

"Move, Ace. You're in my way."

"Sweetheart, I haven't even begun to be in your way." He leaned against the doorway, arms crossed. "I will not allow you to hurt Tommy or Molly, so why don't you pack up your schemes and dreams and hit the road. You won't get a penny from them. I'll see to that."

I have never been known for having an even temper but I've worked hard to keep it under control, but not this time.

"Look, asshole, I don't have a clue what you're talking about. You're delusional if you think I have any intention of taking a dime from Tommy that I haven't earned. I pay my way!"

"Sure you do. I ran your fingerprints, darlin', right off your juice glass from this morning. You've got a nice background there, Laney. Pandering? Breaking and entering? Those are great ways to pay your way, huh? You got a scam to bilk Tommy, but you might as well hit the road running, babe," He smiled, acting quite pleased with himself. "Tommy and Molly all too often fall for the sob story and feel sorry for the strays that come along."

I felt that to my core. Stray? Felt sorry for me? The last thing I needed was anyone's pity.

But right at the moment the only thing I felt was the need to strike back at Sean. "Stray, huh?

"Weren't you a stray too? They feel sorry for you then? Take you in on pity?" I saw his jaw tighten and knew I'd scored.

"Leave now and I won't tell them your plans to take them for a ride," he growled.

"My plans? You're so sure about my plans, huh? Wow, you sure are smart, Sean Michael Muldoon. You ran my fingerprints and so now you know my whole life story in one fell swoop? Look, you arrogant ass, you have no idea what my life has been like and a couple of knocks on a police sheet only tells you what your narrow-minded brain wants to hear. But for your parents' sake, I'll go and save you the trouble of making a fool out of yourself."

I tossed the case of champagne at him. He let out a curse, as he lunged to catch the box and I shoved him hard when I went through the doorway. I heard him hit the shelves, rattling bottles and swearing a blue streak. I heard the case of champagne hit the floor with a thud and the sound of breaking glass.

I know I could have done worse and to this day I still have no idea why I didn't kick him in the nuts, or flat out deck him. I should have done something other than leave. I wanted to do

anything other than leave, but I couldn't bear having to own up to some of the missteps I had made long ago.