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# THE TAKING

Finding Forever - Book 1

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Jessie Jones  
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## Prologue

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**G**iovanni stumbled up the subway stairs, wiping the sweat from his light blond brow as he nervously scanned the large crowd. His body was screaming in agony and the faint smell of death lingered in the cool, early evening air. His shirt, open and torn, was soaked red with his blood. Falling against a wall, he let out a shaky breath as he felt his life's essence escaping down his chest and abdomen. He knew he was being followed, but where had they gone? Pulling himself from the cold slab of concrete, he shook his head hoping to restore his dulling vision. Glancing behind him, Giovanni spotted the familiar car. Fear made him clutch the journal to his chest tighter as he bolted out into the street. He ran recklessly past pedestrians, his body bumping theirs as he ignored their curses and stares. He knew as long as he stayed in public, they would not risk killing him. Nothing mattered at this moment except getting the journal to Kenric. He had given Giovanni his word that he would keep him safe. The man may have the heart of Satan, but John Kenric was a man of his word.

Thinking of his salvation, made Giovanni quicken his pace. Darting across the busy London traffic, he clumsily fell over a rod iron fence. He groaned loudly as pain shot through his body

when he attempted to sit up. As Giovanni gathered his senses, he surveyed his surroundings. Fate had planted him on the fringes of a park, and he could potentially use that to his advantage. If he could just find a phone, then he could call Kenric and let him know what was happening. The billionaire would send reinforcements to help him out of his current predicament. He could feel himself growing weaker and knew that if he lost much more blood that he would die. Giovanni wiped away the tears that escaped his eyes. All he had ever known was forever destroyed. The world he had grown up in was a lie, and the perpetrator of the deception was the very man he considered to be his father. He had devoted his life to his Uncle Geno, and now the man whom he had taken many bullets for was the very one pulling the trigger to end his life. Hearing the familiar voices coming closer made Giovanni push his thoughts aside. Using the heavy fencing to pull himself to his feet, he took off running across the great lawn.

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Jogging through the park, Gillian allowed the crisp, night air to help clear her busy mind. She had only had a couple of hours of sleep and her shift was starting soon. The hospital had already called her to let her know it was going to be a busy night. Blowing a strand of ebony hair from her face, she let out an audible sigh. At thirty-five years old, Gillian was a general surgeon at Sacred Hearts Hospital on London's notorious east end. She had moved to London only a year ago after accepting the position of the hospital's top surgeon. Her life was her work, and she had fought for everything she had. However, with all that work, came very little time for play and she was well overdue some excitement in her life.

Gillian Morgan had been raised on a farm in rural Illinois with her grandmother and uncle. She had grown up in a home with very little money and very little love. Her mother had died

when she was four and her father, well, let's just say that she was his dirty little secret. The ambassador had gone to great lengths to hide her existence, and she had helped him by trying to disappear into oblivion at the age of fourteen, when she had moved to Florida and changed her name. She had not only worked a full-time job while finishing high school, but she had finished two years early at the top of her class. College soon followed and then medical school. Gillian had graduated from the University of Florida and had quickly started her internship at a local hospital. She had learned at an early age that it was up to her and her alone to get what she wanted in life. Gillian had sacrificed everything to build her small, albeit financially sound existence. Her existence was very rewarding but also very lonely. Love and relationships weren't her strong suit. Gillian had an extremely hard time trusting people, and her busy schedule didn't actually leave much time for a love life. It was also difficult to find a man who could handle a woman as independent as she was. She was calculating and controlling in all aspects of her life, but just once, she would love to meet a man who would rip the control from her hands and force her to submit. So far, submissiveness was not in her cards. Clearly, fate had a different plan for her.

Lost in her own thoughts once again, Gillian did not see the man running toward her. Before she knew what was happening, he was directly in front of her. "Ah!" she loudly screamed as his hard body collided with hers and took them both to the ground.

"Oof!" he cried as his large, bulky frame covered hers. As soon as the couple hit the ground, his body began to convulse wildly. Gillian quickly rolled the man off her and got up on her knees to determine what had just occurred.

"What the hell are you doing, buddy?" she barked loudly as her emerald green eyes began to take in the full realization of what was happening to the man before her. She took a sharp intake of breath as she saw the gaping wound in his chest and his blood-soaked clothes. The doctor in her quickly jumped to life as she rolled Giovanni over on his side as he continued to convulse.

