

Head of The Family

Chapter 1

Time to Kill

The sign over the door of the two-story brick building on the corner reads, *Sons of Italy Social Club*. Or at least, that is what it said years ago before five of the letters fell off. But it has been there long enough that the missing letters, the O's and the I's, left their mark on the brick façade. The blackened glass windows look out to the east and north while double steel doors angled between them face the busy intersection. They swing open, letting in the bright morning sun; they are not locked. The *Sons of Italy Social Club* is never closed. The blinding daylight draws everyone's attention to the thigh-high black leather boots, red micro-mini skirt, and rabbit fur jacket that barely clothes a raven-haired ebony Queen. Five men and a barmaid squint to focus on her until the doors shut and the light gives way to a more normal view.

"Marone!" says the old man sitting at the card table facing the woman. The other two middle-aged men nearly snap their necks doing a double take. "You got the wrong place, honey," he continues, slicking back his gray and black dyed hair. "This is a private club. You want the bus depot down the block."

"I think I'm in the right place," she coos and saunters deeper into the room. "I'm here for Benny. It's his birthday and I'm here to make him a man."

A skinny pimply-faced boy standing at the pool table's voice cracks with uneasy arousal, "I'm Benny, but my birthday ain't until next week."

His pool partner, a slightly older boy, slaps him on the back of his head.

The woman stops at a table two feet from the boys, places her foot on the seat of the chair, so they can see right up the skirt, and reveals everything she has to offer. She kicks the chair and it slides across the floor to the pool table. Benny's friend hustles him to the chair and pushes him down onto it. The three card-playing men position their chairs for a better view and one of them calls out, "Red, put on some music."

The barmaid flips a switch and the club fills with Disco sounds, loud and pulsating. The woman starts swaying her hips and shaking her tits, which are now out of the rabbit fur and protruding from her red halter-top. She swings one leg high over Benny's head, giving all the

men a preview of what's to come, while spinning around and thrusting her naked butt in his face. She slowly rubs her bare bottom down his chest and onto his lap. Benny already has a hard-on sticking up through his jeans and she is sure the other men have them too. Hands on her knees, she gyrates and bounces on his lap, rotating her cunt so close to his face he can smell her tangy juices and feel the heat that produces them.

The men are spellbound when she leaps up, spins around in the air, and lands on his lap again, wrapping her legs around him, and her ankles lock around the back legs of the chair. His face buried in her ample cleavage, he can feel his pants filling with cum. Ashamed, he tries to stop but his body is out of control, trapped by her overpowering essence. Everything is happening too fast.

The woman runs her hands through her long silky black hair, taking all eyes with them. She reaches down into the back of the rabbit fur jacket, as the men are glued to every move and watch intently as she pulls two .22 revolvers from her back. Hypnotized like rabbits in headlights, they don't even blink when she fires point-blank into the pool player's face. Then with the gun in her right hand, she sweeps across the card table, placing a slug in each man's forehead.

"Sorry Benny, this is as close as you get to being a man," she whispers in his ear before putting a bullet in it. Then pushing him to the floor, she quickly goes to the backroom door and kicks it in with a black thigh-high boot. With disco music blaring behind her and two .22s outstretched before her, she freezes in the inner office's doorway.

"Vicky! I knew it was you I heard getting the boys all worked up," says Nicky Nails with an easy smile. "Haven't seen you in ages. Did you leave any of my guys alive?"

"I told her to kill them all!"

"Goddamn it, MoJo! This is a day for surprises." Nicky's eyes beam at the sight of the man standing behind Vicky in the back office.

She takes another two steps into the room and Morris Johnson slides to the right.

"I go by the name John Morrison now. Morris Johnson has been dead for ten years."

"Worst alias I've ever heard," Nicky laughs while still seated behind his desk.

"And I told you before, call me Clarita Sanchez." Vicky snarls then turns to me. "Why don't you let me kill this guinea prick and we can get on with our business?"

