them fuckin' free now. This is officially my investigation!”

Go, Willow!

Grey winked at me as he took Blue from the female officer and handed me my son. Bike pipes roared as Rage rode up, followed by a few more Hellfire brothers. I spotted Chance, Tiny, and Celt before Mac climbed off his motorbike and, ignoring the cops' orders to stay back, ran to me.

I leapt into his arms with a cry as Mac grabbed and held us tightly. He patted Blue down frantically, looking for injuries as Blue continued to yell himself hoarse. Reluctantly, I released Blue as Mac took him, and Ezra took Mac's place, patting me down and searching for my own wounds. After discovering I was safe, Ezra turned to Lindsey, who was in Lowrider's grip. Another SUV shot into the drive, Phoe driving and adding to the chaos. Kendara hopped out, yelling about Kane kidnapping Lucy and raping her. Kenny loudly proclaimed her own kidnapping and how Kane was involved in human trafficking. No one could shut her up.

Ezra grinned and rolled his eyes.

“Hawthorne already has Leila on this. Leila's hacked into Thirst's system and has found shit loads of incriminating stuff. It's going live on the internet now, with the women's identities

protected. The man's been outed as a kidnapper, human trafficker, and rapist."

I laughed as media vans pulled up and journalists arrived, adding to the sheer mayhem on the lawn. Finally, Willow and Grey got a cordon in place, and the media was moved behind it. Rage and Hellfire, who just kept arriving, were placed behind one while Diesel, Shotgun, Bear, Lindsey, Mac, Kendara, me and Blue were shoved behind another. FBI crawled all over while cops did penance by keeping lookie loos back and reporters.

Phones were dingling with stories about Kane Thirst, and the man was already a media sensation for the wrong reasons.

"Who's for an encore?" Bear rumbled at me, looking amused.

"Huh?" I asked, confused as I cuddled Blue, who'd finally calmed down when Auntie Marsha drove up with a barrage of lawyers with her and Blue's baby bag. Phoe had clearly called in the troops, and Marsha had collected them. Shoving a bottle in Blue's mouth and giving him a biscuit soothed my son.

"Blows up a fuckin' warehouse using their own bombs. Blows up a helicopter and brings a billionaire to his knees." Bear chuckled.

"Oh no, Lindsey blew up the chopper," I denied.

Bear lifted an eyebrow, and Lindsey shrugged.

"Not sure it was my bullet. When you shot Kane, it was a through and through, so you might have hit electronics."

"Hey, we both blew up the copter," I said with a grin, and Mac sighed.

"It's like fuckin' Artemis all over again."

We watched as several ambulances roared off, escorted by police vehicles. Some bodyguards must have survived. I wondered if the pilot had made it and shrugged. Who cared? He was prepared to steal my son with Kane. That made him worse. Asshole deserved to die for helping to kidnap my baby boy.

Drake whistled, offered us a thumbs up, and rolled his eyes when Lindsey grinned cheekily back. We could almost hear him bitching to Phoe, who stood placidly by his side as her lawyers went at it with the DA of Wyoming. We let them argue it out as, to our amusement, food was delivered for Hellfire, Rage, the FBI, and lawyers. Phoe winked and waved as her team ate their food while arguing.

Finally, Willow came over to us and said we'd have to give brief interviews and then have a more formal one at the RCPD station tomorrow. The FBI was handling the case, and as far as Willow was concerned, there'd be no charges, as it was a blatant kidnapping. And now they had leads on a trafficking ring. Thanks to Leila spreading shit all over the internet. Leila had sent some information straight through to the Feds for them to get a jump on the ring.

Lindsey stood and watched as her SUV was taken into evidence. A mournful look crossed her face. I understood why; it was beyond repair. The engine was still letting out wisps of smoke, the front and sides were completely smashed in, the tyres torn and shredded, and worse, it was riddled with bullet holes.

“Shit, I loved that car!” Lindsey moaned.

“Sorry, honey, it's screwed,” I agreed as we stood side by side.

“Honey,” Lowrider said, commiserating.

A sly and wrathful look crossed Lindsey's face as she stared at Lowrider, and I saw him swallow hard.

“Penance!” Lindsey hissed.

I turned my head. That SUV was over one hundred k. It had all the bells and whistles, and I knew Lindsey had bought it brand new and out of her own money.

Lowrider sighed.

“Yes, baby,” he said, and I chortled.

That was a fucking expensive apology. Plus, the shoes Lindsey wanted. Several other brothers blanched as they heard

Lowrider agree to replace her SUV. They swapped glances, and resigned expressions crossed their faces. Amused, I laughed again as they realised Lindsey had over one hundred grand for her penance. What would their women want? Good job each brother had a couple of mill in the bank, wasn't it?

Ezra wrapped arms around me, making Mac scowl. I guess I'd gained my alternative!

Chapter Six.

Lex

“Motherfucker!” Vivie cursed Lex as she bent over suddenly. The moment Lex set foot on Rage, returning from their chase and rescue of Blue and Casey, Vivie had been cursing between French and English. Lex knew enough about French now that he could understand her.

“What’s wrong?” Lex asked, approaching her fast.

“The baby is coming, and you disappeared. *Putain de merde!* I’m in labour, and you run off!” Vivie screeched, stopping the entire room in its tracks.

She screamed as a contraction hit her, and Axel stepped forward.

“Oh shit, sit down. I’ll get the car!” Lex cried.

“*Va te faire enculer!*” Vivie spat as she sat down with a groan. “It is coming right now!”

“Nope, we have to drive to the hospital. Let’s get you to the SUV,” Lex said smoothly. His child could not possibly be coming now. It was impossible. Vivie was meant to give birth calmly and painlessly in the hospital. Those pain meds for labour looked wonderful. His wife twisted her head, and Vivie sent him a stare that made his balls shrivel. Oh shit, the baby was coming.

“Outta the way. I’ve got this. I practised after Artemis with a lemon and melon. It’s gonna get messy!” Axel bellowed.

Groans from the brothers accompanied his statement as Phoe and Marsha ran for the back rooms. Stunned looks were aimed at Axel.

“How the hell did he practise with a melon and lemon?” Apache asked in horror.

Silvie shot him a terrified gaze.

“Don’t ask!” she hissed.

There wasn't much remaining in the clubhouse apart from beds and furniture. It was all planned to be moved this weekend into the newly finished club. But Phoe and Marsha ran for sheets and towels as Lex picked Vivie up and made for the doors when Axel spun him around.

"She needs to push, get her to the backrooms, and call for an ambulance," Axel boomed at Drake as he steered Lex towards the hallway.

"In here, it's clean," Phoe yelled, popping out of her and Drake's room.

Axel lumbered in with Lex carrying Vivie. He gently placed her on the bed when she sat up as if possessed. A scream left her lips, followed by a sharp grunt.

"Get her bottoms off!" Axel boomed as Marsha hurried to comply.

Within seconds, Vivie was stripped, and Phoe placed a blanket over her lower limbs. Axel crouched down and opened Vivie's legs while Drake held Lex against the wall.

"What's he doing? He can't look at my old lady's pussy!" Lex shouted as his eyes seemed to pop from his head.

"I see the crown," Axel boomed as he washed his arms down and then sterilised them with the items Phoe handed him.

"Ambo's on its way!" Ezra yelled through the door.

"Baby's coming, no time!" Axel roared back. "Sweet girl, when you gotta push, push!"

Vivie went red, and then a wail escaped her mouth as she bore down. Phoe and Marsha held her hands as Lex broke free and pushed his way to her side. Curses left Vivie's lips as her scream tore him apart. Lex shoved Marsha and took his place as Vivie's screech ended, and she panted. Her eyes turned evil as she looked at Lex and burst into a torrent of French that left him gobsmacked.

She broke off halfway and screamed again and pushed down hard.

“Got the head!” Axel boomed. “One more push, woman!” Vivie shrieked and did as she was told, and the baby slid free. Axel ran a finger around its mouth, clearing the gunk, and then slapped its ass.

Lex froze.

“What the fuck are you doing slapping my child?” Lex roared.

A thin wail echoed as the baby cleared its lungs.

“Chill. Axel was clearing his lungs,” Phoe spoke as she wrapped the babe up in a towel and handed him to Lex.

“It’s a boy!” Axel grinned.

“A son!” Vivie gasped as Marsha wrote the time of birth.

Vivie grunted again and pushed.

“What the hell?” Axel boomed.

“Surprise,” Lex expressed weakly. “We were having twins and didn’t tell anyone.”

A few minutes later, a second boy was born, and Lex held them both, one in each arm. Drake was bellowing the news outside the room to everyone waiting.

