

The Race

A Gallo Story

By Kate Simon

Kate looked out to the ocean and thought nothing had changed since yesterday. Nothing but her age. Today was her birthday. She didn't feel old but her drivers license and all those damn solicitations from AARP told her she was officially a senior citizen. It felt like she'd blinked and forty years of her life had gone by. She rubbed her arms against the early chill. She smiled when she heard Cabe moving around the kitchen. Her husband had completely transformed her life. She'd gone from a near invisible field agent and to living her life out loud.

"Hey, what are you doing up so early?" asked Cabe.

"It's not that early."

"You consider anything before seven a.m. the middle of the night." He slipped his arms around her waist and placed a kiss on her neck.

She smiled. "Well, I guess I don't need as much sleep now that I'm so old."

"You're six years younger than me."

Kate giggled. "That's true, old man."

He smacked her ass. "I'll show you old man."

"You did, last night." She laughed as he pulled her tight against him.

"Happy birthday, Katie girl," he whispered as captured her mouth.

"Geez, you two. Don't you ever quit?"

Kate and Cabe laughed as their son came up the stairs from the beach. Jonathan's house was a half mile down the beach and usually came up for breakfast before work. "Nope and you should consider that a good sign for your future since you are a carbon copy of your father."

He stopped and laughed. "I never thought of that. I guess I have more to thank you for than my artistic abilities." He set his briefcase on the chaise. "Coffee ready?"

"Of course," said Cabe.

“I have some croissants from Rice’s.”

“Chocolate?” asked Jonathan.

Kate rolled her eyes. “Like I’d have any other kind.”

“You’re the best, Mom.”

Kate started to set out plates when Jonathan pulled her into a hug. “Happy birthday, Mom.”

“Thank you, sweetheart. Get the mugs.”

Jonathan smiled and took her hand. “Before that I’d like to talk to you about something. Could you sit for a minute? I didn’t want to do this tonight at dinner at the Nashes.”

“Am I going to hate this? Cabe, do you know what’s going on?”

“Not a clue,” he said.

“No, I didn’t talk to Dad about this.” He took Kate’s hand in his. “The last year, with you and Dad has been the best year of my life.”

Kate gasped. “Oh God, you’re moving. Cabe, don’t let him move.”

“Mom no, I’m not moving. I wanted to do this today, for your birthday. I love you, Mom, with all my heart. You’ve been everything I’d ever dreamed of in a mother and never thought I’d have.” He opened his briefcase and pulled out a document. His hand shook just a bit. “Mom, I was hoping we could make this official.” He handed her the papers and she gasped. His voice got quiet, like a little boy. “Mom, will you please adopt me?”

Kate looked at the papers and then launched herself at her son. “Of course I will. Oh sweetheart, I love you.”

“I love you too, Mom.”

She looked up at Cabe and saw he was crying too. “I think someone else wants to get in on this.” Jonathan gave his father a hug.

“You’ve made us both very happy,” he whispered.

Everyone wiped their eyes and sat down at the kitchen table. Kate took a sip of tea and smiled. A year ago she couldn’t have imagined this. Cabe found the son he never knew existed and Kate couldn’t love him more. Jonathan reached into his briefcase and pulled out another group of papers.

“This is another document you should look at.”

Kate took the file and smiled. When Jonathan asked Cabe to sign on to his birth certificate as his father he’d given him a document where Jonathan surrendered any claim to Cabe’s estate. They’d promptly tore it up. “Is this is like the last time?” she asked. Jonathan smiled and nodded. Kate handed the file to Cabe who smiled and tore it in half.

“You knew we’d do that,” she said.

“That’s why it’s not in a folder,” he grinned. “I hate to run but I need to get to court.” He gave his parents each a kiss and a hug.

Kate grabbed a croissant and wrapped it in a napkin. “Here. Take this.”

“Thanks, Mom. I’ll see you tonight at the Nashes.”

She sat back and watched her son run out the kitchen door. “Wow.” She whispered.

Cabe reached for her hand. “Wow, indeed. My birthday gift won’t come close to that.”

Kate smiled. “You gave me a son. That’s the best gift ever. Okay, he’s over thirty but that eliminated all those pesky diaper issues.”

“I’ll tell him you said that,” he laughed. “So does that mean I don’t need to give you a gift?”

“Gallo, you know those women who say, “Oh, you shouldn’t have?”

“Yeah?”

“You didn’t marry one of those. Where’s my pressie?”

He laughed and took her hand. "Come with me." He started leading her upstairs.

"Oh, I like this already," she grinned.

"Later, witch," he said as he led her past their bedroom to his studio. He sighed and Kate could tell he was nervous. "I hope you like it." He led her into the room and she stood in front of a covered easel. He pulled the canvas off and Kate gasped.

"Oh my God, Cabe." She was looking at a portrait of her parents. It wasn't a copy of an existing picture. This was original. They were young, in their late twenties. They were happy and in love. She could see it. Sitting between them was a little redheaded girl. It was her.

"I looked at old pictures and thought about the stories you told me. I hope you think I got it right."

She wiped tears from her eyes and pulled him close. She gave him a soft kiss and whispered, "It's perfect."

"Happy birthday, Katie girl."

The past few weeks had been a blur of work. Scorpion and Homeland had kept Cabe and Kate very busy. They could really use a break. Cabe was paging through the reservation site of the Sandcastle Resort when his son's picture flashed on his phone. He touched the accept call icon.

"Hey, buddy. What's up?"

"Hi, Dad. Guess what. We've been invited to the Long Beach Pro Am race. They raise money for local veterans charities."

"Nice. We should make a donation. Send me the information. When is it?"

"Three weeks. Dad, we weren't just invited to attend. We've been invited to race."

"What?"

"Apparently they know we race the Camaros."

"That's on an empty track."

"They'll give us training and safety courses."

"It sounds like fun. The hard part will be convincing your mother."

"I was hoping you'd work on her for me."

"I'll give it a shot."

"There is one thing that might convince her. They are giving me a plaque."

"A plaque?"

"The LA County VA is giving me a plaque for my pro bono work."

"That's wonderful, son. Congratulations. That might just sway your mother."

“A real race? With actual race car drivers? And you said yes?” asked Kate.

Cabe sighed. He’d waited until after dinner and a nice bottle of Bordeaux thinking it would make Kate more likely to say yes. He should have known. “It’s a Pro Am race for charity. Nobody’s going to be taking any foolish risks.”

“Jonathan wants to do this?”

