And then, the justice

by ff_fan

Summary

M's apprentice Q seized control of MI6 at the end of Skyfall. Two years later as M, Falkirk Bond prepares for the arrival of his and James' first child. Coming to terms with his ever growing Pack, we follow his path through parenthood as he leads one of the worlds' foremost intelligence agencies. Enemies rise, old and new but as the most accomplished Omega to walk the corridors of power in the British establishment he must remain unyielding despite the cost.

Notes

This picks up a few months after Moran's attack on the Holmes family, including the illegitimate children of Siger and Violet Holmes. After coming to the brink of war Britain and America are talking again. Some like Alec and Sherlock are still in casts for broken bones and Falkirk's nephew recovering from a Pneumonectomy.

Key cast members

Falkirk Bond nee Holmes aka Thomas McLair -(Ben Whishaw's Q). Recruited and bound
to James age 15.

James Bond - Alpha to Falkirk. No Franz Oberhauser (Spectre has not happened in this story line).

Alec Trevelyan - 006. In a relationship with Daniel. Parents were refugees and were killed when he was young.

Daniel Carrington - Currently Q, mentor to Falkirk. Ex private agent for technology institute founded by his grand father.

Selene Corvin - Ex 002 currently Falkirk's bodyguard.

Darren Mallory - Falkirk's PA. Mate to Gareth Mallory, who is Intelligence Minister.

Keading Matthews - Papa to Falkirk's half brother Cody.

See the end of the work for more notes.
Chapter 1

The American Hispanic omega with lean delicate face, soft brown eyes and black hair looked out of the car window. Even for someone brought up in a city the buildings around him seemed so strange.

During Keading's time at the hospital he quickly came to a realisation, the man he’d borne a son to he now knew was Siger Holmes. Cody’s older brother Mycroft Holmes was the scary Alpha who tried to take his son away. Then his son's other older brother Thomas had helped him keep Cody. After all Thomas had done, taking over the brothel he worked in, getting rid of the pimp, he thought he’d fallen into some form of criminal empire but the person he knew as Thomas McLair was far more than he ever imagined.

Everyone seemed to call Thomas by a different name or title. M or sir for his subordinates, Thomas for his associates and colleagues and Falkirk for his friends and family. It was the constant stream of Police and military all in formal dress uniform and the politicians in expensive suits, including the scary old Alpha of a Prime Minister that put Keading on edge. Those in power always had people coming to them looking to ingratiate themselves, but there were those like the Prime Minister who had a healthy caution around him. M / Thomas / Falkirk had a lot of visitors during their time in the hospital.

Looking out of the window, the buildings stopped as the car crossed the Thames. “That's it,” the dark haired Alpha woman said pointing out the imposing sandy building. Keading looked to where Selene had indicated with a bit of trepidation. MI6 loomed ominously, the light coloured sections giving it a pyramid shape but there were concealed sections under what looked like black metal distorting the actual size and shape.

Arriving at the main entrance Selene flung her door open allowing Keading to exit. Cringing and ducking his head in a submissive gesture at the glares the guards sent him he stuck close to the Alpha woman as she breezed past them. He felt so out of place like they would turn on him at any moment.

Keading cast furtive glances as they walked along corridors, riding a lift up to exit into another corridor. Breezing passed another checkpoint Selene led the way entering at the side of a large office with lots of desks.

Never would he have thought the scary Alpha of Falkirk's would ever be a welcome sight. Perching on the PA's a desk next to the glass wall of the office at the front of the building was James. Falkirk was in the office beyond speaking on the phone, Keading got a wave before the Omega with the wild mane of hair returned his attention back to the phone. Getting closer Keading could hear James practising his sultry tones on the unimpressed Omega at the desk. Keading was able to further relax, the Irish Omega that was Falkirk's PA a little more normal than the scary people he’d met so far. He swore and made stupid jokes, jokes he could understand that didn't require context or cultural reference.

“Hi,” Darren said to the approaching pair looking round the bulk of the Double O on his desk. “M's just giving his final orders,” Darren added, as Selene ushered Keading into a seat to wait for Falkirk.

A handsome sandy haired Alpha, Addison walked up to the waiting area where the senior Double O was in his usual spot on Darren's desk. Looking round he gave a disarming smile to the other Omega who was hesitantly looking at him. Selene growled at him, 005 just held a cocky grin in the
face of her glare and warning as she placed a possessive arm around the smaller omega male.

“DOUBLE O FIVE, I am waiting,” Falkirk snapped looking at the Operative in question. Jumping at the feisty Omega's sudden presence Addison snapped to follow M into his office.

Assigning the Operative his latest mission Falkirk dismissed him with an order he was not to sleep with anyone important enough to get his direct number, M wished 005 luck in parting.

Coming out of his office Tanner was standing by Darren. Giving the pair their instructions Falkirk then greeted Keading. Selene's scent clung to the other Omega but Falkirk didn't think they were bonded yet. Taking Keading's arm they walked along with Selene preceding them while James was a few pace behind. Falkirk chatted about the building around them, talking about coming here the day after his 16th birthday when he could be officially hired.

“Will Cody be alright?” Keading asked. Falkirk reassured the other Omega that his son was with those Falkirk and James would trust with their child (when it arrived) and placed a hand on the swell of his stomach where that baby was. It was the first time Papa and son would be separated and Keading was worried even though Cody was going to be staying with Daniel (Q). Alec although out of the hospital was still covered in plaster but Maloney(009) and the ex deep cover agent Evans had been volunteered to help out until they could step up their physical therapy.

Getting into his car Falkirk looked to Keading beside him, “You should know I don't fly to well,” Falkirk admitted.

“Never flown, not that I can remember,” Keading responded.

Going by commercial airline James and Selene decided to keep the Omegas separate as both were stressing for different reasons. Falkirk and James were on one side of the plane while Selene and Keading moved a few rows back on the opposite side.

Falkirk tucked himself under James' arm demanding comfort. Happily obliging James stroked his Omega's neck and back. The green eyes peered up and James couldn't help but reach forward and press his lips to his Omega's and moved on to nuzzle his neck.

The Alpha business crowd seemed annoyed at having two distressed Omegas releasing their pheromones into the enclosed cabin. Apart from the scent of Falkirk's fear and Keading's distressed scent emanating throughout the confined space the flight passed without incident.

Letting the first class cabin empty before standing James helped his mate to his feet guiding Falkirk to the doorway while Selene and Keading followed. On the gantry the representative of the British consulate waited with the American, Jack Ryan flanked by guards with prominent CIA branding while the Union Jack adorned the fatigues of the men surrounded the Brit.

The Brit introduced himself as Harper the attaché to the ambassador and in turn introduced Ryan. Giving a pleasant greeting to the CIA agent Falkirk had met in London a few years before, a deliberate attempt to put a friendly face on his first return to America since the hostilities between the two countries, but welcome none the less. After the stiff pleasantries had been made Harper led Falkirk out onto the tarmac where a convoy had been arranged.

Safely in the consulate's car and under way James griped, “Couldn't we just sneak in like we used to?”

Indicating Keading sitting across from them in the limousine, “After accusing his sister's father in Law of being a spy, if I was in the Americans’ position I would pull the same trick. We do this
happy, friendly and diplomatically correct.” Falkirk informed.

Pulling up to the hotel Harper breezed past the reception and headed straight to the lifts. Following the attaché Falkirk exited after James while Selene brought up the rear. Passing guards Harper stopped next to a tall Alpha in tails, the hotel’s insignia worn as a gold badge on his lapel. An ingratiating upper class American accent greeted Falkirk before he opened the doors to the suite.

The suite was opulent with a dining area to the left and lounge area to the right. A tall set of window supplied most of the light where the central grand staircase split to the two balconies, both with two doors. The concierge was giving them the tour, when they ascended the stairs Falkirk broke left with James while Selene pulled Keading to the right.

The consulate guards carrying the luggage fumbled as they exchanged bags before following. “Put them both in here,” Falkirk ordered the guard who followed him and James. Dismissing the guard and concierge Falkirk sat on the bed.

“I'll get rid of them,” James offered exiting the room and closing the door. Flopping back Falkirk closed his eyes laying his hand on the small swell forming across his stomach letting the fatigue show from the journey. His shirts and waistcoats still fit but he’d needed to buy new trousers a few days ago. He’d also taken to wearing braces instead of a belt so there was no pressure on his stomach. Absently stroking his stomach with a thumb Falkirk couldn't help wonder about the creature growing inside him.

The door opened again and a low rumbling growl identified his Alpha better than any amount of words. The bed dipped at Falkirk’s side as a rough cheek brushed the back of his hands. Another dip on Falkirk's right occurred as James nuzzled his way up Falkirk's body. When James reached the Omega's neck his nuzzling was intermixed with nips and kisses.

Groaning Falkirk trust his hips up to gain friction but James' body was too far above him, mewling his displeasure James chuckled at Falkirk, “Insatiable minx,” he teased before latching his teeth over the Omega’s bond mark.

Another guttural groan sounded as Falkirk managed to wriggle his legs apart and wrapped them round the Alpha's waist. Pulling his hips off the bed Falkirk was now able to grind his restrained erection against the Alpha. Wrapping an arm round the small of Falkirk's back supporting him James ground against the round of the Omega's arse.

A sudden pathetic distressed mewl sounded before Falkirk cried out his orgasm and went limp. It took James a moment to realise what had happened.

James tried he really did but with Falkirk's annoyed embarrassed look coupled with the absurdity of the situation he burst out laughing.

“Not funny,” Falkirk snapped hitting the insensitive Alpha over the head.

Continuing to chuckle James stood up slipping his arms under Falkirk's knees and back lifting the Omega off of the bed and carrying him to the adjoining bathroom. Sitting the precious cargo down on the side of the tub James started the taps adding some bubble bath.

Stripping Falkirk while the bath filled James easily removed the jacket followed by the buttons of the waistcoat. Getting Falkirk to stand James popped the trouser button and slipped them down to grasp the waistline of the sticky underwear, “If you laugh again I will assign you to, to...” Falkirk trailed off not knowing a place vile enough.
With iron will James kept his face straight as the underwear stuck to the Omega's flaccid cock. Discarding the soiled garment James dipped a cloth in the warm water and wiped away the cum, then carried on up over the soft swell of the expanding belly. “James.”

James snapped his eyes up from the mesmerising sight of the stomach and what it meant. Discarding the cloth he stood, testing the water James quickly stripped himself before slipping in. Falkirk followed seating himself in his Alpha's lap, James' libido on hold as his hands found he swell again.

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When James and Falkirk descended the stairs Selene and Keading were already tucking into their lunch. “Settled in?” Falkirk asked lifting the silver dome and placing a few triangular sandwiches on a plate. Listening to Keading respond, Falkirk poured some over stewed tea.

After lunch they headed for the grave yard. Falkirk was a little concerned, the cemetery seemed so full and the city still around them, not very peaceful place but that didn't matter to the grieving Omega between him and Selene. Falkirk had bought a plot, a simple white stone marked the resting place of Luke Allen. Rubbing his eyes Keading moved closer to Selene. Falkirk placed a small posy just in front of the stone and stepped back. Keading shook his head pulling away from Selene walking back the way they had come unable to look back at the grave of his friend, hands coming up to scrub at his eyes as he moved away. As Selene trailed the hurting omega a strong arm came around Falkirk's waist and he leaned against his Alpha.

Returning to the hotel Keading disappeared upstairs into his room. There was a knocking and Selene gently called Keading's name. “Fuck off!” The Alpha retreated but not far, leaning against the wall beside the bedroom door she slid down to wait for the grieving Omega.

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Selene sat, still in her self-appointed vigil while James lounged with a drink and Falkirk worked away on his laptop. A knock sounded and James pushed himself up looking through the peephole before pulling the door open. Two Alphas entered, the female in a long velvet cocktail dress with a plunging neckline, the knot of a string of pearls resting between the swell of her ample breasts. Her smoky eyed fixed and predatory on Falkirk. “Hello,” Adler drawled posturing for the Omega. Irene Adler and Johan Paulik's eyes were immediately drawn to the fuller belly of Falkirk as he stood. “Been busy little boi,” Adler purred stalking up to the Omega ignoring the warning growl from James. She circled him, running a hand across his should blades. Falkirk kept himself still and calm, the woman loved to be in control and Falkirk was adamant not to let her be.

“I am always busy,” Falkirk shot back feigning obliviousness to the innuendo, indicating the chairs on the opposite side of the table, “please have a seat.”

The handsome dark haired and green eyed Paulik took one of the indicated chairs. Adler took Falkirk's vacated chair sitting back and patting her lap with come hither eyes.

Ignoring her Falkirk moved to sit beside Paulik while James sat beside Adler to act as buffer between her and his mate. “There have been several police raids,” Paulik informed. “A few well placed leaks quickly showed those in power had more to lose than gain from a crusade,” Adler supplied in sultry tones, leaning forward suggestively.

Paulik reported on the facts of Falkirk's illicit businesses while Adler out did James for suggestive
commentary. James even started adding his own comments quickly entering a competition. Adler purred, “Mr Bond, you are a cunning linguist.”

“I practice as often as possible,” James returned.

Falkirk's eyes widened at the old joke. Encouraging his New York agent to hurry, he wasn't sure how much more he could stand from Adler and James. Finishing up the report Paulik looked directly at Falkirk, “There is concern from the older employees,” Paulik started.

Even Adler dropped the sultry teasing as she added, “The rank and file want to know they haven't been forgotten.”

Shaking his head, as M Falkirk could justify going to some very unsavoury places but not as the owner while on an official trip to help repair the relationship between the two countries. After explaining himself Paulik accepted Falkirk's reasoning. He stood telling Falkirk he would pass on his best wishes.

“Are we leaving?” Adler said with faux disappointment in her voice.

“Yes Ms Adler, you are leaving,” Falkirk informed coolly.

Adler paused on the threshold pressing up to the Omega but he stood firm where most Omegas, Betas and many Alpha's had submitted before her charm and dominance. She leant in so her full red lips were brushing the shell of the Omega's ear, “Do give my love to your brother, I miss him so much.”

“I'm sure you do.”

Closing the door behind Irene Adler Falkirk looked up at the sound of Keading's door opening, already on her feet Selene stood at the ready. From his position on the floor below Falkirk could still see the red puffy eyes before Selene enveloped Keading in a hug, the omega clinging to her giving a hiccupping sob.