"Because," I sigh heavily as I explain it to her one more time, "This guinea prick is my friend. And he has the drop on us. See he has his hands positioned on the edge of his big metal desk?"

"Yeah... So?"

"He probably has a hand grenade between his knees and is prepared to drop it and flip the desk over for cover."

"That's right," replies Nicky. "This nigger taught me to always keep a hand grenade handy. And I guess you have one in your pocket too. Can we put the pins in now and get down to business?"

"Sure... and Honey can come out of the closet over there," I show Nicky my grenade and thumb the pin back into the handle.

He reaches under the desk and does the same to his. Honey opens a secret panel in the wall behind him and comes out toting a sawed off shotgun. The three of us exchange embraces as Vicky reloads and holsters her guns, still angry that she doesn't get to kill Nicky.

Rozalina brings in a large bottle of Absolut and Nicky pours five shots of vodka, we clink glasses and down the shots. She whispers in his ear and I say, "Come on Cherry Bomb, we are all friends here."

"That's Mrs. Cherry Bomb Rocci to you," Nicky corrects me.

"What? You're kidding, right?"

Rozalina holds up her hand to show off the huge sparkling diamond ring as proof.

"Immigration was trying to deport her," explains Nicky, "I couldn't let my favorite girl go."

"Some guys are out there," Rozalina tells him, "Cleaning up the mess."

"Your friends from Chicago had something to do with my daughter's kidnapping," I let fly a heated accusation. "I intend to find out what. And—"

"Hold on, MoJo," Nicky pours another round, "I don't think Chicago is behind Maria's kidnapping. They have nothing to gain; it's not the way we operate."

I accept the drink sitting on the edge of his desk. Vicky looks nervous and Honey, who had returned the sawed-off back to the hidden closet stares at the two of us, not knowing what to expect next.

I kinda don't blame them; I disappeared for four years and now return to light up the club with Vicky. "As I understand it, you are about to replace your father as head of the New York Mob. Maybe they want to draw me out and discredit your loyalty to the family. After all, you are where you are today because you supposedly had me killed."

"Yeah, but that's ancient history now." Nicky downs his drink and continues, "That all died the day Angelo did as well. Besides, anybody who could stand in my way of taking over from my father is already at the bottom of the East River. Those guys are here... well, were here... because your boys are moving in on their territory back in Chicago. I have been telling your boys to pull back before we end up in a shooting war."

"I have them keeping a close eye up north because you have been asleep at the wheel," I tell him and down my next shot. "Those guys have been muscling in on our drug trade and infiltrating your operations."

"Bullshit!"

"Oh Yeah? How about that little motherfucker, Benny?"

"Benny!" Nicky half laughs, "I had him running for me since he was in the third grade. I was fucking his mother for years," Nicky quickly shoots an apologetic look at Rozalina. "Before I married you, honey."

"That might be so, but his Grandfather is Beniamino Brunello. You know, the Chicago godfather. They have been setting up a power play for years and I think they are going to use Maria as their pawn."

"Look, Maria is my goddaughter," Nicky says, the smile gone from his face. He looks me in the eye with a dead-cold stare. "I have her bodyguards down in the basement, and they've been telling me exactly what happened yesterday. I know they are telling the truth. No one from the north is involved. If I thought for a second they were, bullets would be flying and the streets of Chicago would be flowing with blood."

"You sure about this?"

"Yes, and as soon as those two stunods come to, I'll finish getting the information out of them."

I notice the bruises on his hands. His knuckles are skinned and scraped. Nicky Nails has put on thirty or so pounds since I last saw him, and it's all muscle. Now, he does look like he could chew nails and spit bullets.

"For now, you stay out of sight; I'll handle Chicago and find out where Maria is. Man, I hate to have to tell Benny's mother he's dead. She is gonna be pissed. And if she is connected to Chicago, things are going to get ugly."