“He sounded pretty excited. He’s also getting an award.”

“What award?”

“He didn’t make a big deal about that part. He said it was a plaque. He made it sound like a participation trophy. I called and I talked to the director, a guy named Wallace Green. He told me what the award really was. It’s for extraordinary service to the veteran community. Green read off to me some of the things Jonathan’s done in the last year. I couldn’t believe it. The number of pro bono cases he’s handled, the vets he’s gotten into programs. Katie, he’s saved lives.”

Kate smiled. “Well, I’m not surprised. That’s the kind of man he is, but why wouldn’t he tell us?”

“Because that’s the kind of man he is.”

“You know I can’t say no now.”

Cabe smiled and hugged her. “Yeah, I figured. Don’t worry sweetheart. I’ll keep him safe.”

Kate paced the conference room. She'd faced all manner of bad guys without flinching but being interviewed for the local news was downright terrifying. She'd only agreed to do it because the subject of the interview was her son. Her son. She looked out the window and smiled. The adoption had only been official for a few weeks but Jonathan had been her son in her heart for over a year. There wasn't anything she wouldn't do for him.

"Mom, please sit down, relax."

"I'm fine."

"Katie, please. It's going to be fine."

"You always say that," she said as she took a seat next to her son on the couch.

"And I'm always right," he smiled.

The door opened and Kate recognized the man who entered. Randy Levine was a tall, handsome man in his early forties. She saw him most nights on the local news. Following him was a young woman with a large camera setup. He approached them and extended his hand. "Mr. and Mrs. Gallo, thank you for coming. Jonathan, good to see you again."

"Again?" asked Cabe.

"Randy plays on my county league basketball team."

"Your son has a weak ass hook shot," said Randy.

Cabe laughed. "We've heard that before."

Kate extended her hand to the young woman. "Kate Gallo."

The young woman hesitated before extending her hand. "Ah..hi. Rachael. Rachael Woods."

"Hi, Rachael. This is my husband Cabe and our son Jonathan."



“Hello,” she smiled as she shook their hands, especially Jonathan’s. Kate suppressed a smile. She recognized the Gallo Effect when she saw it. When a Gallo man smiled, few women could resist.

“When I heard Jonathan was getting this award I made sure I was the one to do the report,” said Randy.

“That’s very nice of you,” said Kate.

“Nice has nothing to do with it. This award is a big deal, especially for someone as young as Jonathan.”

“What do you mean?” asked Kate.

“This award has been given out for fifty years. Some very big wigs have gotten it, like Bob Hope. Jonathan is the youngest recipient ever.

Kate looked at her son. “Why didn’t you say anything?” Jonathan blushed and lowered his head. “Forget I asked.”

Randy looked over at his camerawoman. “You set, Rachael?”

“I’m good,” she said.

Randy nodded toward Rachael. “I’m here with Jonathan Gallo, the youngest recipient of the Ford Racing Distinguished Service Award. This a national award is given for meritorious service to the veteran community.” Kate and Cabe looked at the blushing Jonathan. He hadn’t mentioned it was a national award.

“Mr. Gallo, you’ve been working with the veteran’s community in LA. Can you tell us a little about what you do.”

“It’s not just me. I work with a number of people trying to help veterans. Many returning vets have health and legal issues. I assist with the legal issues and direct them to agencies that can help them with medical and housing issues.”

“From what I understand you do more than represent clients. You follow up and make sure the vets get everything they need to get their lives on track.”

“Well,” Jonathan said quietly. “These are my veteran brothers and sisters. They’re family. You take care of family.”

“You’re a former Marine,” said Randy.

“There’s no such thing as a former Marine,” Jonathan said quietly.

Cabe covered his son’s hand with his own. “Semper Fi,” he whispered.

“Semper Fi.”

“Mr. Gallo you are also a veteran of the Marines. You must be very proud of your son.”

“I am,” he said. “Jonathan is a wonderful man. My wife and I couldn’t be more proud of who he is and what he’s doing with his life.”

Randy smiled. “You and your wife made the news yourself last year with the assassination attempt of Prince Alexander. You were severely injured.”

“I’m fine,” said Cabe.

“My father is too modest. He saved the life of Prince Alexander. My parents are both Homeland Security Special Agents,” Jonathan said with a broad smile. “They’ve put their lives on the line every day.”

“Hush, this is about you,” Kate whispered.

“Mrs. Gallo, oh, should I say Agent Gallo?” asked Randy.

“Kate is fine,” she smiled.

“Are you looking forward to your husband and your son racing in the Long Beach Pro Am next week?”

“Well, I don’t feel the need for speed they do but they are looking forward to it so I will be cheering them both on.”

“Who do you want to win?” he asked.

Cabe laughed. “Oh that’s a dicey issue in the Gallo house.”

“How so?”

“We are both under order not to be damaged.”

“And we listen,” laughed Jonathan. “You don’t want to tick her off. My Mom is a total badass.”

Cabe was like a kid at Christmas about the race. It was a chance for him to do a big father and son event. They'd been deprived of that all of Jonathan's life. He'd never known about his son until his bitch of an ex came to him looking for Homeland's help. He gave himself a mental shake. Kate always said not to focus on what we can't change. She was right. He pulled his Camaro into the garage and hit the button for the door.

"Yo, Witch. Where are you?" he called as he entered the kitchen.

"I'm right here..." Kate paused as she looked him up and down. "What are you wearing?"

"Cool, huh! It's a team jacket." He tugged at the bright orange jacket covered with patches of the race sponsors. He pointed to one of the patches. "Look, Team Gallo."

Kate approached him and smiled. "Very nice." She linked her fingers through his belt loops. "Do you think I can be your groupie?"

"Hell yeah," he smiled. He reached for his shades and she stopped him.

"Leave them on," she whispered.

"What ever you say," he smiled. He knew when Kate got like this was just go with it. He spent most of his time in suits and sunglasses but his wife had a special appreciation for his bike gear and shades. The truth was he wore the sunglasses because his blue eyes were sun sensitive. She pulled him into a deep kiss then pushed him toward the living room couch. "Ah babe, our big comfy bed is just upstairs."

"Hush," she said and she pulled off her t-shirt. Kate had a fondness for fancy lingerie. The color of the day happened to be fire engine red. The couch it is. She slipped off her jeans to revealed a cute red thong.

"Damn, woman," he growled as she straddled his hips. She nipped at his ear and his neck. He knew she was in control and he was just along for the ride. She whispered in his ear as she caressed him through his jeans. She knew what she was doing to him. His Irish Witch always knew.