Guiding him downstairs Selene manoeuvred Keading onto the couch. Falkirk quietly instructed James to get the spare bedding. With Falkirk on one side and Selene on the other Keading pulled them as close as possible. Suddenly the room went dark as James draped the spare quilt over the three of them. Quickly Falkirk and Keading were cocooned in the quilt and surrounded by their Alphas. With the warmth and security it didn't take much for the Omegas to enter a blissed out state under the gentle touches of the Alphas.

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As they headed to the shut up house Keading and Luke had owned, a police officer stood guard along with a removal van. Remnants of yellow tape flapped in the wind around the small two story house. James dealt with the police officer allowing Selene to concentrate on Keading. Falkirk entered first while Selene kept a reassuring hand on Keading’s neck.

The dark patch of stained wood at the door along with spots on the wall beyond and from the report he'd read, Falkirk knew that was where Luke had been killed. At the arch to the lounge another dark patch stained the wood and rug where Evans bled out. A whimper pulled Falkirk out of his musing to look at the other distressed Omega. Going over Falkirk slipped his hand into Keading's and gave a gentle squeeze.

Keading quietly moved about carefully not looking at the stains on the floor and walls. Going upstairs he entered one room asking Falkirk to do another and pointed to a door.
Entering Cody's room Falkirk started pulling out his little brother's clothing and folding them. When James appeared with some boxes Falkirk had built up several neat piles already of clothing and toys.

As Falkirk pulled back the covers of the small bed a silver bear tumbled out. James reached down picking up the stuffed animal placing it gently on the top of a pile, helping to sort out the remaining items before carefully packing them away for shipment.

Coming out Keading was standing in front of the last room in the house, Selene was whispering reassuring words. Knowing he would refuse but Falkirk had to offer, “Selene and I could...” as expected Keading interrupted with a sharp “No”

Falkirk's words spurred Keading into action, grasping the knob the door swung open. The room beyond looked like a bomb site, Keading's face crumpled at the sight and the fading scent of the dead Omega. Pushing forward he entered the room. “No!” Keading snapped when Selene was about to enter. Falkirk stepped forward and got a nod of consent, Keading not wanting the delicate scent of Omega oppressed by the stronger Alpha.

Looking to the far corner the clothes were piled oddly. Realising he was looking at the remnants of a nest Falkirk could understand why Luke kept the room as he did. Most of what he picked up was clean, just stored as a pile on the floor. Falkirk began folding.

Keading just sat at the side of the bed holding a shirt from the floor. “He never trusted you,” he said, voice hollow.

“In that, Luke was right,” Falkirk responded

“Worst mistake of my life,” Keading started, “Alphas don't want a bred Omega, at least not the ones I dealt with. Percy or whatever your father called himself was the first Alpha I was allowed to spend a heat with and I took the opportunity. He was my way out.”

“If Daddy had been allowed his own Omega, if he hadn't spent a heat with an Omega in Ireland, if he'd properly supported his offspring, if Sherlock had found Moran, if the CIA took my warning more seriously, if Evans knew who Moran was, if, if, if...” Falkirk rattled off coming to sit beside Keading. “Luke's death is not your fault.”

Laying his head on Falkirk's shoulder Keading stared at the yellow wall occasionally bringing up the shirt inhaling the lingering scent every so often. “You're late,” Keading mumbled looking at his watch.

“Admiral Greer can blow it out his own arse,” Falkirk retorted not too bothered about being polite.

“Go, Selene and I will finish up,” Keading insisted straightening up. Moving to start picking up clothes Keading waved Falkirk towards the door, reluctantly Falkirk stood and headed out. Turning back Falkirk watched the other Omega work for a few minutes before heading down stairs past Selene as she carried a box to the movers waiting by the door.

Arriving at the squat utilitarian building Falkirk was met by Jack Ryan again and escorted into the conference room. Falkirk felt positively dwarfed by the three inhabitants. Jack Wade was the smallest of the three, the imposing girth of Admiral Greer and the largest, a red haired, white Alpha male introduced as Senator Glenallen Walken. Falkirk looked to the innocent expression of the CIA Director and advisor to the President, they appeared to take no credit for the third man's presence. Leaning on the table with an ominous creak Walken held out his hand.
“Hello there son,” Walken said pleasantly.

Greer clearing his throat was enough of a warning to the politician to behave and correcting, “M.”

Lifting a coffee pot from the centre of the table Greer offered Falkirk a cup. Looking down to the slight mound of his stomach then back to Greer, “Thank you but I’ve been advised against it,” Falkirk responded, politely refusing when Greer offered something else.

From Falkirk’s briefcase he pulled out a pen drive sliding it across the table, “What we are willing to share on Easton and dataDyne,” he informed.

“No all of it?” Walken demanded.

“An entire section of your domestic intelligence service went rogue despite my personal warnings and that of MI6, both in my time as director and that of my predecessor. American agencies are hardly the bastion of trust at the moment. Put simply, there are things I don't trust being known,” Falkirk insisted. Walken's face became quite red before he calmed himself down.

“Now if you have finished treating the Director of MI6 as a pizza boy I have things that need doing,” Falkirk stated. Greer looked uncomfortable by the comment because there was no real reason for Falkirk to attend personally. If it hadn’t been for Keading and Wade, Falkirk would have not come at all.

Admiral Greer gave his thanks for Falkirk’s attendance. Picking up the pen drive from in front of the Admiral, Walken inspected the device. “We have to sweep that for...” the Admiral trailed off looking to Falkirk.

“It's clean, I've had access to most of your systems since I was 14,” Falkirk shot back. Walken banged the table with his fists as he stood.

“SIT DOWN LARD ARSE,” Falkirk snapped unimpressed by the show. Wade and Greer stood back, letting the politician go up against the person he had criticised the President for submitting to. Now it was his turn to face the Omega personally.

Falkirk fixed a hard look on the beady eyes, “Mary-Ann, catholic school girl, pigtails, the works,” Falkirk shot with a look of disgust before Walken could regain his dignity to respond.

“I have pictures,” Falkirk said pulling out his phone. A bright light shone from the back pointing the light to the table’s surface. The image of a young woman in the aforementioned Catholic School girl costume sat in the Senator's lap.

“I have more graphic ones,” he said addressing the Senator, “not even one of mine, I got the set from General Pushkin who got it from Director Lin,” Falkirk informed Greer.

The mention of Greer and Falkirk's counterpart in Russia and China were less than reassuring to the Director of the CIA. The Senator was unaware of what was happening but Greer and Wade knew. Falkirk was sharing more than what had been agreed, disguised as a posturing display, showing up a major security vulnerability that they didn't know of that Britain, Russia and China did.

Instructing the Senator to leave Falkirk waited until Greer backed him up and the politician was escorted out. “Two other pieces of information are doing the rounds, are we secure?” Falkirk said getting a nod from Greer.

“I am sorry to hear about your diagnosis, again not one of my direct sources” Falkirk said to the
Admiral. Nodding Greer asked Falkirk to continue.

“Apparently the President is suffering from MS,” Falkirk said looking to Wade. Both Wade and Greer looked surprised by the revelation. “His wife diagnosed him a few years ago and is believed to be treating him.”

“Shit,” Wade said speaking for the first time.

“Well you may as well know,” Greer said looking to Wade and Ryan, “pancreatic cancer,” the Admiral informed.

“I need a drink and not that tar,” Wade complained.

“Me too,” Greer added.

“I know just the place,” Falkirk said.

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“Well this is certainly unexpected,” Greer drawled as they entered the strip club.

The Omega that Falkirk had met on his very first time in the club gave him a brilliant smile from behind the bar. Automatically mixing a cocktail the Omega placed it in front of Falkirk by the time he reached the bar. Realising Falkirk was pregnant the Omega looked uncertain. “Thank you Brody, just a coke for me this time and bourbon for my guests,” Falkirk said over the quiet thrum of the music.

“Station N?” Greer asked looking round the establishment. The Early Thursday crowd was thin and quiet. It was mostly older men looking for companionship.

“No, I'm just patron of sorts,” Falkirk responded.

Returning with the bottle and a can Brody placed them on the bar, pulling out glasses as well, “Are we celebrating something?” the pretty blue eyed Omega asked.

“I'm dying,” Greer said and downed the glass in one. Falkirk was monumentally impressed by the heartbroken look and distressed sound Brody sent the Alpha. Brody kept buttering up the old Alpha throughout their visit. It didn't escape Falkirk's notice that a few of the recognisable dancers appeared too.

Falkirk hadn't intended to show face but since Paulik had suggested it he’d been thinking of a way. Finally Falkirk had decided if he couldn't sneak away from his no doubt hidden observers he would be brazen. There is nothing more brazen than walking into a strip club with the Director of the CIA and an Advisor to the President.

“Thanks for intervening at the house,” Falkirk said looking to Wade.

“That was me,” Greer interrupted tearing his gaze away from the bar tender.

The bottle of Bourbon slowly ran down. When it was empty Wade and James bundled Greer into a car. “See ya Kiddo, Jimbo,” Wade called, stiffly patting Falkirk's shoulder and getting in as well. Watching the car pull away James called for theirs.

“So you are back!” a harsh, overly loud nasal voice called. Looking over his shoulder a black haired Beta was leaning against the wall.
“Cindi? Carrie?” Falkirk tried to remember her stage name, another dancer who’d left the club a while ago for a new career.

“Max, you know it, use it,” the beta said supplying her real given name.

“How goes your patisserie?” Falkirk asked pleasantly, coming to lean against the wall next to her.

“Speak English!” Max snapped, exasperated.

“Cake shop?” Falkirk supplied.

“Oh, good. How did you know?” Max demanded quietly.

Giving a soft smile, “I’m stalking you,” Falkirk responded.

“Shut up,” Max said loudly in response. The pair continued to chat until Falkirk's car pulled up.

“Remember to fix a price before getting in,” Max called in a bad joke.

Entering the suite Selene and Keading were sitting on the couch wrapped in a blanket. Falkirk pulled off his tie and popping the waistcoat buttons headed straight for the stairs.

Stripping off Falkirk flopped down onto the bed, James gladly following the exhausted Omega. Pulling Falkirk into his arms James stroked the Omega's back until he drifted off to sleep.

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Sitting and watching the morning TV Keading looked up as a knock sounded. There was nothing planned for the day that Keading knew of and he didn't think they were expecting anyone. Getting up he approached the suite door looking through the peep hole. The short Omega on the other side was instantly recognisable.

He reached for the lock. “Stop!” Selene called from the stairs, jumping away from the door Keading dropped his head submissively.

“But...” Keading insisted gesturing to the door.

As James came out of his room, “It doesn’t matter who it is. Selene and I answer the door.”

Selene arrived at the door first and looked through the peephole getting a petulant, “Told you,” from Keading.

Telling James to go get Falkirk Selene pulled open the door, the Omega revealed greeted Selene pleasantly. “M will be down in a moment, Mr President,” she informed.

The President entered closely followed by Wade, the Alpha looking a little worse for wear after last night. Keading stuck close to Selene as the President engaged in small talk while they waited.

Coming out of the bedroom Falkirk was dressed in casual check woollen trousers and warm jumper. Moving to meet them at the bottom of the stairs the President held out his hand to Falkirk saying, “Hello, there.” The President repeated the gesture with James as well, with a slight blush for the Alpha who saved him.

Wade tapped Selene's arm asking quietly, “I don't suppose you have any coffee about?”

“Oh only filter,” Keading responded.
With a wink the suffering Alpha said, “Good lad, black and sweet please,” as Keading moved to the coffee machine behind the bar.

Selene asked if anyone else wanted anything while Keading supplied Wade with his drink. Pouring the other drinks, Selene acted as waiter. Wade sat at the table cradling his head out of the direct line of sight of the President.

“Jack?” Bartlett called looking over his shoulder to Wade, “how damaging is this, the Chinese and Russians?”

Wade had called the President's Chief of Staff to confirm Falkirk's titbit and suddenly the man wanted to see Falkirk before he left so Wade was pulled from his alcohol induced suffering to play chaperone.

“You said it was doing the rounds?” Wade asked looking to Falkirk. Getting an affirmation Wade explained, “It's posturing 'Look at what we have', eventually it will leak into the public.”

“By the way nice scans, Kiddo,” Wade added looking to Falkirk. The early scans of the baby already entering the gossip of the world's secret services.

Giving a cryptic smile, “Who said they're mine and I really hope you didn't copy the original digital file,” Falkirk said. Wade just shook his head before cradling in with a groan of pain.

Bartlett looked less than pleased with his private information being used for show boating between the world's agencies. “All secrets eventually come out,” Falkirk stated as sympathetically as possible.

“Kiddo is there something not making the rounds?” Wade asked looking to hammer home to the idealist how secrets were always about. Falkirk thought a moment as there were a few he knew of but he would prefer to give something not too detrimental to the UK.

“An Israeli source has proof you personally ordered the assassination of Abdul Sheriff.” As that was as much proof as Falkirk had he didn't think it a problem to reveal. The President was now cradling his head as well at his war crime.

“The Prime Minister executed two agents and buried them in shallow graves,” Wade said gaining the President's attention.

“That one's already done the rounds,” Falkirk dismissed. Falkirk and Wade fell into good natured banter of bits and pieces from other countries.

“I don't think I like spies,” the President admitted cutting through the banter.

Seeing and scenting Bartlett entering an un-presidential and very Omega distressed state, “Would you like to be godmother?” James asked. Getting a look from the omega as if he had just sprouted another head, “You were the first to scent it, it's traditional,” James argued.

No one could say no quite like a politician. It took Bartlett five minutes to even mention someone closer to the pack being more suitable. Eventually Falkirk took pity and mentioned about Daniel or Selene, James already declaring Alec as one.

Bartlett jumped on the suggestion looking to the Alpha behind him. Falkirk looked to the man to see why the President had gone quiet and a frown had appeared. “Jack?” Falkirk called at the bashful hesitant look on Wade's face.
From his inside pocket Wade pulled out a letter and handed it to the President. Looking to Falkirk, “We have been trying to figure out how to get you alone, kiddo. We would like to discuss something with you.”

The President's voice broke in, “You want me to be a hostage?”

Falkirk looked between the annoyed politician reading over the letter and his old friend. Wade adding, “We don't know what is up with your glasses but they have to stay.”

The president, James and Selene said a variation of 'No' Falkirk looked at the bombastic Texan, the frown still in place from his hangover but more aware than when he first arrived. In the pit of his stomach Falkirk still trusted his contact who’d been there since before his joining MI6. Despite the glasses not being the ones with the heads up display Falkirk placed them on the table.

Looking to James and Selene and in the voice he used as M ordered, “If I do not return, release the President.”

“Most gracious,” the President said.