She ripped off her soft green jacket and applied pressure to his wound as she yelled for someone to help her. A handful of pedestrians ran to her and assisted in her efforts to save the man.

"Listen, if you can hear me, mister, my name is Dr. Morgan. I'm going to take you to the hospital, okay? Don't worry; you're in good hands," Gillian softly reassured him as she pushed the green fabric closer to his chest.

In the distance, two men stood and watched the beautiful doctor take care of their mark. As one of the men took a step toward the crowd, the other grabbed his arm and said, "Not now. There are too many people around him."

"Come on, Effrain! We are supposed to kill the bitch and take the journal back to Geno. If Kenric gets his fucking hands on that book, then you and I are dead too!"

"Can't you see what's happening? Giovanni is dying. That bitch is as good as dead. The sweet little doctor isn't going to be able to save his miserable ass." A slow grin crossed Effrain's face as he fingered his scarred jaw and his eyes scanned Gillian's voluptuous frame. "Look at that beautiful ass. Make's my mouth water. Maybe when we finish taking care of business, we could play house with the good doctor."

"Get your mind off the whore's ass!" Rico shouted at his friend. "We need to get that fucking journal!"

"Patience, my friend, patience," Effrain calmly stated as he smiled at his friend. "The book is as good as ours. Have I ever let the boss man down before?"

"I know you haven't, E! I'm just eager to finish the fucking job and get out of town before Kenric catches wind and sends his lap dogs after us," Rico replied, cracking his neck. He spit on the ground and growled as his brown eyes watched the female and the paramedics load Giovanni into the ambulance. "Fuck!" he said between clenched, white teeth as he then watched Gillian pick up the old journal and step into the ambulance.

"Small technicality, Rico," Effrain said as he waved a dismissive hand in the air and watched the same scene unfolding as his

friend. "Seems we have a small change of plans. Regardless, that bastard is dead tonight and the book is ours." Effrain then pulled his cell phone out of his jacket pocket.

"You calling Geno?" Rico asked as he watched the ambulance pull away.

"Of course," Effrain responded before he dialed the familiar number. Hearing the other man's voice on the other end, he said, "Boss, we have a small change of plans."

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## Chapter 1

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**G**illian walked into the dimly lit hospital room. Her emerald eyes quickly found the man lying on the bed, the only sound in the room coming from the machines that surrounded him. She was surprised to see that he was still alive. John Does' wounds had been far worse than she had initially thought, and his surgery had been more complicated and complex than planned. This guy was either a fighter or just plain lucky. The bloody clothes her surgical team had cut off the man told her that he came from money. Gillian wondered if he had any family that she could notify or if he was a loner. Either way, she hoped for his sake that he could make a recovery, although the chance of that was extremely low. His wounds were just too extensive. Walking to the foot of his bed, she grabbed his chart and began flipping through it. When she was finished reading the nurses' notes, Gillian placed the stethoscope on his chest and glanced at her watch. As she counted the steady rhythm of his pulse, her eyes glanced up to his face when Gillian heard him begin to make a queer, odd sound. The American doctor gasped loudly in fear and surprise as he clutched the front of her scrub top with his fist and began breathlessly muttering in a foreign language.



"It's okay. I'm not trying to hurt you," Gillian attempted to reassure him as she tried pulling Giovanni's hand from her chest. "You're safe. You're at Sacred Heart Hospital, and my name is Dr. Morgan."

Gillian again gasped in fear as the man pulled her closer to his face and his eyes opened widely. His grip tightened on her shirt as he faintly whispered in an eerie voice, "T-t-take." His breath touched her cheek as she tried to break his hold. Again, he whispered, "T-take," as his lifeless eyes bored into hers.

"Look, I don't know what you want," she stammered, trying to look away from his haunting gaze and remove his hand from her shirt. "You need to let go of me. I'm afraid that I am going to hurt you if you don't let go."

Blood began to trickle from the corners of his mouth as he again repeated in a strained whisper, "T-take it."

"Nurse, get in here now!" Gillian screamed loudly, trying to alert the staff as the monitors wildly sounded. Her eyes went back to his as she remained only inches from his face. His eyes momentarily sprouted life as they silently pleaded with her. "You said take it. What...what are you wanting me to take?"

Slowly, she followed his gaze to the book resting on the nightstand beside his bed. "Take it," he again whispered weakly as a fresh line of blood began to flow from his nose.

"Okay. Okay. I'll take it," she breathlessly sighed. "What is your name? Do you have any family that I can call for you?"

