

wondered about the mystery texter. Who the fuck was it? He had an idea. A couple of ideas, actually.

He took out his phone and looked at the text message again. Real Scotsman? He'd show her what was under his kilt all right. He glanced round to make sure he wasn't being observed, then stopped and pulled his boxers down. His sporran was already stuffed with a handful of crumpled tenners, so he screwed up the boxers and hid them in the hedge. Easy enough to retrieve them on his way back.

As he walked further down the drive, the hotel vanished from view and the drive narrowed. The hedge gave way to high sandstone walls on both sides, the aged stonework picked out by the headlights from an unseen car. *It must just be round the bend.* He quickened his pace, feeling the stirring beneath his kilt turn to a full-blown hard on.

And then he saw it; or, rather, he saw the

headlights. Dazzled by the full beam, he stood for a minute, then lifted his kilt to give her a flash of the Real Scotsman.

The car revved in response.

*Oh, she was ready for it, all right.*

The car revved again and lurched forward.

*Calm the fuck down. I'm coming!*

But the car didn't stop. Looked like it was speeding up.

No escape on either side. He turned and started to run back to where the path was wider.

*Stupid fuckin—*

There was no bang. No crash. Just the crunching of tyres on gravel. No time to cry out. The ground came up to meet him and the pain shot through his legs. Instinctively he tucked his head into his chest, pushing down into the gravel. And then it was over.

It was over, and he was still alive.

He lifted his head and tried to focus. He saw the car ahead of him, picked out in the fairy

lights. Saw the tail lights and the square number plate. Looked like an old Land Rover. *Bastard!* He forced himself to look. To remember. He'd get the bitch. He clawed at the ground, trying to raise himself up and away from the car. But the pain was indescribable. Oddly, not in his legs now but up his back and into his brain.

He blinked as the brake lights came on. He waited for the door to open. For her to jump down mobile to her ear as she dialled 999. But the door didn't open. He heard the idling of the engine then saw the white reverse lights. Panic seized him and he gasped for air. Someone must come, surely someone? He gasped again and tried to cry out as the white lights came nearer. He tried to roll over towards the wall but his limbs wouldn't obey. The white-hot pain in his head was overwhelming. His phone buzzed again, a message he would never see, and the blackness overtook him.

# Chapter 2

## Sunday, 19th May

It was just after midnight when Clare heard the phone. Years of shift work and late-night emergencies at Glasgow's busy Maryhill Road station had trained her to snap out of even the deepest sleep. After two rings, she was sitting up in bed. 'DI Mackay.'

'Sorry to wake you, Clare. We need you out.'

'What's up, Jim?'

'Hit-and-run. Looks deliberate.'

She put the phone on speaker and climbed out of bed, carrying on the conversation.

'Locus?'

'Kenlybank Hotel. Off the A917.'

'A917...'

‘The coast road out of St Andrews. Head for the swimming pool and bear left. You’ll see the cars...’

Clare had been to the East Sands Leisure Centre a few times since arriving in St Andrews a couple of months ago. It was a fun pool for families really, but better than nothing when she was short of time. ‘I know the road,’ she told her sergeant. ‘Give me fifteen minutes. Twenty, tops.’

‘Cheers.’

‘Oh Jim...?’

‘Aye?’

‘Give Chris a bell. SOCO too. And some uniforms to secure the scene.’

‘All done.’

You had to hand it to Jim, Clare thought. He was no ball of fire but he got the job done. Young Chris could do with taking a leaf out of his book.

Clare thanked Jim and hung up. She took a