Kate took mercy on him and relieved him of his jeans. She stroked and teased him, and she knew he was completely at her mercy. For a man who was always in control, he never minded surrendering to his wife.

Cabe watched as Kate wandered back from the kitchen with a couple of bottles of water. She was wearing his racing jacket and nothing else. "I take it you like the jacket."

She smiled. "You could say that." She curled up next to him and took a sip of her water. "Is there a name for a race groupie? You know, like 'snow bunny'?"

"Actually, there is. They're called 'pit lizards'."

"Eww. I don't like that. I'll just stick with groupie."

He put his arm around her, gave her a kiss and smiled. "You can be my groupie all you want."

"So have you seen any?"

"Any what?"

"You know, groupies?"

"It's just been the practice sessions and this is a charity event."

"But they're there?"

"Well..."

"Pretty young things?"

"Kate Gallo, you don't think for a minute that I'd ever..."

"Of course not. But you're not blind. If a beautiful young woman flirts with you, you'd enjoy it." She climbed on his lap and slipped her arms around his neck. "Cabe, I don't care who revved your engine, so long as I get to drive the car." Kate squealed as he flipped her on her back and pinned her to the couch.

He started with her as she had with him, nibbling her ear and her neck. “You rev me up, Witch. You always have. You always will.”

Cabe and Jonathan were in the green room waiting for Kate. Jonathan was going to receive his award soon and they would all be on the podium. "What's taking so long?" asked Jonathan.

"Security. They're going over the Scorpion van with a fine tooth. Your mother wanted to make sure everyone cleared. She probably badged security to get them cleared."

Jonathan smiled. "Working for Homeland does have some advantages. Mom does look pretty intimidating with a badge and a gun."

A tall man with bushy grey hair entered the room carrying a garment bag. Wallace Green may have been a Ford executive but his leather jacket indicated he'd been part of this race for decades. "Agent Gallo, good to see you again." He extended his hand.

"Please, call me Cabe. And you know my son Jonathan."

Wallace reached his hand out. "Only by reputation. It's a pleasure." He handed the garment bag to Cabe. "I hope this is okay."

Cabe unzipped the bag to find another orange racing jacket with a Team Gallo patch. "It's perfect, Wallace. Thank you. Are you sure I can't pay you for it?"

"Please. An extra jacket is the least crazy thing I've ever been asked for at one of these events. And with the donation your family made, believe me, it's my pleasure."

"Donation?" asked Jonathan as he looked at Cabe.

"Don't worry, Jonathan," said Wallace. "Your parents made their donation long after you were announced as this year's award winner. Their money had nothing to do with your honor."

Jonathan blushed and whispered. "Of course not." He turned to Cabe. "What's with the extra jacket?"

"For your mother," Cabe smiled. Now it was his turn to blush.

"Ah geez, Dad."

The door opened and Kate rushed in. "Sorry I'm late. I wanted the team to get a good seat for the presentation."

"Kate this is Wallace Green. He's the one who will be presenting Jonathan his award."

Kate smiled. "It's a pleasure to meet you."

"And you," he smiled. "Your son has been a godsend to the veteran community. You must be very proud."

"I'm trying not to grin too broadly and embarrass my son." She kissed Jonathan's cheek. "Hi sweetheart."

"Hi, Mom."

Kate gave Cabe a quick kiss. "What's that?"

"For you."

"A present?" she grinned. "I love presents." He unzipped the bag and Kate squealed with delight. "My own team jacket? Oh, gimme." She held out her hands.

Jonathan looked at the smiling Wallace. "My mother loves presents."

Kate slipped the jacket over her blouse and modelled it. "What do you think?"

"It looks great, babe," said Cabe.

"I hate to interrupt but we should get to the podium. The ceremony should start soon," said Wallace.

As they followed Wallace out of the room as Kate slipped her arm through Cabe's and whispered, "We'll have fun with these later."

Jonathan rolled his eyes. "Come on, guys. I can hear you."



Wallace Green approached the podium and gave the sign for the music to stop. “Ladies and Gentleman, welcome to the Fiftieth Annual Ford Celebrity Pro Am Race. This race has been raising money for veteran’s charities since 1970. I am very pleased to announce that year we have reach a new high of three million dollars.” Wallace smiled at the rousing applause. “Those funds will be distributed through veteran’s charities in LA county. Before we begin our race we have a tradition of presenting The Ford Distinguished Service Award. This award is given to someone who has given extraordinary service to his veteran community. This year’s recipient is Jonathan Gallo.

Cabe and Kate looked at each other and then their son in stunned surprise as the audience erupted in applause. He looked equally surprised.

“Jonathan Gallo has quietly made a difference in hundreds of lives. He’s worked through the legal system. He’s gotten clients the medical and housing assistance they needed, but that’s not all. We heard time and time again how Jonathan would make home visits to check on spouses and children. When they didn’t have what they needed he often took care of things out of his own pocket.” Wallace turned to Jonathan and smiled. “You have saved lives.” He turned back to the crowd. “Would anyone who has been a client of or benefited from Jonathan Gallo’s work, please stand.” A hush fell over the crowd as the entire front section of the audience stood, at least two hundred people.

Kate reached for Cabe’s hand. “Oh, my God, Cabe. Look at them all,” she said. Cabe wiped the tears from his eyes with his free hand.

Wallace faced the crowd. “We had a number of people who wanted to speak about Jonathan but we felt the best choice was Miss Kari Winslow.”

“Oh God,” Jonathan murmured.

“What is it?” asked Cabe.

“Ladies and gentlemen, Kari Winslow.” The audience gave polite applause as a young African American girl climbed on the stage. She was no older than thirteen and wearing her Sunday best. She looked over at Jonathan and smiled. She pulled a page from her pocket and began to read.

“My name is Kari. My Daddy, John, served in Afghanistan. When he came home he couldn’t find a job. Daddy wanted us to go live with our grandparents in Pennsylvania while he looked for work but Mommy said no. She said family sticks together. We applied for all sorts of help but there was always a waiting list. Things were pretty bad and there were days me and my brother hungry. When we lost our apartment Daddy got into a fight with the landlord. He got arrested. That’s when Mr. Gallo found us. He convinced the landlord to drop the charges and he got us a place to stay. He made sure we had enough to eat. He even took us to Chuckie Cheese for my little brother’s birthday. My Daddy is a great carpenter and Mr. Gallo called somebody and Daddy got a good job. We’re going to move soon to our own place. My Daddy is a good man and works hard. All he needed was a chance. Mr. Gallo made sure he got it.” She turned to Jonathan and smiled. “Thank you.” She walked over to Jonathan and gave him a hug. “Are these your parents?” she asked.