"Keep. Keep book closed," Giovanni whispered, his face contorting into a grimace of pain as the grip on her shirt began to loosen and his eyes began to close. "P-p-promise. P-p-promise you keep."

"I promise I'll keep it. You have my word. No one else will get it. Now what is your name? How can I help you?" Gillian quickly asked him as she tried to untangle his fingers from her shirt.

Giovanni took one last breath before he let go of her and his body went limp. *No more pain*, his mind thought as his eyes closed and a peaceful calm settled over his body.

"Shit!" Gillian yelled as she dropped his bed back and jumped on it to begin CPR. The nurse ran into the room, and without breaking her movements, she shouted, "Keri, call a code blue now!" Within moments, the room was full of doctors and nurses all working to save the mysterious John Doe. Their efforts, however, would be fruitless. Giovanni was dead.

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Across London, the sound of the cold October rain hitting the glass windows muffled the moans of the beautiful, Greek woman as he roughly fucked her pussy. She squirmed beneath him on the bed as he used her body to satisfy his own needs. Weakly, she accepted his advances as her own pleasure mounted. Her hands ran up his muscular back as the muscles there flexed and he growled. She raised her dark head and tried to kiss his full, sensual lips, but he slapped her large, olive colored breast hard with one hand before pulling his large, thick cock out of her core.

"Did I say you could kiss me, Pandora?" John barked as he rubbed his erect shaft against her clit. "Hands down if you want this fat cock back in that soft, warm pussy." He then nuzzled her neck as he licked the vein that pulsed there. "You know the words I need to hear, pet."

"I'm sorry, Master!" Pandora said in a hoarse whisper as she dropped her arms back on the bed. Her eyes locked with black coals as her body ached with need. Her pussy dripped with anticipation as she waited for her lover to continue. "Please, Master, fuck me. Make me lose control. I need you inside me now. Please, Master, please."

A slow, sensual smile crossed his face as dimples played at the corners of his delicious, bearded mouth. He lowered his face to rest only inches above hers and ran his pink tongue along her plump bottom lip. "Good girl. I've trained you well," he said in a husky, deep whisper, his British heritage thick.

John then slapped his thick cock against her cleanly shaven

pussy before slipping it back into her wetness. He chuckled as her back arched and she clutched the sheets on the bed. He knew she was on the edge of coming, and he planned on giving her what she wanted. Quickening his pace, John growled again as he glided in and out of Pandora's pussy. She cried out loudly as the orgasm tore through her body and her hips bucked against his. Deeper and deeper, he plunged into her warmth as he felt his balls begin to harden in response to his own impending orgasm. As a crack of thunder broke the early, morning grey sky, John threw back his dark head as he felt the jolt of his own climax. He pulled his large dick from Pandora's tight pussy just as his seed spilled out onto her lower abdomen.

"Fuck!" he growled in a low tone as he stroked himself, emptying every last drop onto his mistress, the tight, taut muscles flexing on his ass as he breathed heavily. As he gave her permission to touch him with his coal black eyes, Pandora ran her small hands up his back to settle around his neck. A beautiful smile touched her lips as he ran his finger through his seed and placed it in her mouth. She sucked off the salty liquid hungrily before he pulled out his finger to pat her pussy lips lovingly with his hand.

"Did I please you, Master?" Pandora innocently asked. She felt his body relax as he touched his forehead against hers. His coal black eyes lightened to a deep shade of brown as they searched hers. She swore that her handsome lover was looking into the depths of her very soul. Her eyes could not hold his stare for fear of revealing the deep love that she had for him. He had given her so much over the past five years, and she would give him anything in return, including her life. Her blue eyes then traveled down his large, muscular tattooed frame before coming back up to lock with his once again.

"You'll do, Pandora," John simply replied before raising his head and rolling over onto his back. Her body shivered at the cold distance he suddenly put between them. John Kenric was still a mystery to her after all the years she had been his mistress. He could give her so much intimate pleasure, but she still knew

very little about his personal life. He used her often sexually but had never given her even a small glimpse into his heart. The billionaire lived a life of absolute secrecy, and his inner circle consisted of very few individuals. He also exhibited control over every aspect of his life and that included the people in it.

