

London

I was a woman on a mission.

I strode down the New Orleans sidewalk, my boots clicking on the concrete. The young agent beside me half jogged to keep up.

“Are you sure this is a good idea, Agent Coleman?” FBI agent Amy Chen pushed some of her straight, black hair off her face. “I mean, we have no cause. No warrants. He doesn’t have to show us anything if he doesn’t want to.”

“It’s going to be fine,” I said. “This is just a shot across the bow.”

The mid-size office tower rose above us, all gleaming glass. It was much taller than the surrounding warehouse buildings of the Warehouse District in New Orleans. The tower was more pointed at the top, and some of the glass was tinted red, making it look like a flame. It was called Ignis Tower, so it was appropriate.

“Agent Coleman, I know that you’re awesome at your job.”

I was *very* good at my job. One of the youngest Treasury Agents to close some of the largest financial crimes cases in the country. “I’ve told you to call me London.”

I liked Amy. She was Chinese-American, with a rapier-sharp mind, and a tiny, compact body. She regularly took down agents twice her size in the training gym.

Amy nodded. “London. Our joint task force is lucky to have you. Ever since we arrested that

lawyer who gave us clues to the money laundering going on here in New Orleans, you've been a driving force in our investigation."

Yes, when the FBI had arrested a lawyer several months back, she'd given them intel into a huge money laundering scheme running in the city. I suspected the money was flowing to the drug cartels, but we still had no hard evidence. Whoever was behind it, they had to be stopped.

After several weeks of investigation, we had no proof, no arrests, not much at all. Frustration cut through me.

But one name kept popping up.

Kavner Fury.

A burn seared in my belly. I was sure New Orleans' favorite billionaire was dirty. His name, and that of his company, Ignis Inc., kept appearing in my investigation, but I hadn't been able to prove anything, yet.

Money was being laundered in New Orleans. My jaw tightened. I was going to stop it.

"London," Amy continued. "Kavner Fury is a well-known New Orleans businessman. He's well-connected and—"

"In the perfect position to launder money?"

Amy huffed out a breath. "He makes massive donations to the local community."

"That could just be a front." I'd seen it before. The pious family man, pillar of the community, who behind closed doors broke the law.

"Or he could just be a successful businessman. What is it about him that sets you off?"

"Experience." I knew the type—wealthy, handsome, powerful. The kind of man who thought he could get away with anything. My stomach curdled. I'd seen it firsthand. I'd watched my father get sucked into the world of glitz and wealth, and get destroyed. Seduced by the heady

promises of a man like Kavner Fury.

I shook those thoughts off and headed for the gleaming glass doors that led into Ignis Tower.

Amy grabbed my arm. “London, you need to tread carefully. The Fury brothers are well-liked around here.”

The Fury brothers were well known in New Orleans. Infamous.

Five brothers by choice who were all rich and successful. They owned a prime chunk of the Warehouse District, and had a long list of businesses they owned: nightclubs, restaurants, a gym, and a security company. And Kavner Fury was the CEO of Ignis Inc.—a sprawling business empire that included property, resorts, shipping, and a slew of other businesses.

I’d met Fury a few times. I’d questioned him once on his knowledge of shipping companies at the local port. The man had his long fingers in a lot of pies. He owned, or invested in, a lot of local businesses, which would be perfect for laundering dirty money for the cartels.

“What I need is to do my job,” I said quietly. “Whether someone is rich or powerful makes no difference to me.” I patted her shoulder. “Don’t worry. If there’s any blowback, I’ll shoulder it.”

Amy pulled a face but nodded. I turned and stepped inside.

Instantly, the cool air hit us, and I took a second to enjoy the decrease in humidity. Even though the fall had started, humidity still reigned in New Orleans. Amy and I flashed our badges to the security guard at the front desk.

“We’re here to see Kavner Fury,” I said.

The man frowned. “One moment, please.” He spoke in hushed tones into a radio.