“Shit!” Vivie shrieked as her stomach rippled, and Phoe watched in horrified fascination.

“What’s happening?” Lex roared as he passed a babe to Drake. Marsha was tying a ribbon around his arm.

“He’s the firstborn,” she whispered to Drake and took the second baby from Lex as Lex pushed to Vivie’s side.

Vivie screamed long and loud as Lex panicked.

“No fuckin’ way!” Axel boomed in surprise as he crouched between Vivie’s legs.

“What, what!” Lex demanded, soothing Vivie’s sweaty brow. She grunted and pushed.

“The placenta,” Marsha spoke, but Axel shook his head.

“Again, precious,” Axel ordered, and Vivie weakly obeyed.

She flopped back on the bed, sweaty and puffing, but her job was done.

“A girl!” Axel boomed loudly.

“Thought Drake said two boys!” Lowrider said.

“Axel’s so old he thinks everything has a dick!” Gunner spoke up.

“Three?” Lex sought, shocked.

“Unless she has another up there!” Marsha giggled.

Vivie sent her a dark scowl before closing her eyes.

“Triplets? They just told us, twins!” Lex exclaimed.

“Lex has fuckin’ triplets? How the hell does a doctor miss two extra babies?” Rock demanded, puzzled.

“Did he shove them up her or something?” Calamity asked, and Vivie opened her eyes and sighed.

“No, seriously, how does a doctor miss two fetuses?” Carly inquired, sounding worried.

“Lex and Vivie planned to surprise everyone with the news of twins,” Drake hollered out, amused, as he cooed at the baby in his arms.

“How did they get a third? Buy two, get one free?” Mac exclaimed.

“No wonder Vivie looked like a butterball. Thought she’d swallowed a beach ball!” Klutz said.

Vivie’s eyes flew open, and Lex flinched.

“I fucking heard that!” she shrieked at Klutz, who groaned.

“Got anymore up there?” Axel boomed, shoving his head under the blanket again.

“Stop looking at my Minnie moo!” Vivie demanded.

“She calls it a Minnie moo?” Savage asked.

“Poor fuckin’ Lex. Fancy having to call it a Minnie Moo?” Texas shouted.

“And what do you call it?” Penny was heard snapping.

“My pot of luck!” Texas replied, and Vivie slapped her head and laid back.

Sirens echoed outside, but the hard work was done. Triplets!

Kendara

Rage was chaotic but good. I’d been present for the birth, and now the entire club was waiting at the hospital to get the all-clear for Vivie and the children. Triplets. I chuckled because Lex looked like he’d been hit with a two-by-four. Everyone had been celebrating, and I longed to be a part of this crazy bunch. They were really a family.

Mac and Casey had asked me to move here, and I’d demurred at first. But seeing what they had made me lonely. Phoe had offered me a job working for the Trusts, a great position, too, and I’d been torn deciding what to do. A pair of soft eyes crossed my mind, with genuine concern in them. Muscled and tall, he’d been gentle when talking to me. Maybe it was worth staying after all. I jumped a little as the door opened, and Drake marched in with Phoe at his side, telling him off about something.

“That’s one part of your penance, Drake, and I can think of far worse!” Phoe spoke, standing and placing her hands on her hips.

“No!”

“Every single child and old lady, I mean it!”

“Fine, but don’t come crying to me when the brothers hate you!” Drake retorted.

“I do not give a shit about them. They’ll always love me,” Phoe replied with a smug grin.

Drake ran a hand down his face.

Phoe had won that one, I thought.

“Kenny!” Phoe said, grinning and bouncing over to me. These were such good people.

“That job still on offer?” I urged. Phoe lit up and nodded. “Let’s talk!” Drake made a noise of approval, rubbed a palm on my shoulder, and then walked to his office. Phoe began chatting instantly, and I paid attention to what she was offering.

Jemma

“This house?” I asked in astonishment, looking at my brother-in-law Klutz. My sister-in-law, Lynda, stood by his side with a smile. They and Klutz’s club were helping me move into a home today. I’d travelled across states with the kids to get here and was too tired to unpack. Surprisingly, I found an army of women and men waiting to jump on my every need.

“This is Gunner’s best house. He made sure you could have it,” Klutz explained.

The house was gorgeous and enormous. I was renting until I could find somewhere I wanted to buy. There was no rush. I’d sold my home for a fantastic price, and as Daryl had paid the mortgage early, the money was mine. Alongside the two million life insurance policy. It was a relief not to return home to a beating. But only a few weeks had passed since gaining my freedom. I still flinched, and the big guys outside saw that and ensured they approached me within my line of sight.

They were moving furniture in while four men observed a bevy of kids running around. My two, Suzie, who was six, and Kendrick, four, were with them. They were mainly watching because Daryl hated noise and believed children should be seen and not heard. Asshole. So now they watched instead of taking part. Until a little African American girl ran over and bullied them into playing. My heart wrenched as shyly my two angels began joining in, but they glanced over their shoulders every so often.

I hated Daryl and everything he and his bastard family had stood for. I’d never delighted in anyone’s misfortune, but the day he and his precious fuckin’ family fell, I’d got rip-roaring drunk in celebration. And now I was moving here with what remained of Daryl’s family. Seriously, I must have gone

insane. But Lynda had been a great friend, and I know she loved the kids and me. And Jacon seemed decent enough. His woman was a firecracker, although quiet.

Here I was, moving to a state I knew zilch about, with money in the bank but no job. And there was a pair of beautifully interested eyes gazing at me. Too soon to think of a relationship with someone else, and I certainly didn't want one. It was nice to be desired. But too soon to begin a new relationship. Yup, I was convincing myself.

Texas

He stood outside the front door of Rosie's house and lifted his hand to knock. He lowered it again as he had self-doubts. Taking a grip, he raised it a second time before rubbing the back of his neck and ducking his head. There'd have been no hesitation before, but he was unsure of his welcome. Rosie had been civil to him since they'd taken Calamity back.

"You gonna knock or do that all day, Texas? Because I need to get Precious inside, and Layla needs a bath," Calamity urged from behind.

Texas spun around, surprised that Calamity had sneaked up on him. Precious peeked out from Calamity's hair, which he was allowing to grow out. Meanwhile, Layla sat by his feet.

"Guess I look a sorry sight?" Texas sought, and Calamity nodded.

"Yup, but you need to do this. You've not talked properly. Rosie's still mad, and I hate her upset. Man up, Texas, and sort this out," Calamity responded calmly.

Texas narrowed his gaze at the kid in front of him. He'd always be a youngster in Texas's eyes, but the pain and wisdom in his eyes gave away an age far older than what Calamity was. He'd suffered so much.

"I'm sorry," Texas mumbled, squaring his shoulders and then saying it more clearly.

"I know you are. Temper got the better of you. You know now," Calamity replied.

“Do I kid? Seems to be, although I can recognise the past, it’s hard moving forward.”

“That’s where we come in. One day at a time. Finally, the day arrives when you look around and nothing is holding you back. I heard Penny’s making you pay through the nose. A six-week cruise. You’re gonna hate that shit,” Calamity said with a chuckle.

“Don’t forget the spending money she’s demanded for each of those six weeks,” Texas complained, but deep inside, he didn’t begrudge Penny a single cent. She’d more than earned the right to punish him as she saw fit. And he’d despise a cruise but would suck it up while breaking his back for her.

“Nope. Was an expensive lesson. Rosie doesn’t want or need your money. You can’t buy penance that way,” Calamity said.

“No. Rosie was never money-orientated. Not that Penny is, but Penny knows where to hit me. Rosie is different.”

“Oh yeah.” Calamity grinned.

Texas felt his hackles go up. The kid knew something.

“What are you thinking?” Texas sought warily.

“What’s Rosie love best of all?” Calamity asked.

“Her clinic. I could donate,” Texas said as Calamity shook his head. “Pay for a bigger wing on the sanctuary?” Calamity still shook his head.

A thought hit Texas that horrified him. No! Calamity’s keen eyes searched Texas’s face. No! But the words spilt from his lips.

“I could offer one day a weekend at the clinic or the rehoming centre,” Texas stated.

“For how long?” Calamity shot back.

“A month? Two? Okay, three months!” Texas argued.

Calamity shrugged.

“Six.” Texas sighed.

“Deal. Now you coming for dinner, Dad or what?” Rosie announced from behind him. Texas turned with an outraged expression on his face.

“How long have you been standing there?”

“Long enough to know Calam played you. I’d have settled at three!” Rosie smiled.