Her blue eyes lovingly scanned the perfect specimen of man that lay beside her. John Kenric was the most handsome man she had ever met. His body was a solid mass of tight muscle with not an inch of fat to be seen anywhere. Her hand reached out and lightly ran over the menagerie of tattoos that littered his arms, chest, and abdomen. He was a very tall man who stood six-foot-five and exuded wealth and power. She softly sighed as she watched him rub his bearded jaw in thought and lick his full, sensual lips. His dark, chestnut eyes stared out through the large French doors that led to his private balcony. She wished the thirty-seven-year-old billionaire would look at her with all of the love and adoration that she felt for him, just once. Pandora knew that would never happen, though. John had made his intentions with her clear from the very beginning. She was his mistress and nothing more, but a girl could always hope. She was his favorite after all.

Pushing her hand away roughly, John sat up on the side of the bed. Pandora cringed at the scars that formed an intricate pattern down the muscular lines of this back. Although he never talked about his past, the Greek beauty knew that he had lived a hard, cruel life. He was the son of a member of the royal British court and had inherited his dead father's fortune upon his eighteenth birthday, but John was already worth a few million at that point, no thanks to his father. There was a lethal violence that simmered just below the British man's surface, and that excited Pandora. He skirted the lines of a legitimate, wealthy businessman and the head of England's notorious under belly of crime. She had seen him kill a man with his own hands and then throw her on a bed and fuck her senseless. John had never raised a hand to her in anger, nor did he allow any type of violence

toward women. Very few people ever got the pleasure of seeing him smile, and that included Pandora. She had only seen a genuine smile tug at the corners of his mouth a handful of times, and it had normally occurred during sex. When he did, though, she always melted. He had deep dimples that played at the corners of his mouth, giving him an almost boyish charm.

The thought of his sensual smile had her reaching out her hand again to caress the base of his spine as the liquid heat flooded her womanhood. She felt his muscles flex and his body tense. Pandora felt the danger oozing from his body, and she knew that John was in one of his dark moods. She would gladly help him take his mind off his problems. Before she could utter the words that played at her lips, John's bedchamber door opened and a tall, beautifully stunning man walked in.

John's dark eyes instantly lightened as he watched the man he considered his brother saunter into the room. His eyes met his brother's turquoise gaze and knew that something was wrong. Without sparing a glance toward his mistress, he barked, "Pandora, leave now. Return to your suite. Your services are no longer needed."

With no shame and complete obedience, she stood up and gracefully walked across the room naked. She was stopped, however, as Patrick O'Malley shot out his large, callused hand and grabbed her around the waist. His free hand knotted itself into her waist length ebony hair and jerked her head back. She loudly gasped as his sensual, pink lips gently brushed over hers. "Come on, Johnny," he said softly, his thick, Irish brogue rolling off his tongue. His turquoise eyes sparkled with laughter as they locked with hers. "No need to send the hired help away just yet. The bitch hasn't performed all of her duties."

Pandora silently fumed, her blue eyes shooting daggers at the man who held her. It took everything the Greek woman had to not slap his beautiful face as his eyes openly laughed at her. Simply put, she loved to hate Patrick O'Malley. He had the face of an angel but the dark soul of a devil. He stood as tall as John,

and his face was covered with a light golden beard. His short, blond hair lay in perfect disarray on his head and his broad, muscular body was just as finely tuned as her lover's. The grey t-shirt and jeans he wore barely concealed the muscular power that lay under his clothes. John was the alpha, and the man holding her hair was his beta. Patrick treated her like a common street whore most of the time, and his words were often mean. There had been those moments, however, when John had shared her body with Patrick, that she had seen an almost soft side of the Irishman emerge. Patrick could be just as rough as John and the two of them together was unlike any other pleasure she had ever known.

Suddenly, Pandora's breath quickened as her vaginal walls flooded with desire. The hand Patrick had around her waist traveled downward until it was cupping her clean-shaven mound. He slid a long digit into her pussy and slowly began circling her clit. Her small hands gripped his t-shirt tightly as she began to moan. Despite his mean words, she would let the Irishman use her anytime he liked.

Patrick loudly chuckled at her response. He then jerked his hand away from Pandora's core as he shoved her toward the door. Without looking at her, he said, "Once a whore, always a whore, right, Dorie?"

"You would know, Patrick," Pandora heatedly shot back, straightening her back. "After all, that is all you seem to be able to fuck these days. Don't you ever get tired of trolling the alleys for dates?"

"Why would I, love?" Patrick asked as he walked closer to his brother who sat on the bed. "After all, had John and I not been trolling the streets of London, we never would have met you."

"Enough!" John shouted, tired of the banter between his brother and his mistress. "Pandora, leave now."

"Yes, Master," she softly replied before quickly heading to the door to leave.