I scanned the lobby. A creamy marble floor gleamed, shot through with faint veins of red. A large sculpture dominated the central space. It was made of large curves of metal—all in a

lustrous bronze color—tangled together and rising toward the high ceiling.

A moment later, a man in a dark blue suit strode towards us. One look and I knew he'd been in the military. He was steady-eyed and serious as he studied our badges.

“I'm Max Boston. Head of Security. Do you have an appointment to see Mr. Fury?”

I lifted my badge. “This is my appointment.”

He eyed me for a beat, then nodded. He pulled out a phone, murmuring into it as he waved a hand toward a solitary elevator on the far side of the lobby.

I led the way, straightening the black jacket of my pantsuit. When the elevator doors opened, Mr. Boston held the doors for us. “Mr. Fury's office is on the executive level, accessible only by this private elevator.”

Of course it was. The elevator whisked us upward. I stood still and focused, while beside me, Amy fidgeted.

“It's going to be fine, Amy. I'm just going to ask the man some questions and persuade him to let us take a look at the books for his shipping company.”

Amy dragged in a deep breath. “So why do you look like a knight headed into battle?”

“Hardly.”

The elevator slowed, and the doors opened. We stepped off onto wide-plank, pale wooden floors, and I heard Amy suck in a breath.

I barely controlled my reaction. The space was airy and bright, and screamed classy wealth. I'd half expected heavy wood paneling and dark colors like I'd seen in so many other wealthy businessmen's offices.

This office had some wood paneling, but it was made from a light-colored wood with an interesting texture. A window seat sat at one of the floor-to-ceiling windows, almost inviting you

to sit, relax, and take in the view of New Orleans. There was a curved bronze desk where I guessed an admin assistant would sit, but it was currently empty.

We headed down the long hallway, and I noted that the floor-to-ceiling windows gave great views in all directions.

There was a set of double doors at the end of the hallway that stood open. When I reached the doorway, I saw the modern, clean lines of an office that was nothing like the box I was currently using at the FBI office. There was a sleek couch by the windows, and an elegant potted plant in one corner, and a huge wooden desk topped with white marble. A large painting that was made up of strokes of red, orange, and black hung on the wall behind the desk.

But it was the suited man who dominated the space. He was standing behind the desk, one hand in the pocket of his dark suit pants, the other hand keeping a phone pressed to his ear.

He was tall, with a lean, muscled body, and he knew how to wear a suit. He had thick, well-cut brown hair, the slash of high cheekbones, a carved jaw line, and just enough stubble to save him from looking too clean-cut. Some god somewhere must have felt pretty pleased with themselves when they finished sculpting Kavner Fury.

His gaze flicked up.

My muscles tightened. At first glance, his eyes looked black, but they were actually very dark blue.

“Thanks, Margaret. I’ve got to go. Send those files through to me. Thanks.” He set the phone down. “Agent Coleman, always a pleasure.”

I steeled myself against the impact of him. So, he was handsome? There were lots of handsome men in the world.

“Mr. Fury. This is Agent Amy Chen with the FBI.”

He nodded at Amy. “Hello, Agent Chen. Welcome to Ignis Inc. What can I do for you, ladies?”

I cleared my throat. “We’d like to look at the books of your shipping company, Flare Logistics.”

He eyed me for a second, then circled the desk. He paused a foot away from me, then leaned back against the marble. It made me realize how long his legs were. He was too close to me for my liking, but I refused to take a step back.

“Of course,” he said. “We will comply with any warrants you have. I would like my legal team to take a look and make sure everything is in order first.”

Dammit. I lifted my chin. “I don’t have a warrant. I was hoping you’d do this as a show of good faith.”

His smile sharpened, and I saw the wicked glint of intelligence in his dark eyes. “I’m happy to help, Agent Coleman, but I’m not going to encourage a witch hunt. You can’t just come and rummage around in my businesses for no reason.” He paused. “Can I get you something to drink? Coffee?”

“No.” I took a step closer, my leg brushing his. “Not cooperating makes you look guilty.”