After getting his shoes, not allowed to take a phone or any other electronic device, Falkirk took Wade's arm and the Alpha escorted him from the suite.

The streets of New York passed in a short sighted blur to Falkirk. They seemed to travel for a while, over bridges and into rundown suburban areas then industrial. The factory looked closed down as they moved through the driveway, the large concrete building, falling and partly collapsed. The limousine entered onto a metal grate and with a shudder the section of metal floor the car was parked on descended. The car then moved off along the subterranean tunnel.

Now it didn't matter that Falkirk couldn't see, it was just grey concrete corridor not much wider than the car. Suddenly the tunnel ended and they were in a large and well lit car park. Wade needed to give Falkirk his arm as they walked again.

They came upon a set of glass doors, beyond was a nice foyer with marbled floors. Seeing them approach the upright glass cylinders of the scanners, Falkirk pulled back, “I'm not going through one of them.”

“Okay kiddo, they're safe,” Wade reassured and led him between the low yield x-ray machines.

Waiting for them were three blurs from Falkirk's point of view. Soon the scent of the first was familiar enough to be recognised as Jack Ryan. The next held a scent identifying him as a mature Alpha male. He had a soft grumbling voice, introducing himself as the record keeper and handed over a pair of glasses. Accepting the square plastic frames, the world sharpened into focus. Thanking him Falkirk turned his attention to the man in a wheelchair. Now he could see him clearly he recognised the American equivalent of the Double O, an Ultra. “Frank Moses?” Falkirk greeted offering his hand.

“M,” came the bald Alpha's gruff response.

Falkirk looked about the windowless marbled hallways, still light and airy despite being underground. He followed Ryan, the record keeper having returned after giving Falkirk the glasses. “So what is this?”

Wade nudged him, “Just our Station N. Well we can't have the world knowing where we really do the work I'm sure London is the same. I can't see you doing the real work of MI6 in that tourist attraction.”
Falkirk looked at the taller man with a confused frown, “We do everything from MI6 but I might say MI6 is more of an Iceberg than it appears.” The Alpha chuckled and asked what was below the surface as Falkirk teasingly avoided the question.

Entering a round conference room Wade pulled out a chair for Falkirk and sat beside him. Ryan started, “Double O Seven didn't recognise the name but I'm sure you have now at least researched it.”

Falkirk nodded, “Red October, a submarine you apparently sunk in the mid 90s.”

Wade and Ryan exchanged glances. Eventually Ryan sagged and said, “You are tight lipped but I suspect you know more, well for the record we think dataDyne was aware if they raised the submarine it would not be the Red October they found. At this point it’s believed dataDyne were trying to pull Russia into a war with the proof we obtained Red October and half our fleet use its silent propulsion system, the caterpillar drive.”

“Britain will want the drives now you have admitted to having them,” Falkirk said. Wade agreed, technology sharing a long established and key point to the alliance between the countries since the Second World War.

Then the meeting turned to the other attendee as Moses gave a debriefing of his time in Dubai. Hearing again how 008 lost her life was hard but Falkirk had been over the other reports. “Is Mr Moses' presence the reason there was no security footage from the building?”

Wade gave a small and worried shake of the head, they nor MI6 were responsible for the lack of video footage. “Have you Identified the Russian Mr Moses encountered?” Falkirk asked.

“No,” Ryan said. Speculation was batted back and forth, was the Russian the one to organise dataDyne? Was he the one in charge? Was he just taking advantage? And above all who was he?

Thanking Moses and Ryan Falkirk followed Wade out stuffing his hands in his cardigan pockets not having bothered to dress professionally for the importuned outing. “Can we never have a victory and have it settled? Why does one disaster always bleed into another?”

The big Alpha put an arm around him, “Law of nature. When someone strikes, someone else will chance their luck.”

When they returned to the suite the President was sat at the dining table with Selene across from him, a chess board between them. James lounged on the couch with Keading who’d hesitantly approached the Alpha for comfort. The moment Falkirk entered Keading broke away from James with a bashful look.

Falkirk smiled happy to see the other Omega assimilating into the pack. Hopefully it would help ease his decision to stay in London and be part of their group.

The small omega thanked Selene for the game and moving to Falkirk, extended his hand, “For a hostage I wasn't treated too badly,” he said trying to make light of the situation.

“Well, Mr President, for being kidnapped neither was I,” Falkirk returned.

“Mr President,” Keading called softly suddenly bashful under the scrutiny of the room, “nice to meet you,” he said with his head down.

Extending his hand “Nice to meet you, son” Bartlett said pleasantly. Shaking the President’s hand Keading gave a small smile before retreating to Selene's side.
Wade gave a pat to Falkirk's back saying, “Kiddo,” as he disappeared out of the door following Bartlett.

Selene closed the door behind them. “Not exactly Urquhart's calibre is he,” she said.

Shrugging Falkirk picked up a menu to see what he wanted for lunch. “Kind of nice not having to deal with a psychopath, isn't it?” Falkirk responded absently.

After lunch Selene and Keading went to see the Omega's sister leaving James and Falkirk in the suite. Restless, Falkirk and James argued over what they could do, eventually James grabbed Falkirk's hand and ushered him towards the door. Not knowing where his Alpha was taking him Falkirk sat back waiting to arrive at their destination.

Arriving at a pier James paid for the tickets, Falkirk lazing by the window of the boat as it took tourists to Liberty Island. Spending the day as typical sightseers, taking in the tourist attractions James played the perfect gentleman. They entered a restaurant for dinner, the maître d' turned up his nose at Falkirk's casual attire, however no longer caring about the opinion of strangers Falkirk barely acknowledged the man.

Returning to the suite they found Keading and Selene wrapped in a blanket. Keading looked away from the movie to Falkirk hesitantly lifting part of the blanket. Taking the invitation Falkirk slipped in beside the other Omega, the calming mix of scents Falkirk identified as safe, relaxing him as James wedged himself on his other side.

A thought niggled Falkirk despite the reassuring presences beside him, realising something was missing then understanding someone or more precisely ones were missing. “Can we do this back home, with Daniel and Alec, Cody too?” Falkirk asked dreamily.

First Keading made a mumbling assent as James leaned down pressing his lips to Falkirk's exposed neck, “Anything,” he promised. Selene just made an affirmative sound. Absently Falkirk asked about Keading's sister struggling to listen to his mumbling responses, the warm comfortable and safe feeling robbing Keading and Falkirk of their focused thoughts.

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Quickly, too quickly for Falkirk's liking they returned to the airport. As it would be Sunday morning in London when they arrived Falkirk ditched the formal suit in favour of a pair of warm woollen trousers and diamond patterned cardigan. James continued to tease the Omega on his personal fashion sense. Falkirk shot back about the Aviator sunglasses that the Alpha liked but didn't suit him, especially the god awful white ones. Falkirk had snapped more than a few pairs in his time but James just bought a new pair every time he passed through a duty free.

Arriving at the airport Wade was waiting for them in the private section looking better than the last time Falkirk saw him but still not his usual boisterous self. It turned out the Alpha was just there to see Falkirk off. “Greer is cursing your existence,” Wade informed.

“Tell Greer he's a lightweight and when I'm capable I will drink him under the table, personally,” Falkirk shot back.

Saying their goodbyes Wade shuffled off while Falkirk and James went through security. James clamped an arm around Falkirk guiding them to the private lounge. Selene and Keading were already seated with drinks and magazines in hand. “Do you recognise where we are?” James whispered. Reluctantly looking about the room Falkirk shook his head.
“I take it we came through here with M,” Falkirk guessed. The only event of note occurring in an airport lounge, being the return after Falkirk's kidnapping at age 15.

James nodded with a wistful smile. Suddenly thumping the Alpha in the arm, “You bought me that stupid teen magazine,” Falkirk complained and James just gave a snort of a laugh.

On the return journey Keading was considerably calmer but Falkirk on the other had tucked himself under James' arm. Practice had stopped Falkirk from physically reacting but his scent and the small flinches were still present every time he flew.

Touching down in London Falkirk's car was waiting for them, driving into the city proper the car headed for a familiar town house. A large man sat on the step of the front door, a plume of thick smoke rising from behind a broad sheet.

“Good trip Laddie?” Daniel said without having to looking up.

“Yes,” Falkirk responded pleasantly. Closing the paper Daniel tapped out the contents of his pipe and stood leading the group into the house. “Maloney ran for the hills yesterday, Evans the day before.”


“Aye Lad the poppet's fine,” Daniel reassured.

Walking through the hall James split off at the sound of Alec shouting at the TV. Giving a rundown of Cody's time there Daniel informed that the child got distressed when he realised what it meant to be in a different country to his Papa. “Maloney saw him through it,” Daniel added.

He led the group to the stairs and down into the kitchen where a soft feminine voice could be heard, “There and put it on the tray,” Mary instructed the child sitting on the counter top.

Duly Cody lifted the cut out scone placing it on the baking tray before he squealed “Mommy!” and jumped down racing towards Keading.

“I don't think I can blame Double O Nine,” Falkirk whispered to Daniel before greeting Daniel's grandmother. Stepping round Keading and Cody Falkirk walked up to Mary.

“Oh dear,” she said with a pleasant smile, “off your feet, I'll put the kettle on” insisting, seeing Falkirk's swollen belly and his lingering distressed scent mingling with his pregnant undertones.

Mary quickly finished cutting out the scones and put them in the oven. Daniel was given his orders as Falkirk and the others sat round the table. Giving her grandson a tray she instructed him to take it to Alec. Shuffling back and forth and refusing offers of assistance Mary laid out the tea.

“Bloody jessies, football, waste of bloody time,” Daniel grumbled on his return.

Calling Cody over Mary whispered to the child for a moment. Coming out from behind the counter carrying a plate with two cooling scones Cody returned to his Papa with as much eloquence as a five year old could muster he explained he had made them. With Keading's help Cody placed the plate on the table before he grabbed one of the scones off the plate. Walking round his Papa to Selene Cody placed the scone directly on the table in front of her and returned to his Papa.

“Someone approves,” Falkirk observed of the young Alpha’s actions. Keading ducked his head, red tingeing is cheeks even Selene looked a bit bashful. It was no secret Selene had offered, Keading had accepted and was now living with her.
Finishing the tea Daniel showed Keading upstairs to pack the boy's belongings. Selene and Cody followed leaving Falkirk and Mary alone. “Who was that nice boi who was staying here?” Mary asked

“Nathan Maloney, he was helping out with Cody,” Falkirk informed and waited for the inevitable question, “Does he often stay?” Mary asked casually.

Shaking his head, “No, Nathan was just a familiar presence for Cody,” Falkirk said. Looking a bit disappointed Mary started clearing the table, again dismissing Falkirk's offers of help.

“I wish he would find a good boi,” Mary muttered to herself moving about the kitchen.

At the front door Cody stood before the old Omega stretching his neck in invitation. Leaning down Cody gave Mary a quick nuzzle and stepped back. “Little charmer,” she said ruffling the soft hair.

Arriving at the block of high rise flats where Selene and now Keading lived, Selene pulled the bags from the boot and headed for the door. Waving to the retreating group Falkirk got into the car beside James. Finally a little under a week since leaving, Falkirk and James walked up the steps to their front door.

Before either Falkirk or James could pull out a key the door swung open, their butler Hudson standing back to welcome them home.

“Uncle Falkirk,” David called from the dining room getting an admonishment from his father for shouting.

John appeared at the entrance of the dining room welcoming Falkirk and James back. It was lucky James had furnished all the rooms as Sherlock and John had moved in while 221B Baker Street was being rebuilt.

While David's condition was still being monitored he and his father Shane had moved in as well. Falkirk could admit it was nice to have a full house as he’d missed Alec when he moved out.
Arrival Arc: The Royal Visit

Chapter Summary

MI6 receives a royal visit. And Mycroft gains a new weapon against the Prime Minister, if he can learn to use it.

Chapter Notes

A few notes.

After posting the first chapter I counted how many there were to post of 'And then, the Justice' in total. Given a once weekly scheduled that would be over a year. So I talked with my Beta to discuss times and schedules. We came to an agreement that she would concentrate on the shorter stories. So this won't be proof read after this chapter. I will also try to get the chapters out a little faster.

If anyone wishes to help improve the reading experience for others. I am always open to volunteers. And you will get to read fics ahead of them being posted.

I have also joined Tumler http://fanficfanblog.tumblr.com where I can also be contacted. Currently just a sneak peek at a more recent fic that I'm editing.

So thanks to dragon_fire for the work she has done for this and on the previous instalment. And thanks for the work she still does for my other fics.

Falkirk stood in the foyer of MI6, Darren and Tanner beside him along with the senior London based brass. Through the glass Falkirk could see the black Jaguar pull to a stop. The Prime minister exercising his own curiosity accepted Falkirk's invitation to accompany the young King during his tour.

“Remember to curtsy. God if my da' or grandda' saw me bow to an English King they would be spinning in their graves,” Darren said as they watched the young teenager enter.

The young man who stepped through the door was about the same age as Falkirk when he first entered the building, the blond wavy hair and blue eyes making the young Alpha quite handsome despite his adolescent disproportionate physique. “Did they have to get permission to take him out of school?” Tanner whispered. Darren answered, shaking his head and mentioning summer holidays.

Guiding the King to Falkirk the Prime Minister introduced them. Giving the young Alpha a sharp nodding bow Falkirk welcomed him to MI6.

Starting with Executive Branch the King didn't hide his boredom very well. Used to the Double Os Falkirk moved through the administration section fairly quickly with a cursory point to Medical as
they passed before heading onto the physical training section. A long two story corridor with training rooms, gyms, pools and even a range coming off it. Urquhart observed on the size of Falkirk's domain.

Suitably impressed by the training operatives running through a simulation of an assault on an urban property Urquhart subtly discouraged the King when he voiced a desire to run the course himself.

Moving on the tour came to Q branch. Falkirk showed the group into the motor pool first. Grimshaw the head mechanic took over the lecture demonstrating an old BMW that had survived its time with a Double O.

Grimshaw held out the fob to the King instructing him to press the alarm button twice. Doing as instructed the car at the far end of the space bleeped and revved its engine. Quite quickly for the enclosed space the car speed towards them avoiding the people and equipment scattered about, coming to a stop a meter away from the King, engine idling at the ready. “It will follow like a well behaved dog, good for a hasty get away,” the mechanic informed.

The King seemed suitably impressed for something that was remarkable when first deployed but now was being tested in the USA for the commercial market.