“Yes, we are,” said Kate. She extended her hand to they young girl. My name is Kate and this is Jonathan’s father, Cabe.”

“It’s very nice to meet you,” Cabe said.

“Thank you, Kari,” whispered Jonathan. “That was very nice of you.”

“Mommy said you have to come over when we move next month. We’re going to have a barbeque.” Kari smiled at Cabe and Kate. “You should come too.”

“We’d love to,” said Kate. “Jonathan, you be sure to get us the date.”

“Yes, Mom.”

Kari laughed. “You sound like me when my Mom tells me to do something.” She glanced at Wallace who looked ready to continue. “I better go. I’ll make sure my Mom calls your office with our new address.” She laughed. “I wouldn’t want you to get in trouble with your Mom.” She waved to the crowd as she walked off the stage.

Wallace held up a large plaque. “Ladies and gentleman it is my pleasure to present the Ford Distinguished Service Award to Mr. Jonathan Gallo.”

Jonathan stood and accepted the plaque from Wallace. He had to wait for a moment for the applause to die down. "Wow. I thought it was just a plaque. I had no idea. Honestly I thought this would be the only way to get my Mom to let me race." Everyone laughed, including Kate.

"I'm really honored to receive this but I did nothing alone. None of this could be possible without my assistant and fellow vet, Carolyn Armstrong and the help and wisdom of Doctor Toby Curtis."

Cabe and Kate glanced into the row where Scorpion was sitting. Toby tilted head down and tried to hide under his hat. Happy gave him a shot on the shoulder. Apparently his wife didn't know about Toby's involvement anymore than they did. "Cabe, how much don't we know about our own son?"

"Apparently, a great deal."

Jonathan looked over at them and smiled. "Most of all I want to thank my parents, Cabe and Kate Gallo. They've spent their lives in service to the country. If I know what it is to give back, it's because I'm their son." He nodded once to the crowd. "Thank you." He carried the plaque his parents and was followed by a photographer.

Cabe and Kate stood proudly next to their son and smiled as he held up the plaque. "We're so proud of you," said Kate. Cabe nodded in agreement as he wiped the tears from his eyes.

Kate looked around the pit area as Cabe and Jonathan looked over their cars. Happy was in her element, wrenching between the two Ford GT's they'd been given to race. "Happy, are these safe? They look awfully fast."

"Yeah," she chuckled. "They'll just about fly!"

"Cabe!"

"Don't worry sweetheart. I promise we'll be safe."

She slipped her arms around his waist. "You better. I can't lose either of you."

Cabe kissed the top of her head. "I promise babe."

Paige approached Kate. "We should take out seats in the grandstands. The guys need to get to the starting line."

Cabe leaned in to Kate and whispered "I need my groupie cheering me on."

Kate got into the spirit pretty quickly as she watched her son and her husband race around the track. She'd been shocked to realize the race would last at least two hours. She watched as Cabe and Jonathan, cars number seven and eight raced round and round the track. There were several near misses that made Kate's heart pound. She started shouting at drivers who she thought were cutting things too close to her men. Out of the twenty cars that started the race, two spun out and one blew an engine.

As they got down to the final laps the entire team were screaming for Cabe and Jonathan. When the checked flag fell Cabe and Jonathan placed a very respectable third and fourth. It took the team time to wade through the crowds and get to the bay where Cabe and Jonathan had worked the cars. The Scorpion van and the cars were parked in the bay but Cabe and Jonathan were gone.

"What's going on? Where are they?" asked Paige.

"They should be here," said Kate as she walked around the side of Jonathan's car. She stumbled and leaned up against the car. "Toby!"

Toby ran to Kate's side and saw what she had. Blood. A lot of blood. "Oh, Christ."

The rest of the team came up to the side of the car and saw what they did.

"I'll call 9-1-1," said Paige.

"No," said Toby.

"No? Somebody's hurt."

Toby looked at Kate and spoke directly to her. "Someone's been shot." He pointed to the trail of blood. "This is an arterial spray. It's bad. We don't have time. We have to find them ourselves."

Kate realized her phone was ringing and it was from a blocked number. She held it up and it was from a blocked number. "On it," yelled Walter as he dashed to the Scorpion van. She followed him in as she answered and put it on speaker.

"Gallo"

A distorted voice came over the speaker. "We have your men. You will have 10 million dollars in bearer bonds ready in one hour. You will be called with further instructions."

"Wait, you have to let me talk to them. No money until I know they're alive."

There was a pause on the phone. "Katie?"

"Cabe! Who's hurt?"

"That's enough," said the voice. "You now have fifty nine minutes."

The voice disconnected the call and Kate looked up at the team. "Walter?"

"All I could get was the call was bouncing off a cell tower less than one mile from our location."

"Can you get the ransom?" asked Paige.

“I couldn’t get that together in that time period, even if I had it available. Which I don’t.”

Toby tried to hide from Kate’s gaze. “I know, Toby. They have no intention of releasing them.”

He nodded, “I’m sorry, but it’s true.”

“So we find them ourselves and we take them back.” Kate grabbed her gun from the secured locker and slipped it into the pocket of her new Team Gallo jacket.

“They’re still here,” said Sly.

“Explain,” said Kate.

“They’re still at the track. The security was tight as a drum to get in here. It would be difficult to just drive away with wounded hostages undetected.” He noticed Kate pale. “I’m sorry.”

“Don’t be. That’s good. What else. Somebody give me something else.”

“Even wounded, Cabe and Jonathan are very resourceful. They would need to be in a highly secured area,” said Walter.

Happy walked toward a black wire cage at the far side of the bay. “A parts cage. It’s meant secure expensive parts, it’s built right into the walls.”

“Firing up heat signature software,” said Sly.

“Most of the people will be at the grandstand for the trophies and to see the drivers. Either that or exiting the track. Assuming they are staying put we check the bays.”

“Looking for the one farthest from the activity.” Sly pointed to his screen. “Here. I’m showing two heat signatures in the same location as the parts cage in this building. “

“Great work, Sly. Let’s go.”

Sly reached for Kate’s hand. “There are four other signatures there too.”

“Let’s move,” she said.