"Don't worry about them, call her up and tell her you sent him on a job. My boys will handle the rest. I also got them working the streets, we will find Maria."

"Yeah, we will," he looks down and then back at me with his boyish grin, "You haven't seen Elizabeth yet, have you?"

"No." I say flatly. "I wanted to have some good news to tell her."

"Well, just seeing you're alive will be good news," he tells me. "She is quite sure that you died in Colombia when you didn't return from that last mission. Four years is a long time, MoJo. What the hell happened? Oh, and by the way, I wouldn't just go walking in the front door, the feds are there."

"What?"

"It is a kidnapping case," Nicky says angrily, "It's kinda their thing? And you know they never stopped paying her a little attention. Anyway, you know the guy, he came out of retirement or something to work this case."

A young black man in a red jumpsuit knocks on the door that is hanging half off the hinges. "All done, John," he says.

Nicky looks him over from his paper hair net to his paper booties. He looks like he just stepped out of an operating theatre.

"They are in the van," he continues, "Do you want us to dispose of them in the usual manner?"

"No," I reply as I come to my feet. "We are gonna have to store those guys for a while. I'll be out in a minute."

"Real professional," remarks Nicky then refills my glass and gives it a tap. "Girls, give us a minute."

The three women return to the bar. Rozalina is amazed at the sight, not a drop of blood anywhere, not a chair overturned, the place spotless. When she left minutes previously there were rivers of blood on the floor and flowing from the card table. As precise as Vicky was, shooting five people in the head leaves a mess, but now one can't tell a harsh word had been spoken in the place. The cleanup crew, five husky black guys in red one-piece jumpsuits transformed the place. It looks better than it ever did.

"I'm leaving Vicky here to help you with security," I inform Nicky. He gives me a frown and then resigns himself to the inevitable. "Until we get to the bottom of this, you need someone you can trust watching your back."

"Watching my back," Nicky downs another shot, "She's more likely to put a knife in it. You know she thinks I left you hanging in Colombia. I didn't, you know. I had our people all over the place trying to find you. What the fuck happened down there?"

"I know you did but it's like I told you that night, the government was about to pull a double cross, and did. You saved both of our lives. You didn't tell her, did you?"

Nicky shakes his head, "Not a word, although I don't know why you wanted to keep it from her. Anyway, how many times do I have to tell you? Never work with the government. They'll fuck you every time."

I run a hand across my chest and up to my left shoulder, it's an automatic reaction to the phantom pain that flares up when I think about Colombia. "She knows now. I told her two days ago. She wasn't very happy."

Vicky sits at the bar staring into a half-full glass of vodka. Rozalina and Izolda give her plenty of space; they can tell she wants to be alone. She had slipped on underwear and jeans and sits there barefoot, her mind nowhere near the bar. She is in the Grand Caymans, days ago...

It was 2 a.m. and the only person who could get the drop on her was kneeling by her bedside with his hand over her mouth.

Her eyes snapped open; her fist flew wildly then changed to an embrace midflight. Her arm wrapped around MoJo's neck as he spun and whipped her out of bed without disturbing her sleeping husband, Derrick. His hand went from her mouth to clutching her bare ass and he carried her into the living room.

"My God! You're alive," she whispered then pulled my shirt open, down over my arms, and places her right hand carefully on my chest over the three bullet-hole scars, making sure I was not a ghost. She fell against my chest and I could feel the tears rolling down my body. "I knew you were alive. I told Derrick. I told Nicky. I told them all, it would take more than three bullets to kill you," she said defiantly. "We've got to wake up Derrick; he has to know you are back—"

"Not just yet," I tell her. I notice her eyes are tracing the whiplash welts that crisscross my body. I take her by the hand and lead her out into the night. I hold her tight against my body, searching for the words I must impart. Her body melts into mine, her fingers running along the marks on my back. Finally, I place my hands firmly on her shoulders and hold her at arm's length, "It was Derrick. He set you up. These bullets were meant for you."