“Should have held out for a year. He’d have offered it,” Calamity stated as he walked up the stairs with his faint limp and kissed Rosie before heading into the home.

“I’m gonna kill that little fucker!” Texas swore.

“I don’t think so!” Rosie retorted.

She swung inside the house, and Texas followed, grumbling at the way he’d been played. He didn’t mind animals, but he hated cleaning up after them and brushing them. Texas loathed getting mucky, although he would never admit it. He was well and truly screwed. But deep down, he was pleased his baby was happy.

Drake

Damn, it was moving day. It was five in the morning, and he’d stayed with Axel and Apache overnight in the old clubhouse. He’d been awake an hour and was wandering around, remembering the good and bad times. The birth of Vivie and Lex’s triplets was a memory that would remain with him for life. He’d been honoured to watch Vivie having triplets, and Lex’s stunned expression had been hysterically funny. The men’s reactions were even more comical as they realised Lex had triplets. Vivie had told Lex in carrying tones the shop was shut for a few years if he was going to give her multiple births. The dismay on Lex’s face beat the joy off over his triplets.

It was even fuckin’ funnier when Vivie informed him the kids all had hereditary titles. And they were nobility. Who the fuck had heard of MC kids being nobility?

Poor Everleigh had two older brothers, Beau and Austin. Everleigh had hidden behind them, and that’s why only twins had been detected by scans. Drake had let Lex off the hook

about having twins and keeping it a secret because Everleigh was such a surprise. The old ladies had gone mad last night, hurrying from the hospital and buying an extra two of everything for Lex and Vivie. Drake knew thousands of dollars had been dropped at the baby centre the club favoured, no doubt making their day. That was also part of the men's penance. As was them driving SUVs picking their women and their packages up. No prospects were allowed this time to collect the parcels.

Axel stomped heavily down the stairs with Apache on his heels. They spotted Drake at the same time.

"This isn't the end, son; it's the beginning," Axel boomed.

"My da is here," Drake said, suddenly baulking at knocking the old clubhouse down.

"Your da is wherever you are. The memories will follow Drake. Arrow has never left you," Apache replied.

"But Da is in these walls. He helped build this, and I'm going to tear it down," Drake refuted.

"If Arrow were standing here, son, he'd tell you to move on, look forward, and carry him in your heart. Arrow never held a man back. Honour him, as you always have, and bring him into our future," Axel said softly.

Drake turned on Axel.

"It's harder than you thought," he stated.

"Yup. Lotta memories. 'Bout fifty-fifty on good and bad. So, let's start with a good beginning in the new clubhouse. I lost brothers here, some honoured, some not. But the best guy I lost was Arrow. Ain't no replacing him, but I got a son from the man, and ain't no replacing you either, Drake. I treated you and the asshole here as my own, and I'm not going to love two men better. Loved Keith, but he failed his sister and me. Nearly killed my girl. Can't forgive my boy; that doesn't mean I love him less, but I noticed what he was. You two made me proud."

Drake felt his throat tighten and knew Apache felt the same. The ghosts of the club drifted around them. Saw memories in

flashes and the faces of the ones they'd lost. They heard amusement and tears and watched so many parties they couldn't possibly remember them all. They tasted the bitterness of the club going bad and the sweetness when they put bullets in Bulldog.

It was all here: love, pain, anger, forgiveness, laughter, tears, so many emotions, memories, and so much history. But this was their last tie to the past, and it kept them from moving forward. To give their legacies and their brothers a future, this had to go. The three of them finally accepted that. As much as it pained them. There was nothing left, just three beds they slept in. Everything else had been moved. Just bare walls with lighter patches where posters, flags, and pictures had hung.

Wooden floorboards where hundreds of feet had walked, and walls that held a lifetime of memories. Axel and Apache moved out first. Settled and happy to move on. Drake's eyes shot to his office, tucked away, a tiny cubicle, the door and panelling torn down and replaced in his new room.

"One day, you'll be president, and I expect great things from you. I'll watch from wherever the fuck I am and will be there, son. When you're low, I will prop you up. When you are happy, I'll celebrate with you. But Drake, this club is your responsibility. And no matter what happens, Rage is part of you," the voice floated through the air, or his memories, Drake wasn't sure.

Drake stared around.

"Remember, I love you. And you'll always make me proud because of who you are. Live, boy, live the life you are meant to and be happy. Nothing would make me rest easier than to know my son is content."

"Da, I'm happy. You'd have loved Phoe and the kids. And somehow, I know you're here with me. Walking each step beside me. And I'll always honour you. Love you, Da," Drake whispered and walked out, shutting the temporary doors of the clubhouse. (The old ones had moved to the new club).



In the empty building, memories of ghosts drifted around,
but one stood proud as he watched his son move to the future.

Chapter Seven.

Drake

Drake stood hiding beside the garage as fucking chaos reigned on his forecourt. How this had become his penance, he didn't know, but he thought he was in hell. Phoe did not love him; that much was clear. Eddie flew past him as he straightened, her girl posse on her heels. Fuck no! She was heading for THAT booth. Phoe walked by smiling serenely, and Drake wanted to throttle his woman for the first time but he was sure it wouldn't be the last time today. She pointed to her eyes and then at him and smiled sweetly, and Drake shuddered. He hoped this was his last penance.

"I'm going to kill your wife!" Gunner moaned beside him.

"Don't blame me! You guys screwed the pooch on this one. I don't see why I have to suffer when I didn't fuckin' vote!" Drake replied, infuriated.

"You're the pres; lead by example," Lowrider said as he approached, scowling murderously at Drake. "How the hell did you let her talk you into this?"

"He didn't allow her to talk. Phoe stamped her tiny foot, muttered penance, and Drake caved. Pussy whipped asshole!" Rock growled from behind.

"Oh yeah, I see you stopping Carly," Drake attacked back.

Rock glowered, clearly blaming Drake for all of this.

"Fuck you; I blame Texas. He started this shit. I don't understand why we have to suffer!" Slick complained.

"We should all blame Texas and direct his kids to the worse of the worst," Lowrider grumbled, and they all swapped glances.

"Anyone seen Greg, Daisy, Lilah and Nathan?" Rock called out to Willow as she passed, laughing as she dragged a horrified Grey behind her.

"They were that way," Willow said, pointing.

The five men raced in that direction; Drake was determined to make Texas suffer for this. He wanted the worse out of them for Texas to take home. They skidded to a halt, and Slick's mouth dropped open in horror. Lowrider's face matched his.

"Holy fuck, is that alive? It looks half-dead. Did you bring Pet Cemetery here or what?" Gunner exclaimed.

"What the hell is it?" Rock asked, tilting his head.

"It's ugly!" Drake growled.

Penny's sister, Carrie, was carrying the ugliest thing ever and cooing happily at it.

"Feel sorry for Texas," Lowrider muttered. Gunner squared his shoulders as he spotted Greg. Drake watched as Gunner and Rock swapped glances.

"Not that fuckin' sorry!" Rock complained, and he and Gunner headed for Greg. Nathan was standing behind him.

"Nope, me either; hey, Daisy Chain, Lilah-la-la, take a walk with Uncle Slick and Lowrider!" Slick yelled, seeing Daisy and Lilah.

Rosie was with them and twisted her head suspiciously. Slick and Lowrider adopted an innocent look as they grabbed the little girls and raced off. Drake tried not to laugh as Rosie speared him with a stern stare, but he couldn't help the chuckles. He ducked away from Rosie and crashed into Jett. Jett didn't seem amused until Drake explained what the others were up to. Jett lightened up considerably after Drake told him.

Drake looked and sighed. Phoe had bullied him into holding an adoption day for homeless animals. Rosie had filled half the forecourt on her own. Each brother had been forced to promise that if they had an old lady, they could adopt whatever animal they wanted. And the same for each kid. And if they were single, Phoe demanded they adopt two. Mac had been exempt because he'd already got Pirate and Casey Lazybones, but they were still here looking around.

"Fuck, fuck, fuckety fuck!" a voice cawed, and Drake craned his neck and saw Peter close by, glowering at everyone.

The black raven fluttered his wings and settled back on Rosie's shoulder.

"Sounds like Texas," Drake quipped.

"It ain't fuckin' happening; I don't give a shit what Rosie says. That thing is not coming home with you, Nova!" Ace screeched, silencing the surrounding crowd. Jett saw what was heading his way because he took to his heels, thoroughly confusing Drake. Then he spied what Ace was backing away from at high speed. Nova was stepping calmly towards Ace, carrying a see-through box. Drake's jaw dropped open, and he blinked. Was that a...? No! It couldn't be! A spider the size of a dinner plate sat inside the box. Ace was sweating as Nova kept walking toward him.