Falkirk knew the system had been dropped after the mission where a British operative and Chinese agent had a run in. The Chinese agent was able to override the self drive system sending the car full speed into a wall. The technology was then sold to the private market to raise some cash.

Next came the armoury where the King got to shoot some targets at a ridiculously close range so as not to hurt his pride. The King asked about the best shot, Falkirk informing that Q currently held that accolade.

“And the Second highest?” Urquhart asked with a knowing gleam in his eye. Answering, the King seemed to think it was a joke until no one found it amusing, not even Urquhart gave his typical placating half smile.

“Perhaps a small demonstration,” Urquhart drawled.

Not knowing what the PM was up to but trusting the man enough Falkirk picked up a PPK from one of the cabinets. Unhooking his prescription goggles Falkirk replaced his glasses. “Always wondered what they were for,” Johnson, the ex Double O and Armoury chief said looking at the goggles.

Setting an automatic target program and loading the weapon Falkirk readied himself, three pips sounded and the first target dropped. Hitting dead centre another target dropped down. There was one target for every round and Falkirk had to hit dead centre in order to move on to the next. Falkirk could run the program with his eyes closed after spending endless nights helping to create and test them.

Looking to the side, behind the glass wall Urquhart had the malicious half smile in place while the king looked offended by Falkirk's performance. Coming out Falkirk handed the gun to Johnston to deal with and replaced his glasses.

Moving the tour on Falkirk led the King into fabrication where they made the in house gadgets. Letting the King play with the toys and with the Alpha amusing himself in front of the blinking
lights Falkirk came up beside the PM. “I hope that demonstration wasn’t detrimental to myself,” Falkirk said quietly.

“You have no idea how much I want to put that boy into your custody for a while,” Urquhart responded softly.

“Wilful?” Falkirk asked tactically.

“Arrogant, doesn’t know he’s being used half the time. Every friend he has is there by their parents manoeuvrings,” Urquhart said with a sneer.

“Needs a bit of stick about them?” Falkirk responded pleasantly.

“Precisely,” Urquhart said with a pleased smile to the Omega.

Taking the tour into Q branch administration the King froze at Daniels imposing form looming over the group. Hands clasped at the small of his back and standing ramrod straight an instinctual gesture the Alpha didn't consider anyone in front of him a threat. Falkirk introduced the King to the Quartermaster.

“I seem to remember that one,” Urquhart whispered to Falkirk. Insisting the Alpha was harmless Urquhart just raised a quizzical brow at the response of the Omega. “I think our definitions of harmless differ.”

Daniel explained the workings of administration before inviting the King into an operation support suite. Going into the small theatre through the back Daniel invited the group to take a seat. The screen in front of them split into sections each showing a different view of a compound. Urquhart and Falkirk sat behind the King in the front row. Falkirk leant forward, “We are attempting to apprehend a man responsible for an attack on a British destroyer exiting the Suzie Canal,” he informed the King.

Getting a curious look from the Prime Minister Falkirk gave a reassuring smile. It was just a training exercise on Gibraltar to snatch a bad guy. The King didn't even ask why it was being done in broad daylight where an enemy could see the assault helicopter coming miles away. There was everything a teenager brought up on spy movies could want. Free running across roof tops and muzzle flashes, the only thing missing was a fight on the roof of a train. Eventually the Operative caught up to the baddy taking him down with a rugby tackle.

“Shoot him,” The King whispered as if he was watching a movie.

Annoyed with the casual disregard for life, even for an enemy it was dishonourable. Falkirk looked to the Prime Minister who wore the same look of concern at the teenager's attitude. James had once put it 'An operative needs to know when to not pull the trigger'.

“Even the worst human is still a human. The moment you treat them as anything less you lose any righteousness and integrity,” Falkirk admonished

Spinning in his seat, “Listen boi...” the King got in before Falkirk's glare intensified and he trailed off.

“I am M and you will address me as such at all times,” Falkirk said tone cold and hard. The not so cocky teenager nodded and Falkirk raised a challenging eyebrow.
“Yes M, sorry,” the King said quietly breaking eye contact and lowering his head exposing his neck.

“Accepted,” Falkirk said tone warm and soft.

If anyone outside of Falkirk, Urquhart and the King heard they made a good show of ignoring the proceedings. With a hand from the Prime Minister Falkirk was able to push his bigger bulk up with a slight groan. Daniel joined the group as it headed for the Double O section.

The round central chamber with the nine double O seats angled to the table where M would sit had been laid out with wine and finger foods for their royal guest. Elizabeth, the PM's wife and a few of the non vetted friends of the King milled about with Evans, Maloney and Alec now out of his casts but still walking carefully.

Introducing the King to the three Double Os only by their number, the king seemed surprised that there was a Beta and an Omega amongst the MI6 elite. “We are not an equal opportunities employer, proven ability and experience trump sex, gender, ethnicity and background. Sometimes that means they are purely Alpha male but other times like now there is a mix” Falkirk said by way of explanation.

Looking to the Prime Minister Falkirk asked if he was serious about him conscripting the King. The teenager looked panicked at the prospect, “I think he's a bit young,” Urquhart insisted.

“Poppycock, I was fifteen when I was conscripted,” Falkirk argued before adding, “Give me the boy and I will return the man.”

The King hesitantly protested but he knew Urquhart had been the guiding force behind his reign since his Father's abdication. There was little he could do for his mapped out future.

“M,” Alec greeted handing Falkirk grape juice in a wine glass. Taking pity on the fidgeting teenager Alec guided him over to the buffet asking about Eton their mutual school.

“Looks terrified. Is that what you were wanting?” Falkirk asked Urquhart.

Getting a pleased half smile and a single nod of the head in response, “You might very well say that.”

Moving on to the other guests, a tinge of regret came for the King, his mother gone his father in exile, being pulled one way then the other and now he had frightened him for no good reason. A thought came to mind, Falkirk slipped his hand into his pocket and pulled up his HUD. Composing a quick message he sent it to Alec while the King was still in the company of a friendly face.

Watching the Double O Falkirk saw him read the message and replace the phone. With the skill and subtlety of a Double O Alec dropped the information on the King. Falkirk saw a look of hope cross the young man's face. With the seed having been planted Falkirk approached Elizabeth Urquhart having a pleasant conversation with her. Unfortunately he quickly became aware of his tiring body, the aches and pains starting to grow after traipsing around the substantial building.

“Olivia will be spinning in her grave, parties in MI6,” the gravelly voice of Admiral Roebuck said coming up to Falkirk. Greeting the First Sea Lord the old man looked at Falkirk's stomach, “So it's bloody true!”
Falkirk admitted to having heard a rumour about the Admiral's retirement. The Admiral in turn admitted the truth in the rumour. Falkirk wound up the conversation as quickly as possible and took Double O One's chair as the only one free almost sighing in relief as the weight was taken from his legs.

Maloney appeared beside Falkirk, the Double O had endured a monumental amount of teasing from Alec and James about running away from a little old woman. Falkirk and Daniel sympathised having bore the brunt of the woman's concerned intentions.

When the King's schedule dictated it was time to go it was with great relief that Falkirk escorted him to the foyer. Retreating to his office he then sat in one of the softer waiting area chairs outside with Darren. Propping his feet up, Falkirk asked for a cup of the awful herbal tea Darren had been supplying him. Darren also brought Falkirk's laptop so he could work from the more comfortable chair.

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Returning home Shane and David were just sitting down to dinner. Sherlock and John had returned to Baker Street a few days before. John was outwardly upset at returning to the building Mrs Hudson had left them while Sherlock was unnaturally quiet. Mycroft had surmised it was a point of honour for the pair to return, showing they would not be driven out.

Taking his place at the foot of the table Mr Hudson placed a plate in front of him. Thanking the Alpha Falkirk picked up the knife and fork starting to eat. David had been very subdued lately realising the extent of his injuries and mourning his mother's death. It didn't help that he was in a coma when she was buried.

David wanted to return home but his continuing medical needs where more paramount. He liked to hear about his family, especially form Mr Hudson who could remember his father when he was young.

Moving onto dessert Falkirk drowned the jam roly poly in the cheap custard he had been craving lately. Hudson moved to answer the door at the sound of the bell.

“Master Mycroft,” Hudson informed showing the brother in question into the dining room.

Asking if he wished to join them Mycroft took one look at Falkirk's stodgy desert and declined just taking a seat to Falkirk's right and across from Shane.

Mycroft looked to his younger brother, “I have had a clandestine meeting with the King. Have you and Urquhart been bulling him?” Mycroft asked casually.

“He is the King, arrogant with little experience of boundaries. He needs knocking back or there will be trouble,” Falkirk informed. Mycroft probably knew already but Falkirk continued, “If he wasn't so open to manipulation he would not have reacted to Alec dropping your name as the only open opposition to Urquhart or myself.”

The tight uplift of the side of Mycroft's mouth in his typical approximation of a smile was enough of an answer to Falkirk, he did know or at least suspected.

“What am I going to do with a child?” Mycroft complained.
“Welcome to my world,” Falkirk shot back before pushing his empty plate back into position.

“Give him an expectation to meet and surpass,” Shane offered.

As Hudson cleared the table and brought coffee while Mycroft mused over possibilities.

“Dump him in the army. He can learn it's not all like the movies at least.” Falkirk argued.

“University.” Mycroft reminded, “A King needs to be seen to have a modicum of intelligence and wisdom.”

“He sounds a thick as two short planks,” Shane said

“So he can either fail, be caught cheating or add to the reputation of the upper class being handed degrees from prestigious universities,” Falkirk added

Finishing his coffee Mycroft said his goodbyes. It didn't surprise Falkirk a few days later that the King would be forgoing his further education to join the army. The quote from the King expressing his desire to follow his mentor’s footsteps into the Scots Guards. Going into Francis Urquhart's old regiment was a master stroke on Mycroft's part appeasing the Alpha's ego.
Dispatching the ex-deep cover agent, Evans on her inaugural Double O mission. Nothing too difficult for the Beta woman but that was relative, Falkirk didn't think it would be a simple assassination, if it was they could have hired a local thug to do the job for them. She had to go to station C in Cypress, find the honeypot and get rid of her and the contact in the MI6 outpost who was giving the secrets away.

After the woman had left. Coming into his office Darren placed a small envelop on Falkirk's desk. Picking up the heavy ivory paper Falkirk opened it revealing a gold embossed invitation. When Falkirk looked up the wiry haired Omega was back at his desk, the fall of that dark hair hiding the hazel eyes, deliberately not looking at him.

With a groan Falkirk pushing himself up. He felt rather ungainly as he waddle a bit on his way to Darren's desk. Taking one of the chairs used for the waiting guests. The Irish omega fidgeted nervously before saying, “You don't have to come.”

“James and I would love to.” Falkirk reassured before asking who else he had invited, getting a shrug in response.

“Politicians, military mostly Gareth's friends and family” came the quiet Irish drawl.

Knowing the other Omega had been used as a sacrificial lamb to compromise Mallory. Falkirk didn't expect Darren's family to attend. But Falkirk had thought he knew he had friends here, beyond Falkirk himself.

“Well Selene will come and Keading liked you.” Falkirk prompted before adding Tanner and a few of the office workers to the list. “Oh! Double O Five, he'd never forgive you, I think he has a bit of a crush. Double Oh Four's fond of you, Alec and Daniel.” Falkirk added.

“You think they will come?” Darren asked quietly at the expanding list.

“Of course” Falkirk reassured knowing Darren's brash unpolished charm had won him friends along with the dismissive sneers and condescending glances from others.

“Ewan!” Falkirk snapped remembering the Omega from Q branch who supplied Darren with gossip and by proxy Falkirk.

“Oh, yeah.” Darren responded remembering the Omega in question.

“If you invite him you're going to have to invite Peter.” Falkirk added getting a curious look. “They have not giving official notification but he and Peter have been at it like a pair of bunnies since before I was Q.” Falkirk informed.
“No!” Darren responded shaking his head not believing the gossip could keep something like that quiet.

Making a small ‘ooh’ Darren looked over Falkirk's shoulder. Turning to see what he was looking at. James sauntered into E branch with a bouquet laying across his arm. Dressed in a typical light grey suit. The Alpha approached Falkirk and handed him the flowers.

With great difficulty Falkirk kept the silly smile off his face. “Welcome back Double O Seven, Thank you.” Falkirk said. Extending his hand so James could help pull him up Falkirk walked back to his office. Not making an overtly unprofessional move James followed his mate suppressing the desire to drag him into a corner and growl at anyone who approached.

Offering James the bottle he kept behind his desk. James poured himself a bourbon. James hung about Falkirk's office until he could call it a day. Despite James' presence Selene still had to escort the Director of MI6 home.

Selene waving at them as the car pulled away Falkirk turned to the door James' arm now secured around his waist. In synchronised steppes they climbed the stair to the door. Falkirk didn't know how the man did it but as with every night before the door swung open, Hudson standing ready to take Falkirk's coat. Also taking James'.

Walking forward Falkirk passed through the second door on his left and into the lounge. James followed coming to sit on the couch beside his mate. Placing his arm around Falkirk as he nuzzled him. Stroking the ever expanding stomach James breathed in the scent that exhilarated and pacified him at the same time.

“Dinner is served.” Hudson said from the doorway. James seemed surprised that a strange Alpha's presence didn't set him off. Nodding James pulled the Omega to his feet guiding him the the Dining room, Shane and David already seated.

The meal passed with some casual conversation until Shane informed Falkirk, that he and David would be going to Yorkshire for a few days. Not unexpected Falkirk offered any help which the Alpha declined.

At the end of dinner Falkirk gave up all pretence and ate just the cheap custard letting the others have something else. After he had finished James escorted Falkirk up stairs letting the Omega rest for a while before drawing a bath. Striping Falkirk's pliant body James carried the Omega to the bathroom. Stepping down into the bath James sat with Falkirk in his lap. Running his soap covered hands over Falkirk's skin. James paid close attention to the rounded belly fascinated by the Omega's changing body, so much bigger from when he left. Falkirk had dozed off his head resting on James' shoulder. Finishing washing his mate James pulled the plug letting the bath drain. Pulling a towel round Falkirk James dried him off before picking him up and taking him back to bed.

Making sure the mop of hair was dry. James climbed in beside his mate and pulled up the quilt. Enjoying watching his mate sleep. Nose to nose. James took in the tightening and relaxing of the muscles around the closed eyes. Combing his thick finger through the dark hair that was draying in a mane, the strands soft but somehow able to stand. With a kiss to the dark lips, James pulled his Omega closer and tucked him under his chin and held him. Feeling the expansion and contraction of Falkirk's deep breaths. The warmth of the body and the press of the round stomach against his side.

