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The other bound by duty.

THE DEVIL'S OWN

A novel by

CHRISTOPHER NEWMAN

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HARRISON FORD and BRAD PITT

THE DEVIL'S



a novel by
Christopher Newman

based on a story by
Kevin Jarre
screenplay by
David Aaron Cohen &
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Kevin Jarre



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**A TERRORIST'S BULLET
A SON'S RAGE
A LIFE CHANGED IN
A BRUTAL INSTANT**



The door burst open. Connor McGuire's son felt his breath catch in his throat as three masked men rushed in, all brandishing weapons. Two of the men took aim at Frankie, his mother, and sister while the third strode to the table. A surprised and enraged Connor McGuire began to rise and turn. The move brought him eye to eye with the muzzle of an automatic pistol. It was aimed point-blank at his face. And just as suddenly as Frankie's da saw it, the gun jumped with a roar, like a clap of thunder. The back of Connor McGuire's skull came off and for Frankie McGuire, directly in its path, the world turned a hot, sticky red. . . .

this one is for Evelyn

THE DEVIL'S OWN



PROLOGUE



North Channel of the Irish Sea
off Carnlough

Northern Ireland, 1973

On this rare, crystal-clear day, young Frankie McGuire knew the contentment that any master of his own universe knows. The breeze-rippled sea was that same deep, unfathomable blue as Connie Murphy's eyes, and for the second time in his young life he'd been allowed by his father to take the helm of the family fishing boat. That was over two hours ago, after a shared midday meal of mackerel and sharp cheese on hearth-baked brown bread. Frankie still had the wheel under his da's calm but watchful eye.

"Comin' up on them dangerous shoal rocks off Cushendall, lad," his father murmured. "T' port a

bit more, son. Easy. There you have it. Very nicely done."

Frankie felt his chest swell and wished Connie Murphy could see him now. Indeed, he spent the idle hours of each and every day dreaming of how he would some day own his own deep-sea fishing boat. He would work these same beloved waters while pretty Connie tended home and hearth. They would live a life together like his father and mother shared, without the noisy presence of his sister to dampen their bliss. Ah, how young Frankie McGuire yearned for that day. He would hold his true love's hand all through the night, and kiss her as often as he wished.

After listening to the weather report, Frankie's da had spun the onboard radio dial in search of a news broadcast from Belfast, forty miles to the south. Frankie already knew plenty about the *troubles*. They had set men like Connie's da and his own father at odds. And lately, those troubles had intensified. As much as he loved the infant Jesus and the Virgin, he could not fathom why a family's place of worship could make all that much difference. Didn't he and Connie share the same bright ginger hair, the same mischievous blue eyes and pale, freckled flesh that burned such an angry red in the summer sun?

"... say clashes escalated between Catholic residents along the Falls Road and the army after a rubber bullet killed a seven-year-old girl," the an-

nouncer droned. "It was fired by a British soldier to disperse a Catholic protest march, which threatened to escalate toward violence."

"Bollocks!" Frankie's da snarled. He reached to switch the radio off in disgust. "It has escalated to violence now, you bleeding buggers. Damn you all to the deepest hole in hell."

The fact that it was a seven-year-old girl who had been killed, precisely the same age as Connie, struck Frankie with a strange, unknowing fear. Why, he wondered? What possible threat could a girl like Connie pose to any grown man, let alone to a soldier? He looked up toward his father, his fingers still gripping the spokes of the wheel.

His father read the bewildered look in Frankie's eyes and clapped one of those callused and weather-beaten fisherman's hands on Frankie's shoulder. "Don't ask me why, lad. It's a question I can't answer. They just are what they are."

Frankie's eyes had returned to the sea. Half a mile to the leeward, the cliffs below Cushendall reflected bright in the afternoon sunlight. "What are, Da?"

"The big boys rule."

Puzzled, Frankie glanced up at his father once again.

"You pick up a gun," his father explained, "someone gets a bullet."

Father and son trudged home a half hour later than usual that evening, the summer sun still hours from

setting at fifty-five degrees latitude. Both could feel the rumbling of hunger in their bellies, but neither paid it much mind. They would have their suppers soon enough, and each was content within his own parameters. Theirs was a day's work well done. Six miles north of the Scottish isle of Islay in the open Atlantic, they'd met an Estonian trawler's tender craft. Frankie's father had shown a heavysset man in a grease-stained sweater a piece of paper. In exchange, he had taken one hundred kilos of fresh-caught salmon into the ice-packed hold of his boat, along with a pair of bulky parcels sewn into paraffin-impregnated canvas. It was the third time that summer that such a meet had occurred. Frankie had been told on the first occasion to keep his mouth shut, to say nothing to his chums about it. That was the first time his da had ever let him steer the boat. On the day of the second such meeting, the weather had been stormy and Frankie spent most of the voyage puking his breakfast of oatmeal and bacon over the side.

"I don't think I'll be stopping at the pub for a pint t'night, lad," his da declared as they reached the fork in the road. "Your mother will be worried, us bein' late and all. Maybe later, once chores are done. Y' did well t'day, lad. Your father is proud o' you. You'll make a right fine fisherman yet."

They had gotten underway at dawn and Frankie was tired, but still he puffed his chest with pride. His da was a man other men in Carnlough looked

up to. Catholic men, at any rate. When he spoke his mind before the peat fire at Feeney's pub, his rumbling voice filled the low-ceilinged room and the other drinkers were respectful. Connie Murphy said once, earlier that summer, that her father and others thought his da was a troublemaker, but Frankie could not see how. Connor McGuire was fearless, yes. Frankie had never seen him back down to any man, regardless of size. But not a troublemaker. Nay. Connie's own banker father was a troublemaker, always at the head of the parade of Orangemen on Guy Fawkes Day. Frankie's da called it picking the scab of Catholic failure, and roundly cursed Mr. Kelley Murphy for it.