"Dad, Rosie said it's safe," Nova spoke sweetly. Ace stared at her in horror. Drake bit his lip, trying not to laugh. "And if I don't get her, I'm telling Mom! And Mom said I can have whatever I want, and you need to suck it up!" Nova scowled, looking so much like Artemis that Drake stopped laughing. Holy shit. As much as he wished to back Ace up, it wasn't happening.

"What the fuck is it!" Ace bellowed as people began chuckling in relief it wasn't their kid holding the monster.

"A Goliath Birdeater tarantula. Rosie said she was born wrong. She should be aggressive, but something is hormonally wrong with her, and she's very placid. But her owner didn't want a faulty spider and gave her up for adoption."

Ace eyed Nova with fear and horror.

"It's not coming home with us," he stammered.

"Watch me, Dad, you be nice to Tallulah, or there's going to be trouble," Nova retorted, and Ace groaned in agony.

Jett walked past and slapped Ace on the back.

"Fuckin' Tallulah," Drake muttered, grinning.

"Rather me than you, asshole!" Jett grumbled. "I'm being punished alongside you lot, even though I sided with Calamity."

Bunch of fuckers. Hope your kids bring home the shittiest ones here!”

Drake laughed. Ace was mortally terrified of spiders, and Nova had just picked the worst pet possible. And Jett was no doubt counting his blessings right now. A foul stench wafted, and Drake gagged and turned around. Behind him stood Tony with a fat, ugly, faced Bulldog.

“Dear God, was that him?” Drake asked in dismay. Please don’t say his son had adopted it!

“Mama said I could have him,” Tony announced, looking up at Drake hopefully. Ah shit. His sweet boy.

“Sure, of course you can,” Drake responded, forcing himself to smile. Fuck, fuck fuckety fuck, Drake repeated Peter silently. He stared enviously as Slick walked past with a hawk, yeah, a real-life hawk, on his arm. The hawk’s head kept turning from side to side, but Slick spoke to it calmly. Drake guessed his asshole brother had found the coolest pet there.

“Ranha Daddy, Ranha!” Eddie shrieked.

“A what now?” Drake asked as Phoe approached, grinning wickedly.

“Eddie adopted a piranha,” Phoe replied.

“She did what?”

“Adopted a piranha.”

“Phoe, that might eat our little girl,” Drake said, horrified.

Phoe grinned at him.

“Good job you’re going to be the one cleaning the tank,” Phoe sniped and strolled off with Timmy and Garrett.

No! Not happening. Drake turned to tell Eddie, but she had disappeared. Fuck him!

He spotted Lowrider sitting on the ground, looking unsteady, and a few people stood over him. As Drake approached, Lindsey strutted past, grinning.

“Davy adopted a snake!”

“Shit,” Drake muttered, knowing how afraid Lowrider was of them.

“Even better, Jake and Scout have one too!” Lindsey spoke sweetly.

Drake’s face dropped to a scowl. What was wrong with cats and dogs? It appeared the Rage kids were determined to get the weirdest and smelliest animals out there.

“I want the pony, and Mommy said you have to buy it!” Drake heard Bonnie telling Rock.

“Baby girl, where the hell do we put it?” Rock argued.

“Mommy said that’s your problem, but you’re to get me it!” Bonnie claimed and folded her arms.

Drake hid a snort of amusement. He saw Carly with Lindsey and Silvie, bent over and roaring with laughter while Silvie shook in her wheelchair.

Rock sighed.

“Baby girl...”

“Now, Daddy. Mommy said payback’s a bitch. I don’t know what that means, but Mom said she’s the biggest bitch going!” Bonnie announced to the surrounding enjoyment. “Right Daddy, my pony!”

Drake watched as Rock was dragged off, and Manny wandered past with the fluffiest cat Drake had ever seen and a German Shepherd on a chain. Manny strolled up to Rosie and kissed her on the cheek.

“Thanks for reserving these for me, baby girl,” Manny said.

“Anytime, Uncle Manny,” Rosie replied.

Drake stood open-mouthed.

“How many of you visited and reserved pets?” Drake demanded as Manny approached.

“Most of the single guys.” Manny shrugged and laughed. “Snooze, you lose.”

Those cheating motherfuckers. Drake began plotting revenge when Cody walked past carrying a bag.

“Cody?” Drake asked, confused. He peered at the bag.

“Oh hey, Dad, I got me some tadpoles; I’ll have about fifty frogs if these all hatch,” Cody said and strolled away.

Drake thought he was in a freak show. He was sure this was a nightmare. Compounded by Falcon walking with a snowy white owl. Drake didn’t know whether to bet on the owl or the tarantula.

Christian strolled past with a rat in a cage, and Jared followed with a lizard. Drake gave up. The kids would never pick normal pets. He chuckled when he saw Aria holding a tortoise, following Alyssa, carrying a second. Gunner followed behind, complaining.

“You heard Rosie say that fucker was a giant tortoise?” Gunner demanded of Autumn.

“Did you want the skunk?” Autumn asked, and Gunner froze and then shook his head. “Then suck up the giant tortoise.”

“What in hell’s name is that?” Axel boomed, peering at something Willow was holding.

“A chinchilla, Dad. Isn’t she cute?” Willow said.

Axel wrinkled his nose but nodded at the look on his daughter’s face. Grey behind her looked resigned. Drake had never figured their relationship out. He couldn’t decide if they were partners or lovers. And Willow wasn’t forthcoming. He didn’t think Axel knew either.

“Got me a doobby dog,” Axel boomed, pointing down. A beautifully coloured Doberman sat by his feet. How come Axel got the Doberman, and he got the smelly bulldog? Drake wondered.

“I’m gonna kill those motherfuckin’ assholes,” Texas growled, approaching. “Have you seen what Greg and Daisy have?”

Drake snorted. Whatever it was, it was going to be bad. He spotted Daisy first and nearly sobbed with laughter. She had the ugliest chihuahua. Texas hated tiny yappy dogs, and Daisy had picked the perfect pet to piss her father off. Greg appeared carrying a tank of water, and what the fuck was that?

“A blobfish and it needs specialised treatment and looking after, and have you seen how fucking ugly that thing is? It’s gonna give me nightmares. But oh no. My family ain’t stopped there. Carrie adopted a zombie cat. Penny has two hamsters and then allowed Daisy and Greg to pick two more animals. Daisy has a hedgehog, and Greg fuckin’ stick insects. And those asshole brothers of mine helped adopt them all. And I can’t find Nathan and Lilah,” Texas growled.

“I heard mention of a skunk?” Drake asked.

“Ben took her,” Texas replied, looking thankful.

Drake craned his neck, searching for Ben and Ramirez, and spotted Ramirez carrying a cat carrier while Ben had his skunk in a cage. Ben was grinning madly as people gave him a wide berth.

“Daddy!” Lilah shrieked heading towards Texas at speed. Texas peered into the two small cages she was holding.

“What you got baby girl?” Texas asked.

“Antis.”

“Antis?” Texas asked.

“Dad she’s got a Swirling Flower Mantis and an Orchid Mantis. They were taken from a home of a collector who had illegally imported them. The Orchid Mantis has laid an egg Dad, and it has been fertilised, so expect a baby,” Rosie said approaching.

Texas peered into the cage and straightened. Okay they were beautiful.

“Rosie, baby, there is only one mantis in there, where’s the daddy?” he whispered.

“Dad, the female eats the male, hence one mantis,” Rosie said. Drake choked on a laugh at the look on Texas’s face.

“Good job our women don’t eat their partners,” Drake said as Texas turned an even more horrified look upon him.

Nathan hurried across looking unsure of himself.

“May I please have him?” Nathan asked Texas politely. Texas stared at his adopted son as he held up a provost squirrel in a cage. The song Ray Stevens, A Mississippi Squirrel Revival went through his brain even as he nodded. Oh Lord, he was running a zoo not a house! Penny sent him a dark look and Texas smiled weakly and nodded at Nathan.

“I need a beer,” Drake announced and walked into the new compound through the gate. He stopped and stared at the pool in shock. Two donkeys were swimming in it.

“What the fuck?” Drake murmured.

“Yeah, they’re Scouts, and Eddie’s.” Texas grinned.

“Phoe!” Drake yelled.

“Suck it up, buttercup,” Phoe’s reply drifted on the wind.

Drake headed into the building to get thoroughly drunk. Fuckin’ donkeys!

Epilogue.

Artemis

“James, meet me in the Rage wet room. You know where it is,” Artemis said with a grin at Butch and Simone, who had their package sat between them. Simone was playing with a knife while the bound and gagged figure watched from eyes full of fury. Butch just rapped him on the head every so often.