Slowly the mission faded. The self preservation and exhilaration that kept him alive as he greeted
and played nice with a weapons merchant that supplied any passing regime now became second to
the welfare of his Omega and Pup. The passion as he seduced the Weapon dealer's wife replaced
with a comfort of just being with his Omega. The Alcohol that saw him to sleep and the pills that
kept him alert, he had neither on his return.

Without realising it James fell asleep, absently rubbing his cheek against the top of his mate's head.

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Reading over the document. The Beta woman sitting across from him. The peroxide short back and
side had gone, the hair still short and a little masculine but back to its natural light brown. Her dark
blue trouser suit was professional, and Falkirk hadn't noticed if there was a gun at the small of her
back, but there definitely wasn't one under the short jacket. She had accomplished her mission with
none of the usual flare or posturing associated with the Double Os. Evans was positively boring
compared to the others. “Congratulation Double O Eight,” Falkirk said. Assigning her the official
downtime Falkirk dismissed the newest Double O.

Pushing himself up Falkirk walked through E branch. Waving Selene away she didn't take note
and followed at a distance. Coming to the lobby Falkirk approached the memorial wall. Falkirk had
attended the small funeral but this was the first time he had come to the wall as he had done with
every Operative and personnel he had lost.

Speaking to the carved name Falkirk thanked Joanna for her assistance in apprehending her target.
Not very professional as he swiped a tear, Falkirk could see some of the glances being sent his
way. M was meant to be a rock, unflinching and unemotional. With a final brush to the carved
name he returned to the office.

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He had visited Sally Donovan's mother and Charles Robinson's children and fiancée. Falkirk had
one other visit to make. But so far they had refused a meeting.

The car pulled to a stop in front of a semi detached house. Falkirk stepped through the waist high
gate. The front door was pulled open and an Alpha came out. “He will not see you.” That older
alpha said.

“Give Mr MacFarlane my best.” Falkirk said and returned to his waiting car.

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With James acting as valet, the pervert running his hands over him, Falkirk dressed in his altered
top hat and tails. The Alpha turned and James cupped his cheek. “You look beautiful,” James
purred.

Falkirk ducked his head at the praise. Deep down felling a bit like a blimp on legs. His chin was
tipped up and knew the look in the Alpha's eye. “We can't, we'll be late.” Falkirk breathed just
before their lips met again.

“It's just the King, not like it's anyone important.” James said, pulling back and moving his lips to
the column of the delicate neck.

With a groaning hiss, Falkirk ducked out and pulled away. James came up to his side and wrapped
an arm around him. Giving the Omega a smile, promising they would pick up where they left off.

The car arrived to take Falkirk and James to the palace. Waiting in line until 'Thomas McLair' was
called. Walking out Falkirk knelt in front of the young King. A sword came down tapping Falkirk on each shoulder.

Standing, the King handed over a medal and leaned in to Falkirk. “So you do have a name.” the King said petulantly.

“Yes your Majesty, but that wasn't it and it's still M to you.” Falkirk said pleasantly wiping the smirk from the teenager's face. Stepping back another name was called.

Keading who had come as a guest, looking wondrous in the close cut tailors morning suit. The American omega may have been nervous but knew how to hold himself even in the formal wear. “That was a bit boring.” Keading proclaimed with Falkirk and James agreeing.

As Falkirk explained to the American the new Honour, a Knight of the Garter(KG), meant he was now a very senior Knight who used the title Sir. A name was called. Falkirk's attention snapped up. Approaching the King was the Papa of Falkirk's deceased half brother. Being given the posthumous Military Cross the sandy haired Omega spoke softly with the king for a moment. “He kept his word.” Falkirk said referring to a conversation he had had with the Prime Minister when he was in hospital.

Waiting for the ceremony to complete Falkirk moved to the court yard. Seeing the Omega he was looking for Falkirk approached with James at his elbow. “Mr MacFarlane?” Falkirk called. The Omega turned and instantly recognised Falkirk. The Alpha pulled the Omega behind him, giving Falkirk a glare for approaching again. James released a low warning growl, the older Alpha's eyes slipped to James and released his own growl.

“My mate has no idea who you are.” Falkirk warned gaining the hostile glare. Falkirk could sense James tensing beside him in response to the unknown Alpha's threat. Dropping into a submissive stance, with head bowed and neck bared, Falkirk pulled his arms behind him exposing his torso. “I just want to speak to your mate?” Falkirk asked making his tone as soft and non authoritative as possible.

“No one will tell me anything!” Sammy MacFarlane accused from behind his Alpha.

“I can give you that. I will tell you, but not here,” Falkirk responded. Conscious of the public setting and a few reporters there to get pictures and stories from those receiving an honour.

“Where?” Barry MacFarlane said. Giving an address the pair looked at each other. Sammy hopeful, his Alpha nodded. They made arrangements to go there directly. Selene followed the MacFarlanes while Falkirk's car took James, Keading and Falkirk straight to MI6.

Falkirk and Keading where in the small kitchenette attached to E branch. James waited at the visitor parking area for their guests. Between the two Omegas they were able to carry everything to Falkirk's office in one go. Mycroft the first to arrive in response to Falkirk's summons. Instructing the Alpha to bring in an extra chair into his office, Mycroft did as told.

Mycroft was as stiff and formal around Keading as ever. Thanking the Omega as James entered with the MacFarlanes in tow, Keading slipped out the office to the waiting area around Darren's empty desk. Asking the MacFarLanes into his office James waited with Keading outside.

Taking his seat behind the desk. Mycroft sat to the side while Sammy and Barry took the guest seats across from Falkirk. Pouring the tea Falkirk informed them parts of what they were about to hear was considered classified and could not be discussed. Mycroft kept getting furtive glances
from Sammy with a hint of recognition. Introducing Mycroft first. Sammy didn't recognise the Holmes name as Siger usually used a pseudonym when he spent time with Omegas.

Calmly Falkirk explained his own situation. How his Papa got pregnant by his employer and how he was able to get Siger Holmes to acknowledged the child as his. Going on Falkirk indicated the Omega on the other side of the glass wall. “The same man who got my Papa pregnant got him pregnant,” Falkirk informed before continuing “Siger Holmes, the same man who got Keading and My Papa pregnant, was also Billy's biological father. And there where more. There was an Omega, Jim Moriarty. He was our brother too.”They recognised the famous master criminal and not realising he was an Omega.

“Moriarty's mate is the one responsible for the death of Billy and many, many more.” Mycroft said after the information sunk in.

Giving an overview of Moran's movements, Falkirk told them of the bombing of Mycroft's car, his flat and even telling them Keading had been shot by him.

Sammy looked upset while his mate rubbed his back and neck. “That was him? The one you shot at Billy's funeral?” Barry demanded.

“Yes, that was Colonel Moran.” Falkirk stated

“Billy was a challenging, arrogant, little bastard.” Barry said with deep affection and glistening eyes. He pulled the crying and distressed omega against him.

Nodding to Mycroft the Alpha stood along with Falkirk. “Take your time.” Falkirk said, following his brother out of the office.

Joining his Alpha. James turned the Omega so his back was towards him. Pulling Falkirk against him and wrapping his arms around, to place possessive hands on the growing belly. Resting his chin on the Omega's shoulder James kept conversing with Selene from his hunched position. It was just a constant comforting rumble against Falkirk's back, and a drone of warm air over his ear.

Barry supporting his mate came out of Falkirk's office. Nodding his thanking Falkirk for telling them the truth. Stepping forward Mycroft invited them to a memorial service for all those killed in the Moran incident. Sammy cast his watery eyes first over Falkirk then Keading who looked uncomfortable under the scrutiny and nodded. Mycroft and Selene escorted the pair from the room.

“I didn't know about a memorial?” James said as Mycroft and the group disappeared out of E branch. Shrugging Falkirk hadn't heard anything about a memorial either.

"I hope he isn't up to something.”
Arrival Arc: Maternity leave & Baby shower.

Chapter Notes

Thanks for the kudos and comments and to all the readers.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

He was getting too big for his own desire. Falkirk waddled down to the front where Darren insisted he sit. True to his PA's word Mallory's side of the hall was full of politicians and military, as well as family. Darren's side was much smaller mostly filled with MI6 personnel. Ewan made a wondrous face at Falkirk as he passed the little blond Omega from Q Branch. Only Peter's restraining hand prevented the Omega jumping out of his seat to follow Falkirk.

Mallory was standing, in the long tailed coat. Eve in a long silver/grey dress, his best man a step back and to the side. Both with a white carnation, Mallory's in his lapel Eve's at the V shaped neckline of the dress.

A harp that had been playing slow and melodious changed tempo. James helped Falkirk to stand. Letting out a soft laugh, feeling the alpha behind him and the large chest vibrating a little too in his own amusement. The woman, who reluctantly wore professional trouser suits but still preferred leathers and a long coat was in a flowing off white dress, that flared out at the knee and clung to her body, with a single wide strap over his right shoulder. “She has curves?” James said, in an appreciative drawl.

Falkirk elbowed him and hissed, “Darren, remember?”

The slightly shorter omega Selene was escorting was in a similar tailed morning suite, with a red carnation. His normally wiry hair had been softened and almost gloss black, still a mane. His strange hazel eyes that never seemed to settle as one colour, always shifting from silver, grey and green, brown were shining in joy.

The two stopped at the front of the ornate hall. Selene then took her place beside Falkirk. The civil humanist service passed in aches, pains and cramping for Falkirk.

During the reception it was nice to watch the dancing, disappointed he could not do much more than watch. Seeing James board out of his mind, Selene left Keading to babysit while she dragged the other Alpha onto the dance floor. Not long after James had been dragged onto the dance floor Ewan appeared on Falkirk's other side firing off questions about Falkirk's pregnancy and who Keading was, not really stopping long enough to hear the responses. Falkirk had forgotten how boisterous the Omega from Q branch was, more like an energetic and happy puppy bouncing and yapping.

“So when are you and Peter declaring yourselves?” Falkirk asked freezing the other Omega. Leaning over to Keading. “Peter and Ewan think they are so secretive.” Falkirk mock whispered.

Seeing Ewan' suddenly subdued state. “Sorry. I'm just sore. Tired. And bad tempered,” Q said, regretting his hasty word, it wasn't his place to out the other omega and his relationship. “And I lost the bet. Only Hal wagered you two wouldn't admit it.” Falkirk said softly starting to regret his hasty words.
“Who won on me?” Falkirk asked curiously. Ewan hesitated no sure if he should tell his boss who won the bet on who his mate was.

“Let me guess.” Falkirk started before going though his reasoning. “There was that incident between Double O One and Six so Alec would be the safe bet. Underwood would take that” Falkirk mused. Ewan's shy smile confirming Falkirk had gotten his deduction right.

“Hal is rather twisted underneath the surface, pragmatic and observant. He would choose someone high up and, M?” Falkirk asked hesitantly getting a shy nod. “The little old and scary woman.” Falkirk said for Keading's benefit, the two only having met once.

“Didn't Daniel know?” Keading ask, Ewan nodded

“He took you lot to the cleaners didn't he?” Falkirk added getting another nod.

“My ears are burning.” a Scots brogue drawled interrupting the group. The big Alpha sitting down beside Keading.

Returning home James helped Falkirk up stairs and into their room. Sitting on the bed allowing James to untie his shoe laces. “I think it's time.” Falkirk was loathed to admit. James's shoulders dropped he had been getting to the stage where he was considering ordering Falkirk to start his maternity leave.

“I will tell Daniel and Butler tomorrow” Falkirk added.

James guided Falkirk to lie back, lifting the long legs and swinging them into the bed. “Is there anything I can do?” James said softly, switching off the main light so it was just the duller bedside.

Falkirk rolled over, his huge stomach lying on the silken sheets. “A back rub.” he whined. Almost immediately he felt the cold oil and the warm rough hands scrapping over his skin. The strong fingers digging in to the muscles around his lower back and above the round of his buttocks. Letting out a groan Falkirk stretched straight, his back and legs cracking as he did so, and letting out another groan.

James slid into the bed behind his omega. His hands cupping the back of the hips, and thumbs pressing in small circles. The lower area seeming to be where his mate felt the strain the worst. Pressing his lips the the pointed shoulder. A deep breath and slight snore. Looking over the shoulder, Falkirk’s head pillowed on his bent arm, the other brushing the his stomach.

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Laying in bed his laptop across his lap Falkirk concentrated on the administration of MI6. It was nice not having to get up before dawn and return after dark. James doted on him day and night even last night Falkirk woke up at three in the morning and before he could push himself out of bed James had been by his side. A midnight snack later Falkirk and James returned to bed.

By the third day of his maternity leave James was a constant presence and it was driving Falkirk up the wall. Lifting his phone and pressing it to his ear, the Scots voice answered and Q ordered, “Arrange a random physical for Double O Seven. Immediately.”

Getting up. James grumbling about the physical he had just been called in for. Selene arrived with Keading about an hour later. Falkirk sitting at his desk in the library. Keading taking up a position at one of the small settees near the fireplace.

It wasn't enough. James came in again. Falkirk started screaming, “I DON'T NEED TO BE
ASKED HOW AM I FORTY FUCKING TIMES AND HOUR. I DON'T NEED YOU ASKING, WHERE AM I EVERY FIVE FUCKING SECONDS. I DON'T NEED YOU ASKING WHAT I AM DOING EVERY TIME YOU HEAR A FUCKING NOISE OR A FUCKING SILENCE. JUST FUCK OFF!”

When James slammed the front door the regret was instant and he wanted his Alpha back.

Keading piled blankets and cushions around Falkirk he climbed into the nest as well. Carefully positioning himself. Keading stroked the other Omega's neck and back telling him it was alright to have a meltdown and surprised it had taken Falkirk this long. Falkirk just sniffled against the other omega. “Want him back.” He whined.

“No you don't. You need to calm first. He'll understand.” Keading reasured.

James returned a few hours later reeking of alcohol, smoke, sweat, blood and sporting a bruise on the side of his chin. Poking his head out of the nest Falkirk bared his neck and apologised. Sitting by the nest James wrapped an arm around Falkirk's neck pulling him close, nuzzling the mop of hair. Ensuring he held no ill will James kissed the hair. Slowly the nest moved to surround the Alpha as well.

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The dining table had been laid out with finger food, champagne and assorted drinks. Alec above all others had championed a baby shower. Falkirk wasn't going to bother but Keading who had become a daily fixture after Cody had been dropped off at school had also liked the idea.