"No. No, you're wrong. The Colombians fought back." Tears welled in her eyes, pain and anger collided with confusion and reason in her mind. Her face contorted as thoughts and rehashed events buried for four years but never forgotten resurfaced. "No," she cried. "No. He loves me. He's my husband now; we've been married two years..."

"I know," I said impassively, "And I wouldn't say so if I wasn't sure. I told you he was CIA, not to trust him. He set up the mission; the raid was designed to get you killed. Remember, I wasn't supposed to be there, and that's why I waited until the last minute to show up."

"Half the team got killed that day in the jungle," her voice was hard.

"Yeah, so?"

Vicky turned and walked back into the house. Her slender body stiff, her nightgown fluttered in the gentle island breeze, but she was oblivious to it all, had already switched into killer mode, and from that moment on, she felt nothing, merely focused on the job at hand, moving with precision. Quiet, just as I taught her, she re-entered the bedroom, and slid back between the sheets. Derrick inhaled deeply as if he were asleep. Vicky stretched an arm across his stomach and waited. The minutes passed slowly, both lying in wait for the perfect moment to strike. Vicky turned onto her side, facing him, and her arm went limp across his body. Derrick was lying on his back and thought this was his chance. He flipped over on top of her, clamped

his huge hands on her throat, and was about to use his full body weight to break her neck when flames erupted in his abdomen. It coursed through his stomach and exploded into his chest, ripping it way out of his shoulder. And before the first shockwave of pain could be fully realized and reacted to, another fireball cooked his intestines, followed by another, and another.

Within seconds, Derrick's massive weight came down on Vicky's petite frame, wet and bloodied. Vicky lay there with the gun in her left hand and her husband's head cradled to her in her right. She couldn't breathe. She didn't want to. She stared into the dark night, oblivious to everything around her.



Her face in the mirror behind the bar is stone cold and her eyes are empty. I run my hand down the back of her neck, pulling her back from the abyss of self-doubt. I trained her to trust no one but herself, to believe everyone lies all the time. It was the world we lived in, the only way to survive the jungle, and she was a stone wrapped in a façade of humanity. Everyone was a killer, and everyone was expendable. Trust, faith, even love were weapons more deadly than knives, guns, or bombs. I taught Vicky to use each with precision and without a conscious. I taught her to be a weapon.

"I'm heading out to the Island," I say, not certain if she is fully back yet. "Keep your eyes open, if anything jumps off... Well, you know what to do. You know how to reach me."

"I still think your friend knows more than he is telling," she hisses as she watches Nicky in the mirror behind the bar.

"Of course he does," I whisper in her ear, "but all that will come out in due time. I need you here and on point if he is wrong about Chicago. And if he's not, and I believe he's not, then we are in for a nasty fight. Worse than Colombia, and I need you razor sharp and ready to kill."

As I leave the club I take a quick look back and lock eyes with Nicky, he nods and I go. I'm reassured that he'll keep Vicky out of danger, and I hope to hell she doesn't kill him. I hop into the back of a blacked-out Lincoln and tell my three guys there has been a change. We are going to Long Island but not to the mansion as planned, not with the FBI working on Elizabeth. We are rather going to take the indirect approach. And after what Nicky told me in his office, the indirect approach will work on several levels. I will be able to get Elizabeth to a safe place, and then I'll find out how much the FBI knows about the kidnapping. Yeah, the plan has changed, getting Maria back is not going to be as easy as putting a bullet in some asshole's ear.

I hope you enjoyed chapter 1 of *Killer With Three Heads*. You can go to <https://bit.ly/2ImRPfp> to purchase a copy. And while there check out how it all began with the first book in the *Killer Series*, *Killer With A Heart* and all our other books by fine authors at www.rockhillpublishing.com We welcome comments and reviews at <http://rockhillpublishing.com/about-us.html> or via email at rockhillpub@rockhillpublishing.com