“Is this important?” James Washington asked. His smooth voice was as unruffled as ever.

“I’ve got something you want,” Artemis said, and there was a lengthy pause.

“Don’t be messing with me,” James warned.

“No bullshit. Get your ass to the Rage wet room. I’ll see you there.” Artemis disconnected the call and dialled Drake.

“Is Ace with you?” she asked as soon as Drake said hello.

“Yeah,” Drake drawled.

“Put me on loudspeaker,” Artemis demanded.

“Hold on,” Drake replied.

Artemis heard footsteps, a door open and shut, and the sound of Drake sitting down.

“We’re in my office,” Drake announced.

“Meet me at the wet room, the Rage one. I’ve got something you want,” Artemis said.

“Who you got, baby?” Ace sought.

“Who do you think?” Artemis drawled.

Silence met her words, and she smirked. Yeah, that was the reaction she’d been expecting.

“Are you kidding?” Ace asked, finding his voice first.

“Washington’s on his way. You best grab Gunner because James will need him,” Artemis said and cut the call.

She leaned forward and grabbed the chin of the squirming man in the middle of Simone and Butch.

“Did you really think I wouldn’t come for you? Everything you did, and you assumed I’d let you walk? All your guards and a team of six took you down. As Artemis, we earned our rep. It’s got no weaker now we’re the Juno group. Romeo Santos, prepare to meet your justice,” Artemis said and released Santos’s chin.



James Washington, and everyone else Santos had hurt, would finally get their payback. Fate was a bitch, and Artemis was her daughter.

Characters.

Rage MC Founders

Arrow. Drake's father.

Axel. See below.

Norfolk. Aurora Victoria's grandfather.

Fury.

Spike.

Drake Michaelson. DOB. 1975. Drake is third generation Rage; he was in the third lot of brothers recruited into Rage. His father started Rage MC and died before Drake was old enough to become president. Drake became VP and, in a hostile takeover, became president. Phoenix thinks he looks like Tim McGraw with longer hair. Drake has a leanness to him but has well-defined muscles and broad shoulders. Drake sports dark brown eyes with laughter lines. He's six foot four. He adopted Phoe's sixteen children, and they have two of their own.

Apache. DOB 1969. Apache is a second-gen Rage; he was in the second lot of brothers recruited into Rage. He is one of Drake's enforcers but becomes the Road Captain in this book. Apache has bright green eyes and is six foot two. He is of Native American origin. Apache's described as absolutely stunning, with high cheekbones and raven black hair that hangs past his shoulders. Apache's real name is Tyee (meaning Chief) Blackelk. He looks like Lou Diamond Philips. Apache is partnered with Rock in a construction company. He is married to Silvie and has two children with her.

Ace. DOB 1983. Ace is third generation Rage; he was in the third lot of brothers recruited into Rage. Ace is Drake's VP. He's described as looking like a young Lou Diamond Philips. Like his father, he is Native American. Ace has bright green eyes and is six foot two. He is described much the same as his father, absolutely stunning with high cheekbones and raven black hair that hangs past his shoulders. Ace is no stranger to

violence and will do whatever it takes to protect his club. He is now married to Artemis and has several children with her.

Fish. DOB 1978. Fish's birth name is Justin Greenway. He is third generation Rage; he was in the third lot of brothers recruited into Rage. Fish is Drake's sergeant at arms. He's been married to Marsha for many years and has three children. Fish runs the Rage garage. Fish has a bushy beard and untamed hair, which he keeps in check with a bandana. He is tall and broadly built and has an innate kindness.

Texas. DOB 1965. Texas is a second-gen Rage; he was in the second lot of brothers recruited into Rage. Texas's full name is Blake Craven. Texas is an older man and is the MC's secretary and treasurer. He works on bike design and specialises in paintwork. He has a robust moral code but is mindful of what the MC is capable of. Texas once alludes to cleaning up after their messes. Texas is tall and broad, with a goatee, dark salt and pepper hair slightly too long and piercing brown eyes. He can also play the keyboard. Texas stands at six foot four, and his old lady is Penny.

Axel. DOB 1951. Axel was one of the club's founders, making him first generation Rage. He is the Chaplin of the MC. The Chaplin's role is to look after Rage's needs spiritually. Axel ensures they have their heads straight and performs their marriages and death ceremonies. He has blue eyes, a salt-and-pepper beard, and is very loud. He's built like a mountain. Axel has wild hair which hangs to his shoulders. He is six foot six. Axel claims an old lady, a schoolteacher called Ellen and dotes on her.

Gunner. DOB 1976. Gunner is third generation Rage; he was in the third lot of brothers recruited into Rage. Gunner is one of Drake's Enforcers at the MC. Gunner is described as having silver-grey eyes with thick lashes. His name is Cole Washington. James Washington is Gunner's brother, and they are estranged. Gunner's described as having long sandy brown hair, high cheekbones and firm, soft lips. Gunner owns four houses, three of which he rents out; he also works at Made by Rage carving wood with Manny. He pays fifty per cent with Manny into the pot. His old lady is Autumn.

Manny. DOB 1983. Manny is third generation Rage; he was in the third lot of brothers recruited into Rage. He becomes the Treasurer in this book. Manny's described as tall, sexy as in the cute boy next door way, with tousled blond hair and light amber-coloured eyes. Manny is six foot four. He carves wood and works his own section of Made by Rage. He pays fifty per cent with Gunner into the pot. Manny enjoys playing chess.

Rock. DOB 1985. Rock is third generation Rage; he was in the third lot of brothers recruited into Rage. He becomes an Enforcer in this book. Rock is six foot four and huge. He has a goatee and a Dodge Charger he's very protective of. He runs the Blackrock construction company with Apache. Rock has soft brown eyes and dark brown hair. He is closest to Lex out of the MC. Rock and Carly adopt three orphans he and Drake saved in the floods.

Slick. DOB 1978. Slick is third generation Rage; he was in the third lot of brothers recruited into Rage. Slick loves books and is happy reading quietly. He has soft brown eyes and is heavily muscled. Slick runs a leasing company; he has over twenty properties he rents and pays fifty per cent into the pot. He also plays chess.

Lowrider. DOB 1984. Lowrider is third generation Rage; he was in the third lot of brothers recruited into Rage. Lowrider has ebony hair shaved short at the sides and longer on top. He has a roman nose, full lips, and blue eyes. Lowrider has a tattoo of black flames that crawls up his throat. He's six foot three of lean, powerful muscle and tanned. (He looks like Colin Farrell.) Lowrider's actual name is Nathan Miller. Lowrider is a mechanic and makes builds from scratch. His old lady is Lindsey.

Ezra. DOB 1979. Ezra is third generation Rage; he was in the third lot of brothers recruited into Rage. Ezra has a younger sister called Lindsey, who seeks him out. He has brown eyes, is tall and has shaggy dark hair. Ezra's a broad-shouldered man with a deep, broad chest, beautiful bone structure and a neatly trimmed goatee. (Looks like Robert

Downey Junior.) Ezra owns a landscaping company, which is in high demand.

Mac. DOB 1970. Mac is third generation Rage; he was in the third lot of brothers recruited into Rage. He was shot, protecting Lindsey from her ex-husband. Mac is responsible for running the bar. He falls for Casey when she attacks him as he tries to defend her shopkeeper friends. His real name is Callum MacKintosh, and he has a sister called Paisley, a lawyer. His grandmother, Silvia, is still alive too, and he sees them once a month.

Lex. DOB 1984. Lex is third generation Rage; he was in the third lot of brothers recruited into Rage. He runs the Rage shop. Lex has hazel eyes framed by thick dark lashes. He has a dimple on his right cheek. His name is Alexander Miles Turner. When he marries Vivie, he takes on her surname.

Blaze. DOB 1992. Blaze is a fourth-generation Rage; he was in the fourth lot of brothers recruited into Rage. He became a brother in 2016. Blaze ran the parts store but stopped when he opened a gym with Hunter. He's got green eyes. Blaze is close to Carly and thinks of her as a little sister. Blaze owns a Harley Dyna Glide and a Military Enfield he restored.

Slate. DOB 1992. Slate is a fourth-generation Rage; he was in the fourth lot of brothers recruited into Rage. Became a brother in 2016. Slate runs into Penny's burning house in Rage's Heat to save her and the children with Texas. He works with Ezra in a landscaping company.

Hunter. DOB 1991. Hunter is a fourth-generation Rage; he was in the fourth lot of brothers recruited into Rage. Became a brother in 2016. Hunter is also a designer for paintwork on bikes. He opens a gym with Blaze. Hunter is ripped and covered in tattoos. His old lady is Mina.