Unlike most baby showers it wasn't just Omegas and woman. The entire pack had been invited. James entered the dinning room snatching a voulelant from the tray and getting a slapped hand in the process. Falkirk was amazed by how much the Omega had lost his nervousness around the Alphas in the pack. Only Mycroft caused him discomfort still.

Hudson moved to answer the door at the sound of the bell. “Who the bloody hell invited you?”

James expleated from the other room as a set of tiny feet thumped through the house towards Falkirk.

Much bigger, with floppy light brown hair falling into his brown eyes Rupert hesitantly approached his god mother. Holding his arms open Rupert came forward and after a few hesitant scenting the Alpha recognised Falkirk, hugging him back. The background squabbles of Villiers and James who had never seen eye to eye framing the reunion.

Falkirk heard a menacing growl from James. A relaxed and victorious Villiers followed his son shortly after. Giving a smile Villiers placed a box wrapped in pink paper beside Falkirk's chair. “Hello and before we start could I ask a huge favour?” Villiers asked with slight embarrassment.

Quickly and quietly Villiers explained he had met someone, a Russian businessman. Falkirk lifted a brow at the prospect. The Russians my be democratic now but they were still ruthless and calculating and the FSB was just a re-branded KGB. “You see my concerns.” Villiers stated.

Asking for the man's full name and any relevant data. Villiers already prepared, pulled out a sealed envelope. Telling Villiers to place it on his desk in the next room. Villiers returned, and with gushing enthusiasm joined in the shower.

Slowly the house filled, Sherlock was his typical infuriating self. Only John and Alec able to temper him. Mycroft was stiff, standing in a corner, Tanner taking it upon himself to provide the
man with company.

Darren was giving an animated description of his honeymoon to Villiers and Keading on the opposite couch. Rupert and Cody had made a 'not a nest' under the dining table. Every so often a squeal would emerge. Mallory, James and Selene where in conversation in the dinning room. While two of the god parents to be, Alec sat on one side with Daniel on the other of Falkirk. Selene and Keading the others, but they were being kept quiet as not to offend Mycroft or Sherlock. Falkirk loved his brothers but after the three ring circus of their home and lingering effects would trust them completely if a deranged killer was after his child but not to give him a good and loving home life. Shane the exception to the rule and was another in the line of succession after Selene.

When it came time to open the presents all the guests surrounded James and Falkirk. The last to arrive meant the Mallory's where on top. Pulling a small box covered in navy blue paper with tartan ribbon Falkirk red the card. “It came by way of MI6” Darren informed.

Pulling the card off and handing it to James, Falkirk ripped the paper of Francis Urquhart's gift. Revealing a folding silver picture frame 'Let no man tell you what can't be achieved -FU' was engraved in cursive script. With a pleased smile Falkirk placed the frame carefully to the side.

“What if it's an Alpha or a boy?” Falkirk said laying a pink baby grow across his stomach as he looked at Darren. There where plenty more clothing and blankets even Daniel's grandmother sent a shawl with embroider spring flowers over it. Pulling a bag the label proclaiming it was from Keading. Pulling the fastening apart Falkirk smiled at the Omega as he pulled out a forest green bear with white stomach from within.

As the party wound down Mycroft was the first to leave with an excuse about appointments. Tanner and Villiers soon followed. John dragged Sherlock from the house before he could bombard the tiring Omega with more question on his experience. Eventually it came down to the core of the pack Falkirk resting in the lounge as James, Alec and Selene drank and played cards on the dining table.

Catching Keading's hand as he passed. Falkirk pulled the other Omega down beside him laying his head on Keading's shoulder. “Sorry” Falkirk said after he had made the abrupt move before belatedly asking, “Could you keep me company?”

Reassuring Falkirk it was alright the Omegas where quickly joined by Cody wedging himself between them. It was nice to be close to another Omega. He didn't give Falkirk the same safe feeling James did but there was an odd sense of non threatening comfort from him. After Falkirk had recovered he placed a hand on the back of the couch and manoeuvred himself up. With much support from Keading, Falkirk found his feet.

As Falkirk had blown up at him for helping him up James only watched to see if Falkirk could do it himself before he would help. Seeing the Omega making for the library “No working” James called then tensed in case it was something to set Falkirk off again.

“Purely personal” Falkirk responded. Keading the only person who Falkirk had not snapped at followed. Even Hudson had born the brunt of one of Falkirk's meltdowns. Entering the Library Falkirk manoeuvred himself behind the desk.

Keading took one of the chairs at the coffee table after pulling a book off the shelf. Recognising the picture of the buff Alpha and swooning Omega, one of his trashy Om'Lit books Falkirk focused on the envelope.

“No exactly what I was expecting from an English Library.” Keading mused.
“What gets me is Hudson stocking the shelves in accordance with the Dewey Decimal System.” Falkirk said.

“What are you doing?” Keading casually asked.

Knowing Keading was betraying him and following James' direction but Falkirk couldn't bring himself to be upset. “Hacking into the KGB, just for fun.” Falkirk returned just as casually.

After half an hour Keading got up coming round behind Falkirk. A plain text file was scrolling on screen. “What's that?” Keading asked.

“I am cross referencing FSB records with his history.” Falkirk informed tapping the hand written A4 piece of paper containing the information Villiers supplied on the interested Alpha.

“Wouldn't it be better to look at Daz, Dzh-amge, amger-ch-in-ov?” Keading asked sounding out the complex phonetics.

“If you were to search for me you would find Thomas McLair, home schooled, Open University at thirteen, degree awarded at fifteen, recruited by MI6 at sixteen. I'm not even officially bound to an Alpha, on record.” Falkirk informed before looking directly at Keading. “All lies I invented. The only possibility of finding out who I truly am is by investigating Olivia Mansfield, Siger Holmes, Freddie McLair and James. Only then would you find the black hole in the records in the shape of Falkirk Bond.”

Returning to his seat Keading picked up the book again. “How did you..” Keading trailed off unsure if he should be asking.

“How did I become head of MI6?” Falkirk completed for him. Getting a nod in answer Falkirk didn't see why the latest pack member should be the only one to not know. With impeccable timing Hudson entered carrying a tray.

“Mr Hudson, what was my first step on my way to becoming M?” Falkirk casually asked as he watched the Alpha place the afternoon tea on the coffee table. After Hudson had spoken of Falkirk's kidnapping from his point of view Falkirk picked up the story.

Keading kept rapt attention as Falkirk split his attention between the task at hand, sipping his herbal tea and telling his story. Stopping Falkirk looked to Keading, deciding to brutally honest Falkirk continued the story at the point they first met. “I needed answers from Daddy and his time with you would be the best chance we had. We aimed to arrive before your heat but we were too late.” Falkirk started before giving a truthful but non graphic version of events that occurred, after Selene had escorted Keading home.

When it came to Oso. Keading looked around before asking for more details. Giving grater detail Keading listened intently to the final hours of his former pimp's life. Continuing Falkirk hesitated over the time when James got shot as a sudden panic set in. Glossing over the separation from his Alpha Falkirk forged on eventually trailing off when he came to the arriving at the hospital to pick up the injured Keading. “You came, just for us?” Keading said with a little disbelief.

Not thinking Keading was looking for a response Falkirk concentrated on his hacking. “How has life been with Selene?” Falkirk asked as he didn't think the pair had consummated their bond yet.

Shrugging Keading avoided the question. Concerned Falkirk set up a program to trawl for information before pushing himself up. Closing the door first. Falkirk came to sit at the coffee table with Keading. Sensing what was coming Keading dropped his head submissively.
“If you don't care for Selene you need to tell her.” Falkirk said before insisting “You will always have a home, Here, Daniel or your own place. You're not a prisoner you can go back to America. The support for Cody hasn't ended.”

Keading shook his head, closing the book and looking at the two men on the cover. “I've never been with a woman.” Keading started. Thinking that was not all to Keading's concern Falkirk waited for the next part.

“When she put her arm round me I pulled away and broke free.” Keading continued. Not understanding Falkirk prompted for context. Trying to shrug the conversation off Falkirk didn't let Keading, asking for more details.

Keading sat in silence unwilling to engage Falkirk further. Thinking on what Keading had said he had pushed James away more time than he could count, in annoyance, anger and exasperation James had let him pull away every time.

Picking up the discarded book Falkirk looked at the cover. The typical muscle bound Alpha with a tight hold round the wavy haired Omega. A protesting hand pressing against the Alpha's muscled biceps and come hither look on the Omega's face.

As M, Falkirk had learned anyone with the depicted muscle physique would be useless as an operative. One endurance exercise and they would dehydrate and starve due to insufficient fat deposits. James coming back from a mission would be ripped but before he returned to the field there would be a fine layer of fat covering the expectationally strong muscles.

“Have you ever doubted James' ability to protect you?” Keading asked, quietly.

Shaking his head and answering in the negative. “Well, there was this one time. Daniel went for James and beat him to the ground.” Falkirk corrected himself after a moment.

“And?” Keading prompted loosing Falkirk again. Thinking back Falkirk had just quit Q branch on James' orders and Daniel had jumped his Alpha. All Falkirk could remember was a sense of fear from James' anger, Daniel's fury and what would happen to him when M found out.

Not sure if it was what Keading was getting at, “I was afraid. James had been very angry and I wasn't sure enough of myself at the time. Daniel was concerned about me.” Falkirk said. He didn't know where it came from. If it was subconscious information or cues on Keading's part “You don't think Selene can protect you?”

This time when Keading shrugged there was a subdued quality to the gesture. Despite how good she was even Falkirk had to admit she was forth in line of the people he trusted to protect him. But she was a Double O in spirit if not in name and it was like comparing McLaren to Ferrari in a Formula 1 race. Even the slower was still far beyond what most cars could do.

Every Double O had one defining characteristic and Falkirk said, “She may come up against someone stronger than her, anyone could. Selene has never rolled over, never give up, never give in. Only death will stop her and sometimes not even that will be enough” Falkirk stated with awe and gravitas in his voice. Keading peeking up at the other Omega eyes wide at the passionate statement.

Pushing himself up. A wicked idea came to mind. Going to the door and calling for Daniel the Scots Alpha appeared. Asking Daniel to arrange a random training assessment for Selene and for Keading to see first hand what the woman could do. A memory of James in an illegal fight in an underground car park being the inspiration. Instructing Daniel to keep Keading's presence quiet
Falkirk thanked the Alpha letting him return to his cards.

Keadng protested, “You can't make her fight, just to show me.”

Falkirk dismissed his concerns as she was required to go through the assessment at least three times a year, at random. Along with the regularly scheduled assessments. Finishing off, “See what she can do then decide.”

Chapter End Notes

Just had to say this. With the football, tennis and Grand Prix on TV, I have been turning to my DVDs(Matrix trilogy and the Daniel Craig Bonds). I just realised, Persephone(Monica Bellucci from the second two Matrix films) who I used in 'The big Picture is a Collage' was later cast as Lucia in Spectre. I swear I wrote and planned the story a long time before spectre. The dungeon club scene in Matrix Revolutions was why I chose them as the bad guys. Realising this lead to the brief idea of going back and tying in the fic with Spectre but NO! I'm not George Lucas the story works as it is. #Hanshotfirst
Arrival Arc: It's coming!

Chapter Notes

Thanks for reading.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Waking up James' arm laying heavily across Falkirk's chest. The muscles and bones where sore and the heat of the quilt, the Alpha and his own body heat making his skin clammy. Pushing the quilt back and ducking out from under the Alpha's arm Falkirk levered himself up.

James mumbled something starting to sit up as well. “I just want to wash.” Falkirk insisted and before James could help, had gained his feet. “Go back to sleep.” Falkirk instructed walking through to the bathroom.

Stepping into the bath Falkirk sat on the side letting the water submerge his feet and rise up his calves. When the water had risen high enough Falkirk shut off the taps. Carefully sliding in from the side. Relaxing in the warm water Falkirk sighed, cupping water and poring it over his belly.

Sliding down so only his face was exposed. The sounds of the world disappeared in the water to be replaced by the disjointed sounds permeating the water and the sound of the blood in his ears being reflected back. Closing his eyes the sounds intensified, the air rushing in and out of his lungs now a deep resonating rumbling.

The water cooled and the bubbles popped disappearing into a soapy film across the surface. Hooking a toe round the chain Falkirk pulled out the plug. Letting the water drain Falkirk placed his hand behind him and pushed. Straining Falkirk's arms couldn't bare his weight. Giving up Falkirk grasped the left side of the bath with his right hand, trying to roll onto his knees Falkirk twisted round.

Falkirk's wet hand slipping on the wet ceramic. Falling back. After a moment of panicked assessment Falkirk calmed. There where no impacts and it was more of a slide than a fall. Resigned to the lack of independence, “James!” Falkirk called to the open door.

When nothing happened Falkirk called again not even a grunt in response. Crushing down on the whining tone in his voice and with all the authority he could muster “DOUBLE O SEVEN, GET YOUR ARSE IN HERE!” Falkirk ordered.

Thundering feet preceded a bollock naked James Bond standing at the door. Back ramrod straight, shoulders squared and looking directly ahead in full parade attention. “I require assistance” Falkirk snapped.

Relaxing James approached the bath. Crouching down James was about to slip his arm under his mate's knees. “No, help me up, don't carry me” Falkirk insisted.

Falkirk knew it was silly. James had carried him hundreds of times but now when he was being carried out of necessity Falkirk's pride was rearing its head.
Placing a foot carefully between Falkirk's legs. James leaned down wrapping his arms under Falkirk’s. Falkirk wrapped his arms round James neck. As James straightened up Falkirk was pulled with him. As Falkirk's feet took his weight James carefully relaxed his hold.

“Don't say it I know, no more baths” Falkirk spat going to get a towel.

“Well not with out me” James purred coming up behind his Omega and kissing the bond mark on his neck. Feeling his Alpha's arousal growing against him Falkirk reluctantly stepped away, his spirit was willing but his body baulked at the prospect of the vigorous activity.

Dressing in Pyjamas and dressing gown Falkirk headed down stairs. James following not long after. It was odd to be down so early. Falkirk had gotten used to Hudson floating about whenever he was up. Going down into the kitchen Falkirk put on the kettle. The herbal teas that had been supplied by Sherlock didn't deserve the respect his Earl Grey got and Falkirk just plunked the bag in a mug. James fiddled about with the coffee machine behind him.

A door opening and muttering could be herd coming down the stairs. “Mrs Bridges” Falkirk greeted the old Omega cook.