Kate looked at the building where her husband and son were being held. Part of her wanted to run in screaming. The rest of her knew better. She had to put her emotions aside and let her training take over. The one thing she'd learned in all these years was men always underestimated her. She looked at the team, her team. She loved them dearly. But this was her husband and her son. "Com's in and stay put."

"Kate, shouldn't we call the police? At least let's call track security," said Paige.

"We can't wait."

"I know," she whispered.

Kate slipped out of the van and felt for her 9 mm in her pocket. She walked to the door and knocked, adopting a southern accent. "Track Security. The track is closing in forty five minutes. Y'all gotta clear this building."

A door opened part way and Kate kicked it open the rest of the way with her gun drawn. There were two muscle men standing near the desk of a man in his mid fifties. The men drew their weapons and Kate fired on them both. Each hit the ground. The man at the desk was noticeably pale.

"What the fuck?!", he screamed. You killed them. You killed them both. What is the matter with you?"

"What's the matter with me is I don't take kindly to people kidnaping my family."

"You're..."

"Kate Gallo."

"You're just some rich bitch. How did you...?"

"She didn't tell you, did she?"

The man straightened in his chair. "I don't know what you're talking about."

"There's only one person who hates me and my family this much. Kathleen!" she screamed. "Get out here now or I kill this idiot."

The door opened and Kathleen Ellsworth walked in. "Go ahead. You've got nothing on me."

"What!?! Kathy, baby, we had a deal."

"Let me guess. She told you I was hip deep in cash and it would be an easy payday. What she didn't tell you is my husband and I are federal agents. There's no such thing as parole in federal prison."

"What the?" he said as he tried to stand. Kate fired and hit the man in the shoulder. He screamed and fell back down. Kathleen looked startled but unmoved. "Alright, bitch, I'm done playing. She grabbed her by the arm and dragged her into the back room. The parts cage was empty. She pushed her against the cage and held the gun to her chest. You have three seconds to take me to my husband and my son."

"He's my son! "This was your doing. All this happy family bullshit on TV. Do you know how humiliated I was? Everyone knows he's my son." she screamed.

"Not anymore! One..."

"You stole him from me..."

"Two.."

"You bit..." Kathleen didn't get to finish her thought when Kate fired, hitting her in the shoulder.

"Too slow. Next one is in your femoral artery. You'll bleed out in seconds. Now where are they?"

"You shot me!"

Kate grabbed Kathleen by the hair and whispered in her ear. "I will not hesitate to kill you. Now talk or die." Kathleen looked at her for a moment and nodded to the floor. There was a metal grate that was pad locked.

"Guy's get in here now. Back room." She looked at her shook her head. "You intended to let them die." Kathleen refused to answer as the team ran into the room. "They're in the oil pit."



“Where’s the key?” asked Paige.

“Right here,” said Kate. “Happy, hold her.” Kate angled her gun and fired through the lock, skimming the bullet along the floor.

“Efficient,” said Walter as he and Toby opened the doors.

“Toby, help,” yelled Cabe. “Jonathan’s been hit.” They climbed down and between the three of them got Jonathan out of the pit and on the floor. “My boy,” cried Kate as she fell over her son’s unconscious body.

“That’s my son not hers,” growled Kathleen.

Happy pushed her forearm into Kathleen’s windpipe, severely restricting her air. “I’d stop talking if I were you. You’ve messed with our family and we’re all pretty pissed right now. Your silence is your best hope for continued breathing.”

Cabe knelt down next to Kate. “They surprised us. We had no time to react. I did my best to stop the bleeding.” Kate grabbed his hand.

“I know you did.”

“Actually, you did good, Cabe,” said Toby. “He still needs to get to a hospital ASAP but your field dressing is excellent.”

“I called for an ambulance and I called Cooper,” said Paige.

“Why Cooper?” asked Sly.

“Because there are two wounded suspects and two dead ones. Somebody’s going to have explain this to the locals.”

Kate turned to Paige. “Make sure Kathleen is handcuffed to a gurney and get her to Mercy too.”

“Are you sure?”

“We may need her for parts.”

Everyone in the room gasped, including Cabe. “Katie, what’s gotten into you?”

“She was going to leave you to die. Both of you. Jonathan’s hurt. He may need something only she can provide. If that’s not the case then the Feds can drop her in the deepest hole they can find. But she doesn’t leave until we know she’s no longer needed.”

Cabe put his hand on her shoulder. “Okay, Katie. It’s going to be okay.”

Cabe watched as the EMT’s worked on his son. He was frightened for Jonathan but he was terrified for his wife. He always knew she had a breaking point. This may be it. He took Toby aside. “After we get Jonathan settled...”

“I see it too, Cabe. Her PTSD was bad enough but now she’s an angry mother who’s been pushed too far. A mother with a badge and a gun. It’s going to take a while to fix this.”

“You think she’ll be okay?”

“Eventually. Just not right now. Not for some time.”

“I’m not going anywhere,” said Cabe. “Ever.”

“Of course not. But for right now, as your doctor, I want you on that ambulance with your son and your wife. You need to be checked out too.”

“Thanks, doc.”

“You know, Cabe. I’m not used to you being so nice to me. It’s unnerving.”

Cabe smiled. “Jackass.”

Toby tipped his hat. “There you go.”

Cabe sat on the gurney and tried to see what was going on with his son. “Mr. Gallo, please. I’m trying to get your vitals, said the frustrated nurse.

“And I’m trying to see what’s happening with my son.”

The curtain pulled aside and Dr. Stacey Hawkins didn’t bother with her usual sunny greeting. Kate was sitting at Jonathan’s side and holding his hand. “Okay, let’s do good news first. The good news is your field dressing saved him from bleeding out. Absolutely no question he wouldn’t have made it with out you. Kate managed a small smile at him.

“What’s the bad news?” asked Cabe.

“Your son is AB neg. Very rare.”

“What about his other mother,” Kate all but spit her name.

“No. She’s A neg. For our purposes, she’s useless.”

“What about the blood bank?” asked Kate.

“Not nearly enough. I have enough to start the surgery but we’ll need more.”

“That may not be a problem.” Standing at the back of the room was Frank Nash. “When we heard Jonathan was hurt we put the word out. He pointed out the window and Cabe looked on the street below. There was a line of people down the block.

“What’s going on?” he as quietly.

“Blood donations. I’ll go down and sort out who’s AB neg. We’ll get enough.”

“What if we don’t? asked Kate through her tears.