Jett. DOB. 1990. Jett is a fourth-generation Rage; he was in the fourth lot of brothers recruited into Rage. Became a brother in 2015. His name is Alexander Cutter. He's described as having black hair, dark brown eyes, high cheekbones, a square jawline and firm, soft lips. He is tall and broad, lean-

hipped, long-legged and as tightly muscled. Jett is a mechanic, engine designer, and paintwork designer. His old lady is Sin.

Calamity. DOB 1996. Calamity is a fifth-generation Rage; he was in the fifth lot of brothers recruited into Rage. His name is Billy Tomkins. Calamity becomes a prospect after only being in Rage for a month. He's a talented mechanic, body designer and spray painter. He interferes, stops Frenzy from harming Silvie, and takes a bullet in the shoulder for Autumn. In the Rage of Angels, we discover Calamity is taking a night class for car design.

His old lady is Rosie.

Prospects.

Savage. DOB 1983. Savage is a fifth-generation Rage; he was in the fifth lot of brothers recruited into Rage. Savage is thirty-two years old and is a mechanic. Savage is Mina's alt. He shares a house with Slate.

Gauntlet. DOB 1987. Gauntlet is a fifth-generation Rage; he was in the fifth lot of brothers recruited into Rage. He works in the garage.

Klutz. DOB 1989. Klutz is a fifth-generation Rage; he was in the fifth lot of brothers recruited into Rage. Klutz is a talented bartender and often pulls scenes similar to those in the film Cocktail. He's African American. Klutz's roommate was dealing drugs in college, and Klutz got swept up in the sting. The cops beat him, and then his innocence was proven, and he was freed. He is married to Aurora Victoria.

Carmine. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 1996, half African American and half white; he plays for the Cubs. Carmine joined Rage in 2019. He's from Maine and was adopted in 2010. Carmine looked after Tye, Harley, and Serenity on the streets. Phoe alludes to Carmine, sacrificing himself to protect Harley and Serenity.

Tyelar. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 1996, Tye is half Mexican and half Caucasian from Maine. Tye joined Rage in 2019. He was adopted in 2010. In Hunter's Rage, Tyelar is playing for the Blackhawks. Carmine had to fly out and sort his head out.

Tye, like Carmine, looked after Harley and Serenity. Phoe alludes to Tye sacrificing himself to protect Harley and Serenity.

Harley. DOB 1999. Harley's from Maine and was adopted in 2010. In November 2015, two seventeen-year-olds attacked Harley from behind, cracking his skull and putting him into a coma. Harley was protecting Christian. He has soft brown eyes and ash-blond hair. Harley woke up in Nov 2016 after the flooding of Rapid City. He joined Rage in 2019. After being told he'll never make a professional baseball player, Harley is now an apprentice blacksmith.

Cody. DOB 2000. Carmine found Cody living on the streets in Colorado; he was adopted in 2011. Bullies fear Cody because he will call them on their behaviour. Cody speaks to Phoe about joining the Trusts while he is at college. He and Christian want to run them when Phoe retires. In the meantime, he wants to manage the Rebirth Trust. Cody joined Rage in 2019.

Candidates.

Wild. DOB December 1999. He is known as Jonas Valden and approached Rage to join the club when he was fifteen. His father is a well-known tattoo artist, Rio Valden. Wild takes his younger brother and runs away.

Cowboy. DOB 2002, Cowboy is hot-headed and apt to act before thinking. Wild is three years older than him and has taken care of him for several years. Cowboy is immensely loyal to his brother. He leaps from his bike to Wild's, trusting his brother will catch him. His name is Zac Valden.

Rage Old Ladies.

Phoenix. DOB 1979. Drake's old lady. She is English and left England to escape an abusive relationship. She has six children she gave birth to and adopted eleven. Phoe is exceedingly well off and runs three National Charities. The Phoenix Trust, the Rebirth Trust and the Eternal Trust. On meeting, Drake Phoe has two more children with him. Phoe has long, blond hair and is green-eyed and five feet tall. She

met Hellfire MC first and is loyal to them and a Hellfire sister. Her alternative guy is Ace.

Marsha Greenway. DOB 1978. Fish's old lady and the only old lady the club has until Phoenix meets Drake. She's known to be kind and caring. Axel is Marsha's alternative guy. Although the old ladies don't have a ranking, Marsha is Phoe's VP. Marsha has blue eyes and shoulder-length brown hair.

Silvie Stanton. DOB 1982. She's claimed by Apache. Silvie's kind and generous. The MC has a lot of respect for her. She has blonde, curly hair and is close to Gunner. Silvie has soft, brown eyes. She takes a job at the Made by Rage shop, working for Lindsey, first helping cut material and then as a receptionist. Finally, she becomes the shop manager. Although the old ladies don't have a ranking, Silvie is Phoe's Chaplin. Her alternative guy is Gunner.

Artemis, aka Kayleigh Mitchell. DOB 1987. She has curly red hair and green eyes. She's small, dainty, and muscled. Artemis has a heart-shaped pixie face and full lips. Kayleigh was taken in by Master Hoshi, and out of her alleged death, Artemis arose.

She was part of a group called Revenge before she left and formed the Artemis group. The Artemis Group became the Juno group when she went legal with her efforts. She has combat skills and has killed many times. Artemis's alternative guy is Drake. She is Phoe's equivalent of an enforcer. Artemis now has a large team working for her on search and rescue for child and women trafficking. She also provides protection, and James Washington makes use of her skills. She's extremely expensive. Her alt is Drake.

Sinclair Montgomery. DOB 1993. Sin takes over her father's shop, the Reading Nook when he dies, and they turn it into something special with Reid. Sin was an only child, and Reid became her surrogate brother. She is socially awkward and inept and feels out of place in crowds. She's described as dainty with brown hair and big blue eyes. Sin doesn't think she's pretty, but people describe her as beautiful. She has low self-esteem created by attending college and university when

she was fifteen. Manny is Sin's alternative guy. Manny is Sin's alternative guy.

Penny Nelson. DOB 1976. Penny is a cook and server at Reading Nook. She loves cooking and baking and makes everything from scratch. She has a warm and caring attitude. Penny has two children, a son of five and a daughter of three. She has short dark hair cut into a bob and is a few pounds overweight, with blue eyes and freckles. Penny is five foot six. Her alternative guy is Fish.

Lindsey Miller nee Smithson. DOB 1989. She is ten years younger than Ezra and is his baby sister. She has brown eyes with gold flecks and long, waist-length brown hair with red highlights. Her face is a sweet heart shaped face, and she has plump lips and high cheekbones. Lindsey has her own business called Made by Rage, Designs by Lindsey. While Lindsey is wary of strangers, she has no worries about speaking her mind to the Rage brothers. She's kind and generous. Lindsey's books are published under the pen name of L. Smithson. Her alternative guy is Mac.

Autumn Rydell. DOB 1990. When Rage finds Autumn, she's on her knees, unable to cope and has no money. She resists the relationship with Gunner at first. Autumn starts work at the Rage Garage as their office girl. Calamity is her alternative guy, and Autumn is also an enforcer for Phoe. Autumn is a brunette with dark brown eyes and a sweetheart-shaped face. She is about five foot six and is slender but has curves in the right place.

Carly Lennon. DOB 1997. She has long, dark brown hair and enormous brown eyes. Carly arrived at Made by Rage underweight and traumatised. Lindsey and Silvie decided to look after her. Rock worships the ground Carly walks on. She and Rock adopt three orphans. Blaze is her alternative.

Ellen Keating. DOB 1961. Ellen works at the Black Oak Hills Academy. Ellen has rounded curves and chestnut hair with strands of grey. She usually works long hours from seven in the morning till six at night. She became the English Department Head when she was thirty-five and has held the job for twenty years.

Geneviève Angelique Blanchard. DOB 1994. Vivie is twenty-three when she meets Lex. She owns her own business, Chocolates by Geneviève. She also owns Blanchards Creations and a vineyard, amongst several other things. Vivie is a billionaire but shies away from the public. She has brown hair and green eyes and loves reading. She inherited everything from both sets of grandparents. Vivie also holds the title Duchesse Toulouse, something Lex is slightly uncomfortable with. After her attack, Vivie stops talking, and it takes an ex-girlfriend of Lex's being mean to make her talk. Her alt is Klutz.