The table looked as though it had been laid for quite some while when the two McGuire men entered their home. Frankie's thirteen-year-old sister, Mary Claire, sat scowling over her lacework in a corner and hardly looked up.

"Ma," she bawled out. "Da's here at last."

Frankie's mother, clearly fraught with nerves, darted into the room tying her apron. She bussed the cheek of her husband in passing and ordered Frankie to wash.

"Move, girl," she ordered Mary Claire. "The fishing went well?" she asked Da.

"Over two hundred pounds of prime salmon, though that bleeding scum Barstow would pay no more than half the going rate for it. Sod the bastard. One day, he'll get his."

With a warm bowl in her hands from the hearth, Frankie's mother stopped and frowned. "Not in front of the children, Connor. Please. It's bad enough, what they hear on the street, without them hearin' it here in their own home, too."

Frankie's da grumbled something under his breath as he moved to stand beside his son at the washbasin.

Once grace was said and Connor McGuire had mashed together equal shares of boiled beef and spuds on his plate, he took a mouthful and surveyed his little family with satisfaction. "Frankie's going to make a right fine fisherman, he will," he announced. "Got an instinctive feel for the helm."

"His marks in school are excellent," Frankie's mother countered. "Father Dunleavy tells me he'll recommend him for a place at the seminary in another two years' time. We could never afford to give him such a fine education as that, Connor."

It was clear from the expression on Connor McGuire's face what he meant to reply to such a notion, but before he could open his mouth, the door behind him burst open. Connor's terrified son felt his breath catch in his throat as three masked men rushed in, all brandishing weapons. Two of the men took aim at Frankie, his mother, and sister, while the third strode toward the table. A surprised and enraged Connor McGuire began to rise and turn. The move brought him eye-to-eye with the muzzle of an automatic pistol. It was aimed point-blank at his face. And just as suddenly as Frankie's da saw

it, the gun jumped with a roar, like a clap of thunder. The back of Connor McGuire's skull came off and for Frankie McGuire, directly in its path, the world turned a hot, sticky red.

1



Belfast Twenty-Four Years Later

The briefing room at SAS clandestine operations headquarters near the River Lagan shipyards was stifling. It was an unusually warm August that Northern Ireland was experiencing. Harry Sloan of Her Majesty's Secret Service branch MI5 stood with his tie loosened and collar unbuttoned before two squads of SAS wet-work specialists—commandoes trained in the delicate and often brutal art of clandestine urban guerrilla warfare. The room was darkened, blackout curtains drawn, and a pathetic oscillating fan set atop the table at his right hip barely stirred the close, sweat-heavy air. Each and every one of those ruthlessly schooled killing machines seated before him was dressed in coveralls splashed in the muted hues of redbrick dust and concrete. Not a one of them so much as twitched in

betrayal of the slightest discomfort. They were cool in their minds. In their world, that was the only cool that mattered. Harry Sloan knew the feeling. In a time that seemed an eternity ago now, he, too, had been one of the SAS elite. But theirs was a game for much younger men. A fifty-year-old MI5 strategist, Harry embodied a different sort of cool than they. He'd gone to the mat with the best of the bad and survived. Today he got to rest on his laurels.

"This is your target, gentlemen."

The image on the projection screen behind him shifted abruptly with the slide change, now showing the grainy photo of a man caught in three-quarters view by a telephoto lens. He had a scruffy beard, his strawberry-blond hair worn tied back in a little ponytail. His intent blue eyes were focused on some unseen object off camera.

"Frankie McGuire," Sloan continued. "Also known among his comrades and to the tabloid press as Frankie the Angel. Commander, Falls Road Active Service Unit, Belfast Brigade. Known to be responsible for the deaths of eleven regular army, seven RUC officers, and an unknown number of loyalist paras."

Sloan paused to let that sink in, surveying the expressionless faces before him. He might as well have told this lot that McGuire rescued abandoned kittens for all the rise it had gotten out of them. "Bastard has never seen the inside of a cell, which is remarkable, considering the long term of his notoriety. But two days ago we got a break. A Provo

bomb maker turned informant has given us a time and location where we can expect Frankie the Angel to put in an appearance. This evening, at eighteen hundred hours."

Another slide change. A burnt-out street in the Beechmount section of Belfast appeared. The pavement was strewn with rubble and parked with battered old cars. "O'Shaughnessey Street, gentlemen. Your target building is the one in the middle of the screen." He indicated a building half boarded up, in better repair than most, with an overgrown empty lot alongside. "Identified as being the Falls Road Unit's latest Belfast safe house. Good location for them, buried deep in a one hundred percent sympathizer-occupied neighborhood. I will now let Brigadier Morris proceed with your briefing, but only after saying that if McGuire is in that building," Sloan nodded at the screen, "I and eleven dead British Army soldiers want very much for you to fetch his arse out of there."

A commando in the front row raised his hand. The movement was as fluid and pretty as a ballet dancer's. "Sir?"

"Yes," Harry acknowledged the broad-shouldered boy.

"Are you very much concerned if he's delivered dead or alive, sir?"

Harry had already begun to move away from that table to make room for the brigadier. He smiled. "From an intelligence perspective, I'm sure you can understand the value of a man like Frankie Mc-