“I really don’t think you have to worry about that.” Frank pointed to the local news van and a few national vans. The fact that Jonathan needs AB neg will be all over the news.

“Thank you,” she whispered.

“No thanks needed. He’s a brother.”

“Semper Fi,” whispered Cabe.

“Semper Fi,” said Frank.

“Semper Fi, whispered Jonathan.

“Jonathan? Sweetheart. It’s Mom, baby. I’m here. Dad’s here too.”

Cabe took his son’s hand in his. “I’m here son. You’re safe now.”

“Fuck this hurts. Sorry Mom.”

“Kate managed a small laugh. “It’s okay. When you get shot you get a pass.”

He took his mother’s hand. “What happened? Another kidnap?”

“Sort of. Just relax. Stacee’s going to take you to surgery soon..”

“Stacee?” he smiled.

“Yes and I have a perfect Gallo saving record and you will not mess that up for me, do you hear?”

“Yes Ma’am.”

Jonathan grabbed his father’s hand. “Who did this to us?”

Cabe took a breath. “It was Kathleen.”

“What?” The pulses on his machines started to beep rapidly.

“Try and calm down. You’re safe and she’s in custody.”

“Why would she do this?”

“Apparently our public appearances as your parents set her off.”

Stacee shook her head. “No more of this until after. She injected his IV with a syringe and he immediately began to fade.

“I guess I see you later,” he whispered as his eyes fluttered.

“Count on it,” said Kate as she kissed his forehead. “I love you, baby.”

“Love you, Mom.”

“Cabe kissed his son’s head. “I love you. And don’t forget you still owe me a hundred bucks for beating you in the race.”

Jonathan smiled. “I’m good for it. He managed to whisper, “I love you, Dad,” as they wheeled him off to surgery.

Cabe closed the door and looked at Kate he was expecting tears. He’d hoped for tears. Instead he saw Kate staring out the at the long line of blood donors.

“Do you think they’ll get enough donors?” she asked.

“Yes. I’m sure they will. Look down the street. There’s hundreds of people.” He rubbed his hands over her shoulders. “Kate, sweetheart. Talk to me.”

“I killed two men.”

He closed his eyes for a moment. Kate had never had to draw her gun until she met him. She’d been forced to kill three terrorists at the UN take over. Now, two goons who’d kidnaped their son were dead. It took its toll. “Kate, you had no choice. They drew on you.”

“I know.”

“I know that doesn’t make it any easier.”

“I was going to kill her,” she whispered.

“What?”

“If the team hadn’t come in when they did, I was ready to kill her. I was going to do it.”

“Kate, you were just doing what you needed to find us.” She turned and faced him.

“No Cabe. I was going to kill her. She took my family. I was ready to make her pay.”

Cabe was frightened at the sound of her voice. She sounded flat. He was going to make sure Toby talked to her as soon as possible. He pulled her close. "Let's just think about our son for now." He winced as he tried to get her to sit down.

"What's wrong?" she asked.

"I'm fine."

"On the bed, now Gallo," she ordered. He'd normally argue with her about it but his sore leg seemed to be diverting her attention. She pulled off his Team Gallo jacket and started unzipping his now ragged riding leathers.

"Now might not be the best time for that, sweetheart."

"Shut up, Gallo." She pulled off his boots and slipped down his leather jeans. "Dear God," she muttered. She looked down and saw torn skin from thigh over his knee and down to his ankle.

"Holy shit," he muttered. He hadn't realized he'd been hurt so bad.

Kate stuck her head out the door and looked up and down the hall. "Toby! Here. Now!" Toby ran into the room and stopped dead when he saw Cabe's torn up leg. He hit a but on the wall and shouted into intercom.

"I need a nurse in exam room four, stat!" He gloved up and cut away the rest of Cabe's leather pants.

"Damn. I really liked those."

"I'll buy you some new ones, just let Toby do his job."

The same nurse ran into the room who tried to get Cabe's vitals earlier. "Who are you?"

"I'm the doctor who didn't miss that this patient has massive deep tissue injury and very likely a compound fracture. Now get blood drawn and I'll get a room prepped for surgery."

"Surgery? Toby, you're good but..."

“Don’t worry. I’ll track down Derek Brown.”

Kate nodded. “Good,” she said as her knees buckled. Toby caught her before she hit the floor.

“Katie,” cried Cabe.

“Don’t worry. I’ve got her.” Toby set her on the chair and took her pressure. “I’m going to give you something so you can rest.”

“No!”

“Yes. Both Jonathan and Cabe will be in surgery for hours. If you don’t get your pressure down you’re going to have a stroke. If I have to strap you to a gurney you’re going to rest.”

Cabe and Kate both looked at Toby, dumbfounded. He’d never spoken to them like this. “Okay,” she said. “But you’ll wake me if they need me.”

He took her hand in his. “I swear.” He placed an order with the nurse for two different meds. She returned quickly with two syringes. She gave Kate the first shot. “You better be okay, ‘boyo,’ she said as she drifted.

“I will, Katie girl, I promise.”

“Okay, she’s out. We have a minute before Derek gets here.”

“Toby, this is a Kate I’ve never seen before.”

“I thought we’d talk about the compound fracture you’ve been walking on for an hour, but okay. I think Kate’s training as an agent combined with her fierce desire to protect her family and she went into overdrive. That, combined with her PTSD and well, we have a lot of work to do.”

“Toby, she said she was going to kill Kathleen. She was prepared to kill her.”

“She might have thought she was, but she didn’t. She could have. We didn’t get there that fast. Cabe, we’ll have a lot of work to do, but she’ll be okay.”

Derek Brown came through the door and examined Cabe's wound. "Damn, You Gallo's are going to pay for our condo in Carmel."

"If it's so bad, why doesn't it hurt?"

"Oh it hurts like a mother but, Adrenaline, maybe some nerve impingement, you can't feel it yet. I won't know until I get you in surgery."

"Okay, let's get this over with," said Cabe. "Toby will you..."

"Take care of Chateau Gallo?" That room on the top floor is big enough for three beds. Kate will be there when you and Jonathan get back."

"Come here," he called and pulled Toby toward him. He gave him a kiss on the cheek. "Thank you son. I honestly don't know what we'd do without you."

"You're welcome, Dad."

Derek looked confused. "I thought the Gallo's had only the one son."

Toby smiled at Cabe. "There's more than one kind of family."



Jonathan woke up with his leg on fire and a massively sore throat. “Oh, crap,” he muttered.