"Answer me a riddle, Johnny," Patrick said as waltzed further

into the room. "Why do you keep that bitch around? It's not like you lack for companionship, mate. You could have your choice of any woman, and yet you choose to spend your time with her."

A soft smile lit John's handsome face as he stood and stretched out his naked frame. "Because Pandora is very good at what she does. I think you can attest to her talents, boyo."

"Maybe." Patrick shrugged as he embraced John. The two men stood there for a brief moment before John pulled back slightly and put his hand on the back of Patrick's head lovingly.

"When did you get back? Did everything go okay in New York?"

"Of course. I have secured the property we wanted. Construction on a fourth branch of Kenric Industries will begin there in the next couple of weeks."

"Excellent," John responded as he pulled from his brother and headed toward his huge closet. "I know you did not come here to discuss business, mate, so what is on your mind?"

"Giovanni is dead, John," Patrick said quickly. He watched his brother freeze and turn to him. Their eyes locked, and he then heard John let out a low growl, "He never made it to his destination last night."

"Fuck!" John shouted loudly, his naked masculine form a tight ball of tension. "What the fuck happened?"

"Word has it that Effrain and Rico are in town. Geno apparently caught wind that Giovanni was bringing you the journal, and he sent those two to kill him and get the book back. They fucked up, though, and Giovanni was able to get away. He was running through Brushy Park, severely wounded, when he ran into a female doctor who had him taken to the hospital. He died there early this morning."

John studied Patrick's turquoise eyes and knew the answer to his next question before he even asked it. "Where is the book?" he calmly asked.

"Gone," Patrick replied. "Luther and Duff have already gone to the park and searched the area where he met the good doctor."

They also interviewed the paramedics who transported Giovanni and the doctor to the hospital. One recalls the doctor holding an old book, but when they searched his hospital room, they found nothing."

"Then Geno's men have it," John half growled as his large, callused hand ran through his thick, ebony hair. "Call Viper. Make sure no planes leave without clearance from me."

"I don't think they have it, mate," Patrick said as he shook his golden head. "Luther and Duff were able to hack the hospital's security cameras, and those two never stepped foot into the building last night."

"Were Luther and Duff able to talk to the doctor who treated him?"

"No, they didn't. Seems the bitch snuck out before they could. The nurses said something odd happened to Giovanni before he died, and guess who was the only one in the room with him when it happened? Maybe Geno had the doctor planted to make it all look like an accident. You know how sick that fucking bastard is."

John cracked his thick neck. He didn't need this shit right now. The last thing he needed to do was fuck with some stupid bitch who'd put her nose where it didn't belong. If Geno would stop being a coward and come out of hiding, he could kill the motherfucker and go on with his life. His eyes darkened to a deadly hue as they met Patrick's. "Well, then we need to talk to the doctor. Find out where the bitch lives and have Luther and Duff pay her a visit. Call Viper and have him do a thorough search of her history. Tell him to make sure I have the file tonight."

"Already ahead of you, boyo," his brother said with a smile. "Luther and Duff should be arriving at her place now, and Viper was notified an hour ago."

"I knew there was a reason why I kept you around." John chuckled as he quickly closed the distance between himself and his best mate. He again embraced Patrick before pushing him



back lovingly. "Shouldn't you be on your way to work, bitch? Surely, you don't plan on wearing jeans to the office. I thought you had a meeting in Dublin this morning."

"The helicopter is warming as we speak. I just wanted to touch base with you about Giovanni before I changed clothes and headed out." He arched a golden brow as he took in his brother's naked form. Making a disgusted face, he said, "Speaking of office apparel, you gonna go to work naked, mate? I guarantee Tanya does not want that tiny stump you call a dick in her face all day."

John smiled affectionately at Patrick, his large hand resting on his chiseled abdomen. "Then get the fuck out of here so I can get ready for work," John barked as he turned to head toward one of his personal closets. Over his shoulder, he said, "Meet me here tonight, boyo, around eleven, and we will go over the information you obtain about the doctor. Let Luther and Duff know that I expect them here as well. I'm going to be in Edinburgh for most of the day on business. Maybe we can share a drink and a nice piece of ass after the meeting."

"John baby, how many times do I have to tell you I don't swing that way?" Patrick chuckled as he headed toward the door of the bedchamber. He missed the middle finger that John threw over his shoulder as he entered his private bathroom. Opening the door, he headed to his own room to change. He had a helicopter to catch.