“I’m not guilty, and you have no proof that I’ve done anything wrong.”

I leaned in closer. “I will find it.”

“There’s nothing to find, Agent Coleman. You’ll see that in time.”

My gaze shifted to the painting. “Do you like art, Fury?”

His gaze narrowed at the change of subject. “I do. I have an extensive private collection. That painting there is by a local artist, Regina Scully.” He cocked his head. “Why?”

I had a strong suspicion that the money laundering was being done using art. Art was a long-

established and ideal way to launder dirty cash. The art industry wasn't well-regulated and often sales were made anonymously. Art or antiques could be purchased at over-inflated prices with illegally sourced cash, then re-sold, leaving the money clean.

But I wasn't ready to share that yet. I was still cultivating sources and uncovering information.

"Excuse me," Amy said, looking awkward. "May I use your restroom?"

"Of course." Kavner waved a hand. "It's back down the hall."

Amy disappeared with enough speed to get her a gold medal. I turned back to Fury. It was just the two of us now.

"I've learned to trust my gut, Mr. Fury. I *will* take you down."

"I like your tenacity. Actually, there's quite a lot I like about you."

I stifled a growl. "We are on opposite sides."

He cocked a brow. "So, we're enemies?"

"Yes."

He shot me a panty-melting smile. "We'll see."

God, the man was infuriating. "You'll say differently when I slap you in cuffs."

That smile just widened. "Kinky." He cocked his head. "Who hurt you, London?"

I stiffened.

"I understand being driven by personal motivations, believe me. But I'm not the one who did you wrong. Who made you so determined to take down the bad guys?"

I suddenly felt unsettled, and stepped back. He was looking at me like he could see right inside my head.

"Mr. Fury?" An assistant in a sleek, gray skirt suit and blonde hair up in a twist appeared in

the doorway. "You have the Crown meeting in five minutes."

"Thank you, Alana."

A moment later Amy returned, hovering in the doorway.

"This isn't over," I murmured.

"I hope not." His gaze held mine.

And dammit, my heart gave a huge thud in my chest. I swiveled and strode out. As we headed for the elevator, I could sense Amy looking at me.

"Not a word," I bit out.

"My lips are sealed."

I hadn't gotten what I wanted, but I wasn't giving up.

Kavner

I walked into my brother's gym, Hard Burn, and paused to absorb the atmosphere.

There was the thump of music, the sounds of boxing gloves hitting bags, and the grunts of fighters. It was located in a large warehouse in the block of the Warehouse District we owned.

After years in the military, then working as a mercenary, Beauden had boxed for a few years and earned himself a reputation. He'd once told me that boxing had helped him quiet the shit in his head—from his childhood and the military. He'd said he wanted to give that same escape to others, young and old, who needed it.

Hard Burn had a long waitlist. I was proud of what Beau had achieved here.

The gym was mostly filled with roped off boxing rings, but a glass wall at the back separated the exercise equipment and weights.

I passed several people working out with their trainers, my gaze zeroing in on my brothers in a large ring at the back. Beau and Reath were going at it hard, both of them drenched in sweat.

The pair were total opposites. Beau was a big bruiser and covered in tattoos. His damp, shaggy, black hair stuck to his rugged face. Reath on the other hand was far leaner, but still all muscle. He had a handsome face, with brown skin and short hair. He might be smaller and leaner than Beau, but no less dangerous. The CIA had made him that way.

I circled the ring and headed for the change rooms. I quickly changed into my workout gear and stowed my gear in my reserved locker. I was ready to shake off my long day.

As I headed back out, Beau and Reath had finished their bout. “Who won?”

“Me,” Reath said.

Beau grunted. “You wish.”

“I’m ready for a few rounds.” I took out my wraps and started wrapping my hands.

“Rough day?” Reath asked.

I shrugged. “The usual.”

“Did you make a few million dollars?” Beau joked.

“Something like that.” I started wrapping my second hand. “I did close a lucrative deal, and I got word that some art I’ve been after for a while is coming up in auction. Oh, and the renovations of my new resort are on schedule.”