“Sweetheart, it’s Mom.” She kissed his forehead. “I’m here.”

“Mom, I hurt.”

“I’ll get the nurse.” She pushed the button and a few minutes later a nurse entered the room.

“Welcome back, Mr. Gallo.” She began to take his vitals.

“He needs some pain med.”

“As soon as I get this done.”

“While you’re at it I could use some of that,” said a groggy Cabe.

“Cabe!” She turned to her husband and gave him a kiss. “How are you?”

“It hurts like hell but I’m alive.”

“Yes you are and I intend to keep you that way. Both of you.”

“Both men muttered, “Yes Ma’am.”

The nurse chuckled as she moved toward Cabe for his vitals. “Okay, you’re all good. I’ll notify Doctors Hawkins and Brown and get your meds.

Kate stared out the window while Cabe and Jonathan slept. They’d been lucky, damn lucky. Jonathan had been shot in a branch of his femoral artery, just like she’d threatened Kathleen. Cabe’s field training had saved Jonathan from bleeding out. The call for blood had provided enough blood for Jonathan’s surgery and hundreds of others.

A gentle knock at the door diverted her attention. “Hello Kate. How are they doing?” Katherine Cooper entered the room and gave her a kiss on the cheek. Katherine may be the director of Homeland Security, but she was also a friend.

“It’s going to be a long hall for both of them but they’re going to be okay.”

“That’s so good. I happy for you.”

“So why don’t you sound like it?”

“Because I’m also here to put you on suspension pending investigation.”

“What?”

“What’s going on?” asked Cabe.

“I’m sorry, sweetheart. I didn’t mean to wake you.”

“Katherine, tell me what’s going on.”

“The DOJ is making a fuss. You shot one of their AUSAs. They’re demanding an investigation. ”

“Investigation! We were kidnapped and our son was shot. If Kate hadn’t found us when she did we would have died,” said Cabe.

“Agreed. But you also have two dead bodies and two wounded suspects.”

“Kathleen’s not out, is she?”

“No. Her bail was set at one million. She couldn’t raise it. She keeps trying to use Jonathan’s name to raise the money.”

“That bitch!”

“Calm down, Katie.”

“Yes, calm down. We know what went down but we can’t have the DOJ thinking you purposely went after one of their people.”

“Excuse me? She kidnapped my family. She was going to leave them to die.”

“Look at this way, your men are going to need you. Let me handle this.”

“Do I need a lawyer?”

“It might be a good idea.”

“Cabe?” she walked to his side and took his hand.

“Don’t worry. We’ll make some calls. In case you’ve forgotten, we can afford the best lawyers in the state. In the meantime maybe you could get the nurse to get me a shot.”

Kate pressed the button for the nurse.

“Yes, Mr. Gallo.”

“This is Mrs. Gallo. Can you get my husband and my son their meds?”

“Of course. I’ll get yours too.”

“Mine?”

“Doctor Curtis admitted you and he has some meds ordered for you.”

“I don’t need anything.”

“Kate,” said Cabe. “Mom, please,” said Jonathan.

“Sweetheart, you’re awake. What can I get you?”

“Water, please. My throat is sore.” Kate poured a glass of water with ice chips and held the straw to her son’s lips.

“Cabe, you want some?”

“Please.” Kate set up another glass with ice chips. “Here.”

The door opened and Doctors Hawkins and Brown came in the room. “Everyone’s awake? Good,” said Stacey. She checked his incision. “Okay, Jonathan you were shot in a branch of your femoral artery. Thanks to your father’s field dressing and my skills as a surgeon you’re going to be fine.” Everyone smiled. After all this time they knew Stacey didn’t believe in false modesty. You will have some major rehab ahead of you and you’re going to be out of commission for awhile.

“Thank you, Stacey.”

“Actually, I’m not the only one you need to thank. We didn’t have nearly enough of your AB neg for your surgery. Colonel Nash put out the word we needed blood. The blood bank got enough for your surgery and hundreds of others.

“Wow.”

Derek Brown walked to Cabe’s side and checked his leg. “To quote my dear wife, you are one tough son of a bitch. When you were tossed into that oil pit your leg caught on the metal grates and when you landed you landed on your feet. That’s when you sustained the fracture of your right leg. I have no idea how you were able to function with it.”

“I was busy,” he said looking at his son.

“Okay. You’re both going to be in here for at least five days. From what I understand Dr. Curtis has admitted you to for the same amount of time.”

“What? That’s ridiculous.”

“No it’s not.” They turned to see Toby standing in the doorway. “Kate, your injury is just as severe as Cabe and Jonathan’s. I’m not letting you out of here until I’m sure you’re okay.” He smiled and got a Toby twinkle in his eye. “Besides, this way you can keep an eye on both of these two.” Toby took her by the hand. “Kate Gallo you are the best mother I’ve ever known and you are a loving and supportive wife. It will be better for you to be here with them but it will also be better for them to be here with you.”

“Now lay down and take your shot.”

“I’m fine.”

“No arguments.”

“Fine, but first things first.” She walked to her son’s bed. “I love you sweetheart.”

“I love you, Mom.”

“She walked to Cabe’s bed and took his hand. “I love you, boyo.” She gave him a deep kiss.

“I love you too, witch.”

Kate laid down in her bed and accepted the shot from Toby. “You’ll wake me if they need me.”

“I swear on my hat.”

Kate smiled as she drifted off. “Well, okay then.”

Toby tucked the covers around her and thought there was more work ahead of them than even he’d estimated.

The Gallos had been released from the hospital for two weeks and they'd been making excellent progress. That is everyone except Kate. She'd kept herself busy with caring for Cabe and Jonathan. They'd decided it was easier for the home nurse and physical therapist to only have to visit one home instead of two. Actually it was Jonathan who'd quietly suggested to his father that he move back to his old room. The smile on Kate's face told them they were right.

She enjoyed fussing over them to the point of hovering, but Cabe could see it. The times she sit on the deck or walk on the beach. Always alone, sometimes for hours. Toby had been stopping by regularly for sessions with Kate. He used his own codes to get into the house.

"Hey guys."

"Hey Toby," said Jonathan. He was limping out from the kitchen to hand his father a glass of ice tea.

"Where's Kate?"

"She went for a walk."

"How long?"

"Half a hour."

"She sitting on the bench near the jetty," said Jonathan. "I checked on her a few minutes ago."

"Does she know about Kathleen?"

"Yes."

"How are you two doing with her taking a plea bargain?" asked Toby.