Alison Jackson. DOB 1995. Ali runs the Jackson ranch and is well thought of in the local community. When her parents died, her brother Ice Dawg moved into the farm with his biker gang. They sacked all her staff and isolated her. Ali saves Blaze from being killed by the gang and is tortured herself. Blaze protects her as he feels she suffered because of him. Ali is strong, mouthy, and not frightened to use a gun if needed. She is loyal and dedicated to raising her younger siblings. Ali's alternative is Slick.

Thomasina Mae Blake. DOB 1990. She has one sister younger than her who died, and her parents are alive, but both have divorced and remarried. Her Godfather is Walter West. Mina has been a shut-in for three years after a stalker murdered three people close to her. He stalked her for the two previous years before turning to violence. Mina was a child actress who turned into a famous actress. Since she became a shut-in, she has begun writing books about a PI under the name A. Dudley. Her alt is Savage.

Casey Reeves. She was brought up by her father to be tough and look after those weaker than her. When the shops begin to get shaken down, Casey steps up to protect them. She attacks Mac thinking he's one of the gangs attacking her people. Casey makes a judgement about Mac which is wrong and causes trouble. Her father has trained her to be as close to a Delta Force operative as possible. When Casey, Mac and Aurora are kidnapped, it is Casey that frees them. She then goes on a mission when fit to save the children who are being trafficked and helps take them out. Her alt is Ezra.

Rosie Craven. (Penny and Texas) DOB 1995. Rosie is now a qualified veterinarian, and she is Texas's daughter. She's a beautiful girl with long dark hair, Slender and tall and pretty, with piercing brown eyes. She is harassed by Brett, takes a civil suit against him, and quits work. When Calamity is kicked from Rage, she stands by his side and cuts Texas and Rage off. Rosie has opened her own clinic and, with Jon, a rescue centre. She also wants to open an animal sanctuary and a rehousing shelter. Rosie helps take down a dog fighting ring. Rosie's alt is Fanatic.

Aurora Victoria. She was Norfolk's granddaughter and was taken away for her protection when she was younger. Her grandmother is now dead, and Aurora has returned to Rapid City. Aurora opens a witch's shop and performs readings on people. She also has visions. Aurora's alt is Gauntlet. She knows Klutz is her soul mate straight away and marries him quickly.

Rage Children.

Micah. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 1995. See Rage

Carmine. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 1996 See Rage

Tyelar. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 1996. See Rage

Jodie. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 1997. She likes tennis and is close to Serenity. Jodie in Crafting of Rage has a minor role in a tv drama. Drake disapproves. In The Crafting of Rage, we find out that Jodie's minor role has become more significant. In the Protection of Rage, we find out Jodie is flying back and forth to visit Harley whenever she gets a break.

Serenity. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 1998, she is from Maine, plays tennis well, and likes ice hockey. She was adopted in 2010. At the end of Crafting of Rage, Serenity signed as a lingerie model. Serenity cancels her jobs to return home for Harley in Rage's Terror. She fights off the serial killer Frenzy.

Harley. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 1999. See Rage.

Cody. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 2000. See Rage.

Christian. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 2002. Christian defends Carmine against a group of seventeen-year-olds who were

calling Carmine names. He runs for help from Harley and sees Harley get attacked. After Harley's attack, Christian withdrew into himself, and Marsha arranged for homeschooling for a few months. Christian took up boxing and martial arts when he returned to school.

Jared. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 2004. Jared is a hothead and known to use his fists to solve problems. He is widely popular at school.

Aaron. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 2005. He was born after his father died, and he never met him. Aaron, the same as Jared, is a hothead and known to use his fists to solve issues. He is widely popular at school. Aaron broke his arm in 2016, leaping from the uneven bars and not listening to safety advice.

Eddie and Tony. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 2010. African American, adopted in 2012. Eddie is a little diva. She says what she thinks and does what she wants. She's very strong-willed and quite funny. Drake adores her. Tony is quieter and follows his twin's lead.

Timmy and Scout. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 2014. Adopted 2014. Their mother was a drug addict. They have severe illnesses which Phoe hopes medical care will cure. The twins get the all-clear in the Crafting of Rage.

Garrett and Jake. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 2014. Adopted 2014. Their mother was a drug addict. They have severe illnesses which Phoe hopes medical care will cure.

Dante Michaelson. (Phoe and Drake) DOB 2015. Everyone says that Dante is the spitting image of Drake, including his father's attitude. Dante is strong-willed and possessive of Phoe. He hates to share his mother. He is the future President of Rage and claims Aria when he's twenty months old.

Nova (Conway) Blackelk. (Ace and Artemis) Born Feb 2003. Nova looks like Ace. Nova has countless gold medals in mixed martial arts. She has green eyes, a straight curtain of black hair and olive skin.

Falcon (Conway) Blackelk. (Artemis and Ace) Born Feb 2003. He looks like his father, Ace. Falcon prefers swimming and baseball while also winning medals for mixed martial arts. He has green eyes, a straight curtain of black hair and olive skin.

Gregory Nelson. (Penny and Texas) DOB 2011. Penny's five-year-old son. He didn't remember his father and was over the moon when Texas adopted him.

Daisy Nelson. (Penny and Texas) DOB 2013. Penny's three-year-old daughter. She loves Texas and her new big sister Rosie.

Rosie Craven. (Penny and Texas) DOB 1995. Rosie is a now qualified vet. She is Texas's daughter. Rosie is married to Calamity and expecting their first child. Rosie owns her own clinic, animal sanctuary and rehoming centre. She's a beautiful girl with long dark hair, Slender and tall and pretty, with piercing brown eyes.

Amelia Cutter. (Sin and Jett) DOB 2013. She is Jett's daughter and is adopted by Sin. Her mother had called her Ursula Letitia Jean. Sin and Jett changed her name to Amelia Abigail.

Davy Miller nee Masterson. (Lindsey and Lowrider) DOB 2012 Davy is Lindsey's and Lowriders. Lowrider adopts her. The little girl saw her mother get beaten and snuck Ezra Junior out of the house to safety.

Ezra Junior Miller nee Masterson. (Lindsey and Lowrider) DOB 2015 Ezra holds his own against Dante even though Dante is older than him. Everyone says he's the future VP of Rage MC and Dante claims Alyssa for him. From Love's Rage, everyone calls him EJ. He has dark hair.

Elijah Miller. (Lindsey and Lowrider) DOB 30th September 2016.

Aiden Rydell. (Autumn and Gunner) Born 1st of December 2011. His father was Carter Rydell, and he is the eldest of Autumn's three children. Aiden idolises Gunner and looks up to him.

Aria Rydell. (Autumn and Gunner) Born in May 2014, she is the eldest of the twins. Aria's very shy and quiet. Aria is discovered to be a natural skier, and Gunner gets her lessons at Terry's Peak between December and April. Phoe had an indoor ski slope built for Aria to continue practising on.

Alyssa Rydell. (Autumn and Gunner) Born May 2014. She is the youngest of the twins. Alyssa is the open one and the more excitable one. Alyssa isn't into skiing and goes dancing lessons instead.

Peyton Michaelson. (Phoe and Drake) DOB June 2016.

Nokomis Isis Phoenix Blackelk. (Artemis and Ace) She was the firstborn of the twins. Nokomis means Daughter of the Moon. Born 14th Feb 2016.

Nashoba Tyee Drake Blackelk. (Artemis and Ace) Tyee is Apache's name and means Chief. Nashoba means wolf. Born 14th Feb 2016.

Hawk Axel Greenway. (Fish and Marsha) Born 4th of March 2016.

Julianna Kayleigh Greenway. (Fish and Marsha) Born 4th of March 2016.

Keith Ware. Born 1984. Keith is Axel's oldest child and only son. At thirty, Keith resembled a zombie, bone-thin, greasy, lank hair and unkempt stubble. Keith steals one hundred thousand dollars of cocaine from the Deminio Cartel and is killed. But before he dies, Keith sells out Willow.

Willow Ware. Born 1991. When Axel goes to rescue Willow from drugs, she looks like a streetwalker. Her hair was teased out, and her makeup pancaked on. Willow had just turned twenty-three and appeared ten years older. She has her father's blue eyes. Willow is actually an undercover FBI officer and has been under for five years. She escapes the trap Keith set for her and warns Axel that the cartel is coming for him as payback for her and Keith.

Brooke Cutter. (Jett and Sin.) 29th April 2016.

Blake Johnson. (Rock and Carly.) Born 2010. He became an orphan with his brother and sister in 2016 when a flood hit the city, and his parents died. Rock and Carly adopt him and his siblings.

Harrison Johnson. (Rock and Carly.) Born 2011. He became an orphan with his brother and sister in 2016 when a flood hit the city, and his parents died. Rock and Carly adopt him and his siblings.