“Scrambled eggs with cheese, on toast” Falkirk asked. After assuring her the normal breakfast time would be sufficient. Falkirk and James headed back up stairs. Passing Hudson on the ground floor Falkirk headed for the lounge. Leaning against James Falkirk watched the early morning news. Moran, London, America already forgotten in favour of a boy who wrote a letter in crayon, applying to be the new manger of Manchester United and getting a shirt and a polite no.

Hudson came into the adjoining dining room laying out two places. In preparation Falkirk with James' help found his feet. Sitting at the foot of the table a dome covered plate was placed in front of him. As Hudson pulled back, the dome disappeared to reveal just what Falkirk had wanted. A bottle of HP sauce appeared as well. Falkirk usually despised the brown condiment but recently he had been putting it on everything.

After breakfast Falkirk moved to the library to finish off his search on Villiers' potential Alpha. Making a concerted effort James told Falkirk he had errands to do and would be back in an hour. Falkirk knew James went to the park at the end of the road, counted the minutes before he returned. Ten minutes before James was due to return Keading rang the bell. The two Omegas chatted until James returned. Hearing them talking about Villiers James demanded to know what was going on. Telling his Alpha how Villiers wanted him to vet the Alpha. James looked displeased as he retreated.

During lunch Falkirk had one of his other cravings, a cheep cafeteria pizza, plastic cheese and cardboard base. The phone ringing caused Hudson to come in, holding out the handset, “Mr Carrington.”

Listening to Daniel before hanging up. “Could you take Keading to MI6?” Falkirk asked James. Nodding James agreed to take him to observe Selene's assessment.

After Falkirk had been secured on the couch with plenty of blankets, phone, bell, laptop and cup of tea. Giving his mate a kiss and nuzzle. James waved and guided Keading out.

Daisy the maid came down stairs, it didn't take her long to clean up the ground floor. An experienced maid she barely spoke, quick and efficient. Like Mr Hudson and Mrs Bridges Daisy
had been vetted and had experience in similar households.

Having dozed off the bell roused Falkirk. The thundering feet announced Rupert's return. Hugging the little Alpha of his god son, Villiers followed at a more sedate pace. Asking Hudson to bring some tea. Villiers took a seat opposite Falkirk. “I didn't find anything beyond what a businessman of Mr Dzhamgerchinov would usually be involved with.” Falkirk informed

“I'm sure he wouldn't mind you calling him Grigor” Villiers insisted, before going on to ask about the Alpha's business dealings. When Falkirk came to the end of his research Villiers observed, “Pretty tame by Olivia or your standards”

“Not in front of unvetted ears” Falkirk admonished placing a hand either side of Rupert's head. Giving the confused child a brilliant smile Falkirk nuzzled him which was returned with enthusiasm. Feeling a kick, Falkirk placed the young Alpha's hand over the movement. Falkirk sniggered as Villiers gave an explanation of where babies come from to the barely comprehending child.

James returned with Keading in tow, a slight bounce in the omega's posture. “Went well?” Falkirk asked the obviously happy Omega.

“Blood thirsty little thing” James said from behind the Omega “Wanted to get close enough to see the teeth flying out of mouths.”

“Selene did this thing where she jumped of this guy and kneed this other guy in the face” Keading described, enthusiastically bouncing on the balls of his feet. Even when Keading sat he continued to bounce slightly as he described the events of Selene's assessment in great detail.

James who had taken up position beside Falkirk leaned in close. Whispering, “She knew he was watching.”

Rupert attracted by the excited and boisterous pheromones approached the Omega he had met a few days before and climbed into his lap giving a cheesy smile.

When Villiers left Falkirk gave James a look, luckily the Alpha knew when to make himself scarce. Asking Keading about Selene the Omega was far more confident in the Alpha.

“How will you speak to her?” Falkirk asked. Getting a nod and a shy smile from Keading Falkirk relaxed.

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Tapping his foot. Then surging to his feet to pace. James listened. He had heard Q come out of the library and head up stairs. Now the silence was driving him mad. “Fuck it!” James spat, he didn't care if Falkirk was going to scream at him again.

Darting out of the lounge, up the stairs, round the landing. Pulling to a stop, talking a calm breath he pressed down on the handle to their room. The bed pressed to the left wall, no sound from the bathroom on the right and his mate nowhere to be seen.

A quiet sniffle.

James moved quickly. Beyond the high bed he found his mate. James' heart froze. Falkirk was on
the floor, his knees under him and face to the thick plush carpet. In a classic presenting pose and sobbed gently. Lying down pressing his cheek to the carpet too. James looked at the eyes that were squeezed shut.

Stretching out his hand. Falkirk whining, “Don't touch me.” Horrors running through James' mind. Did Falkirk fall again. Was it something else. The distress was growing rank from the Omega.

“I want it o,o,over.” the omega whined in a hiccuping sob.

“Can I ask, the presenting?”

“I'm sore.” Falkirk whined. James not comforted and calculating the best way to get a doctor here or his omega to a hospital. “Everything hurts. Only way...less sore.” James relaxed a bit as his mate seemed to be talking about the general aches and pains and not something new.

“So this is the most comfortable position?” James confirmed. Falkirk just nodded his head. James guessing the omega came here because it was the only room, Hudson or Keading wouldn't just walk into, like the library.

“You do know, that, you... I.” James floundered again. “You're mine.”

The green eyes cracked open. The omega's face still with the unhappy down turn of the dark lips. The eyes blood shot and a little snot escaping the nose. James was captured by the image, wanting so much to take the omega in his arms, but was sure touch still wasn't wanted.

“I know. I'm yours.” Falkirk said, with understanding. He then pulled his arm out from under him and bridged the distance over the deep red carpet. James grasping the offered hand. “Thank you, for not going paranoid, or asking how am I.”

James smiled and nodded. Thankful he had crushed down on the said paranoia enough to not get caught or asked the question that had become a no-no of recent, almost guaranteed to set the Omega off.

Tears continued to slip from the green eyes. But James just stayed. The distressed scent easing a bit as they just stayed there gazing at each other.

There were thousands of things to discuss. A health visitor had been to see their preparations. The classes with the others, going through the exercises, the preparation, the horrific video shown by the woman running it, even for an Operative it had been a little graphic. They made a plan and it had not been discussed again.

Falkirk suddenly shifted and started to roll, James supporting the weight. With Falkirk spooning him. The omega's head pillowed on his arm. James pressed his nose so it was bushing the nape of the neck. The Omega's scent improving more but still James felt the tears on his biceps. “Do you want me to rub your back?” Only a silent nod answered him. James pressed his free hand to the muscles around the other man's lower back. “Someone suggested, Alexander, Alexei, Alexandra, Aleksandra and Alexcia.” James breathed as he worked.

A shudder from the air tickling the hairs on the back of his neck and gave a small silent chuckle. Falkirk said, “Alexis Trevelyan? By any chance.” James confirmed Falkirk got the guess right. “Well, Keading recommended something short, which I kind of agree with.”
“Fall-kirk, Sher-lock, My-croft, She-rrin-ford. I do wonder why you like the idea of a short name.” James teased, stretching out the names as he said them.

“Can we move to the bed? I think I want a nap.” Falkirk said and James was helping him up.

James cupped the cheek, his tanned thumb looking so dark against the pale skin of his mate. He wiped the last remnants of the tears away. The eyes still a little puffy. Physically biting his tongue to stop himself asking if his mate was alright. “Beautiful.” James breathed and pressed his lips to his mate's, feeling a rumbling movement against his stomach. Looking down he pressed his hand to the swell until the baby within had stilled. Looking up again a silly smile had lit up the face that had been so solemn not so long ago, and was sure there was a matching smile on his own face.

Helping his mate sit and lie. James joined the omega and watched as he fell into a doze.

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Coming down the stair in the middle of the night. Someone refused to sleep and didn’t see why he should let his mother sleep either. Entering the kitchen Falkirk dragged a high stool over to the kettle. Perching on the stool Falkirk flipped on the device. Watching the rising steam Falkirk waited for the click indicating the water was boiling. After poring the water Falkirk considered moving before dismissing it. The shadowed tiles made an appalling view but with the weight off his feet Falkirk could live with it.

James and Falkirk had entered a form of denial about the oncoming addition. They had done what they needed to. As for name, sex and gender Falkirk had taken to using the masculine but it was subconscious decision.

Daniel had been a bit more pragmatic suggesting they consider the first, middle and last names together. Selene had suggested honouring the baby's heritage. In the decoration of the baby's room, colours had been gender and sex neutral with only a few exceptions. A blue blanket, blue in expectation to the masculine but had been bought because it reminded Falkirk of James' eyes. Betaesc green baby grows, that James had remarked reminded him of Falkirk's.

Another bit of movement followed by a spasm of the mussels. Not lasting long and having them before. The midwife had warned Falkirk to expect them so dismissed it. Finishing his lukewarm tea Falkirk felt something slimy leaking from him. Pushing to stand there was a slight damp patch on the stool and his Pyjamas where sticking to the inside of his legs and backside.

Crushing down the initial panic Falkirk waddled towards the stairs as another spasm started this time stronger and far more painful. Breathing through it Falkirk waited until the pain subside. When the contraction subsided Falkirk looked up the flight of stairs. Shaking his head, he was not going to climb two stories to get James.

Looking round Falkirk spotted the corded phone hanging on the wall. Crossing the room. Falkirk lifted the receiver and dialled James' mobile. Two rings before a gruff voice barked, “Bond!”

“I'm in the Kitchen....” Falkirk trailed off as the line went dead. Hanging up and as expected James barreled down the stairs. Falkirk closing his eyes as the Alpha's feet lost traction and landed in a heap as he went from stone stair to tiled floor.

“A good Double O dose not panic.” Falkirk snapped. The curt admonishment did more to relax the Alpha than all the reassurances Falkirk could offer.
“I think it’s starting” Falkirk informed as James picked himself up.

“Contractions?” James demanded fussing about the Omega.

“One…” Falkirk started

“One minute apart” James interrupted.

Scenting the heightened state of the Alpha. Falkirk snapped with authority “one contraction four minutes ago, mucus plug has broken.”

Looking sheepish, Falkirk asked James for a cloth. Duly James obeyed his Omega fetching the rag. Taking the cloth Falkirk wiping the stool. Falkirk handed it to James instructing him to throw it away.

With James' support Falkirk made it to the ground floor. Making for the lavatory Falkirk sat down on the toilet. James ran up stairs with his instructions. Returning James laid out the fresh pair of pyjama bottoms. Falkirk cleaned off the mucus remnants. Pulling on his pyjamas. James helped his mate up as a another contraction hit.

With long soothing strokes along his back. James helped see Falkirk through the discomfort. “Eight minutes” James observed helpfully.

“I am glad the skills of a Double O extend to telling the fucking time.” was Falkirk's snarky response. James got everything ready for the hospital while Falkirk walked in slow circles in the foyer.

“Is everything alright, sir?” Hudson asked coming down stairs in his dressing gown. Investigating all the strange noises. His hand moving behind him to block his gun from view.

“Yes thank you. I will be going to the hospital soon.” Falkirk informed.

Nodding “Very good sir and if I may, good luck” Hudson responded. As Falkirk was thanking the Alpha for his concern another contraction hit. With speed that defied his age, Hudson was at Falkirk's side supporting the Omega.

Another set of hands appeared supporting Falkirk's other side. Observing James started, “Still eight minutes, the midwife said…”

“This is not the bloody NHS. I'm paying, a lot so that bloody hospital will do as it's fucking told!” Falkirk interrupted before looking to Hudson “Warn the hospital of my arrival, contraction eight minutes apart” Falkirk ordered.

Stepping out Hudson watched the car disappear into the night of London. The boy become man to become father. The the old Alpha felt exhilaration and melancholy at the prospect of the new arrival.

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Sitting serenely Daniel had his eyes closed in meditation. Alec paced the square waiting room like a wolf in a cage. Every so often looking to the door. A growl form Daniel prevented him from
wandering off again. The poor woman giving birth, probably still traumatised by the sudden appearance of the Operative going to the first door he could find.

Daniel explaining they needed to know the exact location of Falkirk for security reasons. There were now several MI6 guards dotted about the place for good measure. The hospital staff had requested Alec remain in the private waiting area.

Selene had returned home to see her recently sealed bond mate. Coming back after taking Cody to school, Keading accompanying her. Approaching the the two other men Keading handed the strong black coffee to Alec and the double shot Mocha to Daniel. Both thanking the Omega who then returned to his Alpha's side. Daniel and Alec sipped their drink. Alec returned to his pacing the caffeine boost not helping his agitated state.

“I'm going for a smoke” Alec proclaimed and darted out the door heading for the designated smoking area.

James appeared at the door a few minutes after Alec had left. A red mark marred the Alpha's face along with two lines of light scratches. “Would you stay with him?” James asked refusing to look at the other Alpha. When Daniel hesitated “Go!” James growled with a hard glare.

The big Scotsman found the room with the MI6 guard outside. The Omega nurse jumped at Daniel's sudden appearance. “You can fuck off as well” Falkirk spat at the Alpha before releasing a pained moan.

“Mr McLair has been physical.” the nurse warned from the corner as Daniel approached. Falkirk continued to hiss and spit curses at Daniel throughout his attempt to help calm the Omega. With two hands resting on the bed while he stood, shifting weight from one foot to the other Falkirk bore the pain. As Daniel gave soft words of encouragement a box of tissues suddenly impacted his head.

“If you can't say something useful shut up” Falkirk snapped through gritted teeth and dropping the box.

Pointing to a tube “Gimmy!” Falkirk demanded. Doing as commanded Daniel handed the Omega the pipe. Sucking on the mouth piece Falkirk relaxed slightly. Looking round the room the nurse had disappeared at some point. With the pain abating Falkirk apologised. Reassuring he understood Daniel caressed the Omega's neck. Helping Falkirk up onto the bed and onto his side Daniel continued to stroke the delicate neck. Bringing up his knees up Falkirk took full advantage of the brief respite.

A tall broad shouldered Alpha nurse entered. “Well Mr McLair lets see how you're progressing.” She said abruptly. Submitting to the examination as she continued, “I hear you're being temperamental, striking your Alpha, scaring the nurses” she admonished. Falkirk's legs snapped straight, coming out of the stirrup connecting with her nose. As Daniel switched from a warning growl to a hearty laugh James burst into the room.

“Get her out” Falkirk ordered. James grabbed the nurse by the scruff dragging her out.

Bringing himself under control. A few chuckles still slipping out. “That's ma laddie” Daniel praised stoking the Omega's sweat dampened hair off his face.