Reath sat on a nearby bench and chugged back some water. “And you donated money for a bunch of scholarships to the University of New Orleans.”

Damn, the man had good sources. It was the problem with having a brother who’d once been in the CIA. You couldn’t keep anything from him.

“It is my alma mater.” It was because of a scholarship that I’d gotten my business degree in the first place. Back then, I’d had no money. I’d had nothing but a hunger for knowledge, a hunger to change my life.

“And they’re going to name a building after you,” Reath continued.

“Fuck off.” I’d told UNO not to do that or the deal was off. “Get in the ring, Reath, I’m gonna kick your ass.”

Reath climbed between the ropes. We both slipped on our gloves and mouthguards. Reath

bounced on his feet, and I moved my neck from side to side, relaxing my muscles. Then he darted forward and swung his arm. I blocked the hit and soon we were trading punches. My muscles warmed up, the tension left me.

But as we moved around the ring, my mind turned to Treasury Agent Coleman. To her long legs, elegant neck, black hair, and smooth brown skin. She wore the hell out of a pantsuit, that was for sure.

I took a punch to the stomach and grunted.

“You’re distracted,” Reath said.

“Like I said, it was a long day.” But London definitely was a distraction. One who was out to get me.

For some reason, that excited me.

There was nothing for her to find. I’d had a few shady connections back when I’d first started out, but I was all legitimate now.

The lovely agent was on a mission, but I was the wrong target. I smiled. I was going to enjoy tangling with her, though.

“You guys done?” a deep voice called out.

I glanced over and saw our brother Colton striding in. He lived in a converted warehouse not far away. The only person missing was our fifth brother, Dante. I knew he’d be busy at his nightclub, Ember. Friday nights were always packed.

“What are you doing here?” Beau asked.

Since Colton had hooked up with his office manager, and fallen in love, it wasn’t often we saw him out and about on his own. Plus, his seven-year-old daughter, Daisy, also kept him busy.

“Girls’ night.” He scowled. “Macy and Daisy kicked me out. They’re painting their toenails

and watching Disney movies.” He winced, then held up a bottle of whiskey.

Beau nodded. “I’ll get us some glasses.”

“How’s the bounty hunting business going this week?” Reath asked.

Colt grunted. “Nothing too challenging.”

Colt often got called up to chase some pretty bad criminals, all around the country. But in between, he did local jobs that kept him closer to home. Especially since Macy had bowled him over.

Beau returned with the glasses, and I listened to my brothers talk. I’d started my life with nothing. I’d been a hungry nobody that not a single person had cared about. My life had changed when I’d met these men.

We’d been five angry teenagers in foster care, getting beaten up by the world. But together, we’d made a better life for ourselves. I’d built my businesses and wealth with fierce determination. I’d vowed to never be hungry again, to never again wear threadbare hand-me-down clothes. To never again have no options.

My brothers had helped me every step of the way. They always had my back.

I wondered if London had that. Someone or something in her past had hurt her. Something was definitely driving her.

I took a glass from Beau, holding it up as Colt poured the whiskey. “Remember we have the charity event tomorrow night at The Rooftop.”

Beau groaned.

“It’s showcasing local producers.” I elbowed him. “There will be all sorts of whiskeys, gins, and cocktails. You just have to come and drink.”

“And put on a monkey suit,” he grumbled.

“You survived weeks on end in deadly jungles,” I said. “I’m sure you can survive one night in a tux.” I eyed Colt. “How come you aren’t complaining?” Colt usually took grumpy to the next level.

Colt’s lips quirked. “Because it means my woman will wear a sexy dress. And probably something even sexier under it.”

“Lucky bastard,” Reath muttered.

I sipped my whiskey and savored the burn. It had an interesting touch of spice.

It reminded me of Agent London Coleman.

Smiling, I took another sip. Yes, whatever happened, I’d enjoy tangling with her.

Let the games begin.