Bonnie Johnson. (Rock and Carly.) Born 2014. She became an orphan with her brothers in 2016 when a flood hit the city, and her parents died. Rock and Carly adopt her and her siblings.

Noah and Asher Washington. (Gunner and Autumn) Born 15th January 2017. Noah was born first.

Eagle and Kite Blackelk. (Silvie and Apache.) Born 1st Dec 2016.

Maverick Drake Greenway. (Fish and Marsha) Born 21st April 2017.

Robin Cutter (Sin and Jett) 22nd June 2017

Keme Blackelk. (Ace and Artemis) Born on 30th June 2017. His name means Thunder.

Levi Cutter. (Sin and Jett) 16th July 2018.

Bastian Johnson. (Rock and Carly) 25th Sept 2018.

Zak Miller. (Lindsey and lowrider) 16th Oct 2018.

Halona Autumn Blackelk. (Silvie and Apache) 22nd Nov 2018

Austin Blanchard. (Vivie and Lex) 3rd June 2020.

Beau Blanchard. (Vivie and Lex) 3rd June 2020.

Everleigh Blanchard. (Vivie and Lex) 3rd June 2020.

Nathan. (Penny and Texas) Born 2010. Adopted in 2020.

Lilah. (Penny and Texas) Born 2017. Adopted in 2020.

Hellfire MC.

Chance Michaelson. DOB 1973. Chance is the Hellfire President. His father started Hellfire. Chance looks like Tim McGraw with long hair. He is Drake's older cousin. They were brought up together and are as close as brothers. They both fought to get their clubs clean from the filth that infected them. Chance is six foot four and projects a deceptive leanness; he has a muscled chest and shoulders, not heavy like a wrestler but with clear muscle definition. He's lean-hipped and long-legged. Chance's hair is shaved on the sides, the top left long, and tied back in a ponytail. He has sharp, bright green eyes with laughter lines. Chance has a neat goatee the same colour as his hair, which is a brown so dark it looks black sometimes. Has a tattoo of a pin-up girl on his right arm. He is married to Clio.

Bear. Bear is the Hellfire VP. Chance lets it slip to Drake that Bear has a dead sister. Phoenix calls him Bearbear. His real name is Sky Blue. Bear's hair is light brown, cut short at the sides, and long on top. Bear has a floppy lock that keeps falling over his eyes. His eyes are light hazel, which look amber when the light catches him just right. Bear has a strong face, not classically handsome but eye-catching and attractive. His jaw is square, and a goatee hides firm but plump lips. Bear is six foot seven with shoulders as wide as a wrestler and his chest just as broad. He has long legs and thick muscles. He is married to Thalia.

Diesel. Diesel is Hellfire's Sergeant at arms. He buys and flips houses, putting half the profit into the Hellfire coffers. Diesel, a quiet man who speaks when he has something to say, once had an old lady who'd split from him during the fight to get the club clean.

Tiny. Tiny is an enforcer for Hellfire. Tiny is sullen and quiet, but with reason, his mother was murdered by his father, and he hates women being abused. He owns a gym.

Celt. Grew up glass-blowing. Celt had been betrayed not once but twice by a woman and saw women as a release and nothing else. The only ones Celt treated with respect and decency were Phoe and Tati. He'd been brought up by an

uncle who taught Celt glass blowing and then turned his back on him. His wife is Cheyenne, the lead singer of a band.

RCPD.

Antonio Ramirez. He is over six-foot tall and has wavy black hair, olive tanned skin. He is Mexican and has brown soft, gentle eyes. Tonio is lean-hipped and long-legged, and broad-shouldered. He is a good cop, and Drake thinks a lot of him. Ramirez brought down his previous chief, who was taking bribes from Santos. He also quit his job when he was called out on being too close to Rage, which led to a walkout from RCPD. Tonio is involved in a fiery relationship with Sophia Hawthorne. Dylan is amused at how his cousin is running the cop ragged. Tonio is classed as one of Rage even though he's not a brother, and Drake is exceptionally fond of Tonio.

Eric Benjamin. Known as Ben. Partner of Ramirez. He's a clean cop and thinks Ramirez sometimes turns a blind eye to Rage, but he'll always back his partner up. Ben finally realises in the Hope of Rage that Rage is clean, and he's been judging them. Ben gets claimed in 2018.

Hawthorne's

Dylan Hawthorne. Owner of Hawthorne investigations. He is extremely intelligent and will bend and break the rules as he wants. Dylan thinks of Drake as a close friend and takes Rage's back during the Artemis war. He discovers information on Artemis, which leads to Rage discovering who she is. Dylan protects Matthieu in the Sweetness of Rage

Leila Gibson. She is Hawthorne's computer genius. She managed to get a trace on Artemis, which led Rage to Artemis's Stacy Conway identity. Leila becomes part of Phoe's school board. Leila has helped the Hawthorne females cover up their revenge against those who scorned them.

Other Characters.

Magic. He owns a bar out in the hills on an open stretch of road that is a biker-neutral zone. Magic doesn't allow violence in his bar nor truces to be broken in it. He's a big man, but no

one knows his age. No one wants to upset Magic. He's rumoured to have buried the bodies of those who've upset him in the hills behind his bar.

Inglorious. President of the Unwanted Bastards.

Lucy. Blue's birth mother who was kidnapped and trafficked. She died giving birth to Blue and insisted Kendara get Blue to Mac.

Kendara. She is a lawyer and took Blue to save him from his abusive father. Kendara hid him until she could get him to Mac. She ends up kidnapped by Kane Thirst but escapes and warns Mac that Thirst is coming.

Kane Thirst. He owns a business and is a billionaire. But he is involved in trafficking and buying women. He gets killed in a helicopter when Lindsey and Casey rescue Blue.

Dan Grey. Willow's partner in the FBI.

Jemma. She is Klutz's sister-in-law who escaped an unhappy marriage to his eldest brother Daryl. She has two children, Suzie, who is six and Kendrick, who is four.

Introducing the Pets!

Calamity and Rosie. **Precious**-a white raven and **Layla**-a Great Pyrenees. She's a beautiful dog with a thick creamy white coat and gentle brown eyes, and she stands about two and a half feet high. **Henrik**-a Bernese Mountain dog. He has beautiful markings with tan colouring on his legs and tufts on his cheeks and either side of his chest. Henrik has four white paws and a white chest, while the rest is a thick black coat. His nose and mouth were white, with a trail leading up between his eyes. Henrik was two and a half feet high, slightly smaller than Layla. **Peter**-a Black Raven. **Merlin**-a Maine Coon. **Arthur**-a Norwegian Forrest cat. **Empress**-a beautiful black and grey Teacup Persian. She likes to ride around on Merlin. **Wolfie**-a Lykoi cat. Wolfie is skinny with sparse, thin fur, but his facial markings make him look like a feline werewolf. **Jester**-a beautiful white arctic fox. **Harold**-a hedgehog. **Terence**-a tortoise. **Dawn**-a muntjac deer.

Carrie. An ugly beat-up cat.

Mac and Casey. **Pirate**-a baby macaw. **Lazybones**-a big fluffy lazy cat.

Nova. **Tallulah**-a Goliath Birdeater Tarantula.

Tony. English Bulldog.

Christian. A Rat.

Jared. A lizard.

Aria. A tortoise.

Alyssa. A giant tortoise.

Willow. a chinchilla.

Axel. A Doberman.

Daisy. Chihuahua and a hedgehog

Greg. A blobfish and stick insects.

Penny. Two hamsters.

Slick. A hawk.

Eddie. A piranha and a donkey.

Davy. A snake.

Jake. A snake.

Scout. A snake.

Bonnie. A pony.

Manny. A fluffy white cat and a German Shepherd.

Cody. Tadpoles.

Falcon. A snowy white owl.

Ben. A descented skunk.

Tonio. A cat.

Scout. A donkey.

Thank you for reading A Renewed Rage. Please take a gander at the Hellfire MC Series, starting with [Chance's Hell](#). For more Rage, check out Rage MC, book one [The Rage of the Phoenix](#) is the beginning of the Rage MC world. And recently released is [Calamity](#), book one of Rage MC-The Prospects. Or take a peek at Washingtons, starting with [James](#).

Also, take a gander at the Love Beyond Death series, book one of which, [Oakwood Manor](#), is out now. And the new series of Love Beyond Death-The Inns begins with [The Jekyll and Hyde](#). If you enjoyed this book, please leave a review at,

[Goodreads](#) and [Amazon](#)

Please remember your reviews are so important to me!

Thank you!

Elizabeth.