"What ever feeling I still had for Kathleen, disappeared when she left me and my father for dead."

"Twenty to life is too good for her," said Cabe.

“She knew it was the best she was going to get. Her associate sang like Caruso.” said Toby. “She may be an evil bitch, but she’s a smart bitch.”

Kate sat on the bench and watched the waves. She couldn’t seem to get started. Every project she’d been working on was a jumble of code. She was doing well taking care of Cabe and Jonathan but she was smart enough to know they didn’t need her as much as they let on. Her sessions with Toby were helping but there was one thing they couldn’t change. She’s killed five men. Yes it was in the line of duty. Yes what she did saved lives, especially the lives of her husband and her son. There was now something that wasn’t there before. A darkness she’d never be free of. All she could do now was learn to live with it.

She glanced at her watch and realized she’d been out too long again. Toby was probably waiting for her. She stood and turned toward the stairs when she heard a whimper. She stood still, sometimes the ocean can play tricks on you. It wasn’t the ocean, the noise was in front of her. She walked closer to the jetty and found a trash bag that had been taped close with duct tape. The closer she got she saw the bag was moving. She leaned close to the bag and heard the unmistakable sound of a whimpering dog. She tore open the bag and found a white terrier puppy stained with blood.

“Oh my God!” She pulled the dog from the bag and ran up the stairs to her home. “Cabe, Jonathan, come here.”

“What’s going on?” asked Toby.

“Oh thank God, you’re here. Look.” She set the whimpering dog on the kitchen table. I found her in a trash bag. Someone duct taped it closed. What kind of monster does that?”

Toby examined the dog. “My bag’s in the car, can you get it?” Kate ran to the driveway and found his bag in the back seat. He listened to the dog’s heart and lungs. “Her leg is broken. I don’t think she has any internal injuries, but I can’t be sure. She need’s x-ray’s.”

“Let’s go.”

“Kate, we can’t take her to Mercy.”

Jonathan looked up from his phone. “There’s a veterinary ER about five miles from here.

“I’ll drive,” said Toby. “Kate you have hold her still.”

Kate nodded. “Jonathan get my bag.” Cabe reached for his jacket and his cane. “What are you doing?”

“We’re all coming.

“Toby?” asked Kate.

“They be fine. Let’s go.”

Kate all but ignored Cabe and Jonathan as they found spots in the waiting room. She and Toby carried the whimpering dog to the front desk. “We need help,” she said.

“Come with me,” said the receptionist. They followed her into a small waiting room and she laid the puppy on the metal table. A tall woman with jet black hair and tattoos walked into the room. Her white jacket said Dr. Danielle. She went straight to the whimpering puppy.

“Hi. What do we have here?”

“I found her on the beach. Someone had duct taped her inside a trash bag.”

Danielle made a face. “Some people are such pricks.”

“I think she has at least one broken leg.”

Danielle looked up at Toby. “You a vet?”

Before he could answer Kate said, “Family doctor.”

“Well, you’re right about the leg. I need to do some x-rays and she’s probably going to need some expensive treatment. If she’s not your dog...”



“She is now,” said Kate. “Money doesn’t matter.”

Toby looked at Danielle and smiled. “She’s one of the few people you’ll ever meet who can say that and mean it.”

Danielle smiled, “Okay then, let’s see what I can do for this little girl.” She left Toby and Kate in the exam room.

Kate sat down on the bench and sighed. “Do you think she’ll be okay?”

“We got her here fast. I’m going to get Cabe. I’ll stay with Jonathan.” She nodded and continued to stare at the door where the vet left with the dog.

Toby walked back to the waiting room where Jonathan and Cabe were flipping through old magazines.

“What’s up?” asked Cabe.

“The dog is being X-rayed and Kate’s waiting for the results. You should go wait with her.” He nodded and grabbed his cane. “By the way. You own a dog now.”

“Excuse me?”

“She’s claimed her and has taken financial responsibility for her.” Toby put a hand on Cabe’s shoulder. “Trust me, this is a good thing.”

Cabe walked into the exam room and sat down next to Kate on the bench. “How are you, sweetheart?”

“I’m okay. What kind of monster could do that to a little puppy? They wanted her to die.” She buried her head on Cabe’s chest and sobbed.

“It’s okay, sweetheart. She has us now.”

She looked up Cabe through watery eyes. “It’s okay if we keep her?”

“Sure. We can’t just abandon her.”

“Oh Cabe,” she smiled and cried and hugged him as if he’s just given her a diamond. He was going to have to trust Toby this was a good idea. One thing was for certain, he hadn’t seen a smile this genuine on Kate for weeks.

Danielle came back into the room and was startled by Cabe’s presence. “Hi, I’m Danielle.”

“Oh, I’m sorry, this is my husband, Cabe.”

“Nice to meet you. How’s the dog?”

“Considering everything we had to do, she was a little angel. Her two front legs are broken.”

“Oh God,” Kate gasped.

“The good news is they’re clean breaks. She’s so young, about eight weeks, they should heal fine. She’s got some cuts and scrapes, but nothing too bad. We gave her some pain med and the techs are casting her legs. I’ll need to see her in a few days but you can take her home now. She’ll sleep a lot the next day or so. I have some care instructions for...what are you going to call her?”

Kate smiled at Cabe. “How about Angel?”

“Sound great.”

They walked out front to pay the bill and were met by Toby and Jonathan. “Cabe, we’re going to need things, beds, and bowls and I don’t know what all.”

Jonathan held up a couple of large bags and Toby was balancing a large cardboard box that contained a dog crate. “Don’t worry, Mom. I’ve got it covered. They have a little shop here and I asked what a new puppy would need.”

Kate gave her son a tight hug. “Thank you, sweetheart.” The receptionist pushed the bill toward Kate and she signed it without looking. A tech came out of the back with Angel cleaned up and her front legs wrapped in pink casts. “There she is.” Kate was so focused on holding her puppy that Cabe listened to the care instructions. “Let’s go home,” Kate said as she walked toward the front door.

“Doc, are you sure this is a good idea. Kate’s been pretty fragile.”

“Having the dog to care for will take her out of herself. We’ll still continue our sessions of course but this may be just what she needs. It will also cut down on her hovering time on you two.”

“Works for me,” said Cabe.

“Me too,” said Jonathan.

Kate turned from the door. “Let’s move it. Angel needs her rest.”

Cabe and Jonathan drilled Toby with a Gallo glare. “Trust me. I went to Harvard.”