Dr Frost appeared quickly afterwards. She didn't apologise for the nurses' conduct but quickly and
efficiently completed the examination. “You shouldn't be long now” the doctor informed.

Seeing a nasty challenging comment brewing in the Omega's mind. Daniel looking to avoid another altercation pressed his hand to Falkirk's mouth. The sharp teeth latched on almost immediately to the heal of the thumb. Seeing the interaction Dr Frost made a hasty exit before Falkirk could go for her.

With one last clench of his jaws Falkirk spat the hand from his mouth. Poking through the medical supplies Daniel requisitioned some gauze, pressing it to the seeping wound. Falkirk continued to glare at him until the contraction peaked and he took to the gas and air again. Making a distressed sound Falkirk told Daniel to get the midwife as his waters broke, “And James” he added in a desperate plea.

The door didn't even have time to swing between Daniel leaving and seeing James enter the room. Falkirk automatically reaching out to his Alpha. A bruise blossoming on his face and the scratch marks cutting Falkirk deep “I'm sorry” Falkirk pleaded cupping the face and caressing the scratches he made. As James reassured Falkirk he pressed his lips to the omega's brow and slipped in behind him. Dr Frost returned with the midwife. The Alpha nurse from before took a step into the room. Before James could do more than issue a menacing growl she was yanked back out, to the familiar and synchronised growling of Daniel and Alec.

Popping his head in. “Good luck” Alec said before pulling the door shut behind him.

Everything seemed to blur for the Alpha. His Omega's scream tore him apart, and all he could do was hold him. It was a helpless felling that he couldn't stop the pain. With encouragement Falkirk made a grunting scream and went slack. James brushed the sweaty fringe back, the green eyes were closed and he panted. A wail went up, James caught a glimpse of green eyes forcing themselves open before he turned his head to the sound.

The blond Omega male of a nurse was approaching. James was passed the small bundle, his breath stolen and heart clenching as he glimpsed the tiniest face. Falkirk, so tiered he could do little more than look at the tiny red squishy thing that was so beautiful, as they were both held in the strong arms of their Alpha.

The nurse hesitated a moment before asking, “Alphas don't, would father like to keep baby warm?” James wasn't sure what was being asked but he gave a nod.

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Ignoring the staffs request to stay in the waiting room. Daniel had taken up position opposite Falkirk's door. Alec now had a whole corridor to pace along. Selene had taken up position beside Daniel so with the guards across from them there was now a quad of MI6 personnel stationed around the door of Falkirk's room. Keading watched proceedings from beside his Alpha with curiosity.

Nurse Nokes as he badge proclaimed made a point of walking passed them without fear as she moved up and down the corridor but made to further attempts to enter Falkirk's room. Alec stopped in front of Falkirk's door waited expectantly for a few moments before carrying on his journey.

Falkirk's pained moaning suddenly ended. Seeing Daniel and Selene stiffen Alec ran back in time to hear the first wail of the new life inside the room. With bated breath they waited an eternity before James appeared, his shirt open and a bundle pressed to the bare skin. He invited them in.
The mix of scents in the room masked any attempt to identify the offspring by smell.

Carefully Alec approached James. Standing by his old friend's side. Seeing a squishy red face and dark hair pressed to the tanned chest. Alec still couldn't tell what had been born, James' scent masking the baby's.

“Son” James informed proudly.

“Omega” added Falkirk's quiet and tired voice.

When the squishy face opened a pair of bright blue eyes looked up at Alec before closing again.

“Has his Father's eyes.” Alec said

“All babies have blue eyes” James responded hoping the baby would keep them.

Chapter End Notes

A reminder. I have quite a backlog. If anyone is wishing to help. I would appreciate another set of eyes. Please leave a comment or contact me via tumblr.
Moved into a private recovery room. Falkirk had slept fitfully off and on as the night turned to day. Alec had been dragged off by Daniel, taking Keading with them. Selene continued to float about, as head of Falkirk's personal security she was the only one legitimately working while at the hospital.

Awake, Falkirk rested until a commotion sounded down the hall. A tapping at the door followed by it opening and one of the guards calling a warning, “Holmes, Sherlock.”

James came to the door. Further down the hall a nurse was making demands of the tall detective. Insisting it wasn't visiting time and if he continued security would be called. Like a ship parting the waves Sherlock stalked down the hall brushing past all. The smaller beta companion, trying to calm down the Alpha before he arrived.

“If he makes it to the door he can come in.” James ordered the guard.

Despite his exhaustion Falkirk had been unable to sleep properly. The still as yet unnamed baby, however, slept soundly. Positioning himself between the bed and cot, stroking Falkirk's neck as he watched the sleeping baby James waited.

Surprisingly the door didn't fly open at Sherlock's arrival. Gently and quietly Sherlock entered with Watson on his tail. Falkirk mumbled a greeting to his brother, who kept a cautious eye on the guarding James as he approached the Omega. Very aware of the territorial Alpha Sherlock scented and nuzzling his brother. Returning the gesture as best as he could, the familiar family scent calm and secure to Falkirk. Light pleasantries being exchanged between John and James.

Following Sherlock as he pulled back until his body protested and Q let out a whine. James’ hand immediately returned to give the calming touches. Sherlock moved to the clear plastic cot, his grey eyes darting as his head bobbed left to right, close and far inspected the baby from all angles without touching him. Deducing, “6lb 4oz, good weight for an Omega. 18 inches, crown to rump. Head about 13 inches.” Sherlock carefully looked at the small hands with tiny red fingers as they opened and closed a bit, “And likely left handed.”

John, seeing James's dumbfounded expression and how tired the Omega was. Grasping Sherlock's arm and tugging him away from the baby. “Come on. They need rest.” He said quietly. Sherlock's head darted to the parents, his eyes scanning them and nodded, allowing John to lead him away.

With Sherlock's visit over and the last of the adrenalin leaving Falkirk's system he crashed falling into a deep and exhausted stupor. As Falkirk slept James tore himself away from one Omega to approach the other. The baby was less red now, only pudgy. A tuft of dark hair visible from under the tiniest woolly hat James had ever seen. He could already tell his son would have long floppy hair as a standard, just like his Papa. James pressed the pad of his index finger to the tiny palm and watched the fingers curl around it. A chewing motion of the dark lips, again so like the boy's Papa.
“So small?” James said, not sure if he quite believed his eyes.

When a male Omega entered, in the white uniform of a nurse. “He's just gotten to sleep?” James complained. The nurse moving closer to the Omega on the bed.

The male nurse, a mixture of sympathy, hesitancy and determination insisted, “Baby needs his nourishment and it is important, little and often.”

It tore James' heart to hear the whine as Falkirk was roused to feed the baby. Following the nurse's soft instructions, James slipped in behind his mate supporting him and the baby. Eventually Falkirk made a continuous mewling sound and only quieting as the baby latched on. It amazed the Alpha how Omega males could supply enough milk when there chest didn't change that much, just a slight swelling. With the baby getting his fill Falkirk had fallen asleep.

Pulling the gown shut James let the nurse deal with the baby. Leaning back James kept a hold of Falkirk stroking his back and neck as he tucked the Omega's head under his chin. “Sleep now. Rest. You don't need to do anything.” James muttered adding his voice to supplement his scent and touch to help Falkirk feel secure and relaxed.

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At the designated visiting time Mycroft appeared with another bouquet, a large and perfectly ornate arrangement of flowers, tied with Blue(boy) and violet(Omega) ribbons. The Alpha stood as far from the baby as possible sending the child wary glances.

“It's not a bomb.” James remarked to the uncomfortable man.

Mycroft just gave his tight smile to the other Alpha and approached his brother's other side. Mycroft hesitated trying to find something to say that would not come out as obvious or condescending. Given that he heard the nurses gossiping about an unloved member of staff crossing a patient and getting her nose broken Mycroft's initial concern may not be well received.

Giving up Mycroft reluctantly acknowledged, and for his brother, indulged in his base instincts. Leaning down to nuzzle the Omega in a awkward gesture. Cheek to cheek, “You have done something spectacular.” Mycroft whispered. With Falkirk coming out of his shell over the years Mycroft half expected his brother the baulk at the praise. Feeling an increased pressure against his face and a contended sigh. Mycroft couldn't help moving down to the crook of the Omega's neck to rub and breath in his scent.

Falkirk matched the gesture scenting his brother closely. The veiled approval unclenching something deep that Falkirk no longer wanted to admit affected him. Daniel as the most senior pack Alpha had not said anything yet as far as Falkirk could remember. His mate's whispered words brought comfort and pride but not the deep seated sense of approval of a pack. So the words of the man who should be the ranking Alpha was enough for the stressed Omega for the moment.

Alec barged in disrupting the moment, immediately making a beeline for James and the baby nestled in his arms. ”Hello, Munchkin.” he said brushing a soft cheek.

Mycroft stood straight up. Fixing a bemused smile. As if he hadn't been doing anything so base, as bending over a bed, indulging in a nuzzling session.

Daniel came in weighed down under mounds of flowers, balloons, sweets and toys. “You were meant to bloody help.” Daniel growled getting a mumble and dismissive wave from Alec in return.

Shifting his legs out the way Falkirk let the Alpha dump everything in a pile. The balloons floating
up to the ceiling. A small stuffed bear rolled out of the pile 'Happy Birthday Q 2.0' embroidered on its stomach. Picking it up Falkirk smiled at the violet coloured bear. “Cyber division?” Falkirk asked, of his first posting in MI6. Daniel confirming Falkirk's suspicions. Most of the cards and toys where either masculine blue or the Omega violet.

“Who won the bets?” Falkirk asked looking through the cards.

“Maloney for the Double O pool.” Alec piped up.

“Underwood for administration, Ewan for cyber, Guy for mechanics, Partridge for the armory and I don't know for bio or chemical.” Daniel rattled off.

“Executive branch?” Falkirk asked realising everything was from individuals or groups in Q branch.

Shrugging.”Darren's dealing with them.” Daniel informed before adding “And he wants to come visit.”

“Look!” Alec called turning round to reveal the baby in his arms.

Daniel making room when Alec brought the baby over. Uncertain wide blue eyes looked up to the two men. The pert little nose making a snuffling, scenting. “Hello, little laddie” Daniel said softly, sending a smile to the boy.

A small unhappy mewl sounded causing James to almost lunge to get his baby before stopping himself. As Alec placed the baby in Falkirk's arms. Mycroft backed up as the baby got closer.

Mycroft stiffened and started issuing excuses and all but ran from the room as Falkirk opened his dressing gown. Even Daniel and Alec averted their eyes as the baby fed.

James came up beside his mate putting an arm around him. Brushing the soft dark hair of the baby with the other hand and pressing his lips to the limp hair of his mate. The trio made a picture perfect circle of a family. Mate, child, house, pack. The one thing a Double O should not have, a home, and one had formed around James.

Leaving the family in peace Alec and Daniel headed out. Passing Selene as she oversaw the changing of the shift.

James refused to leave but the staff seemed unsurprised by the Alpha's desire to remain with his Omega. A nurse came in at regular intervals to help feed the baby. After James returned the baby to his crib and the nurse had left them alone. “How about Andrew Frederick?” Falkirk said softly, liking the idea of honouring their parents but James had always been touchy on the subject of his family, ignoring it at best and outright hostile at worst.

Looking down on the small bundle wrapped in the soft blanket. “Hello, Andrew.” James said simply to the slumbering child and brushing his cheek before returning to his mate. The bed was too narrow for the two of them to sleep but James was able to perch beside Falkirk holding him close and pressing his lips to the Omega's. Falkirk fell asleep quickly in his Alpha's arms pleased his suggestion had been approved of.

A knock brought James out of his light doze. The Beta who introduced herself as a health visitor asked to speak with him alone.
Detaching himself from Falkirk. James followed the woman out. In a small informal consultation room only a few low chairs. The woman took a seat indicating James should do the same. Introducing herself as Emma as she looked through her notes.

“Your mate is in a high pressure job and is quite intendant for an Omega.” came a soft Irish accent. “He attacked an Alpha and has been seen issuing orders. This is not beneficial behaviour for an Omega.” she continued pulling out some pamphlets on Alpha/Omega relationships, targeted at teenagers.

Not liking the overly patronising and sympathetic start. James schooled his expression and being a Beta she would be unable to pick up his furious scent ques.

“To much independence can be detrimental to an Omegas. Causing insecurities and depression. Ultimately he would appreciate a firm hand and you don’t want him to set a bad example to your son. It's not uncommon for an Alpha not to know how to deal with Omega. Especially when they only have experience of Alpha or Beta partners. Omegas need more care, these will help.” Emma said handing over the pamphlets.

A knocking interrupted them, an MI6 guard immediately popped his head into the room “Th... the Prime Minister to see M.” the Alpha guard said, James' enraged scent making him stutter slightly.

“The Prime Minister can go in, alone” James ordered. The guard closed the door behind him to deliver the message.

Giving the woman his most threatening smile, “You were saying?”

“I know this may be hard to hear but I only have your Omega's best interests at heart.” She insisted.

“Could you wait here a moment.” James asked pleasantly before taking Falkirk's notes out of the woman's grasp and leaving the room.

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Waking up, Falkirk saw the tall hawk eyed Alpha looking over the side of the crib. “Prime Minister?” Falkirk called drawing the man's attention.

With a single raised brow Urquhart looked to Falkirk. “An Omega. Well if he is half as good a his parents The World Will Not Be Enough.” he drawled. The smirk the Prime Minister sent Falkirk indicating he knew the the relevance of the words. “Have you chosen a name?”

“Andrew Frederick Bond.” Falkirk informed proudly.

“A good Scottish name.” Urquhart responded, nodding.

“I thought it was Greek.” Falkirk challenged getting a soft lecture in Scots mythology. The soft precise tones of the Alpha had a hypnotic affect. Relaxing Falkirk like a bed time story.

Coming to sit on the side of the bed. “I am loathed to speak of this but I need your help?” Urquhart asked in the same soft tones.

In a dreamy voice Falkirk answered. “I will not help or hinder you or your enemies.”

“My enemies no longer need help and I do not ask for myself.”

“I will not promise anything.” Falkirk said.
“The wolves are circling and at a time like this we must know who we can turn to.” Urquhart stated before looking to Falkirk for the first time since he sat down. “I would like Elizabeth to be able to turn to you, for advice.”

Thinking back to Mycroft's request for the same thing Falkirk didn't see a reason to refuse and despite all the man in front of him had done. He had treated Falkirk with a dignity and respect that others simply didn't understand. “Two things.” Falkirk stated waiting for a nod before continuing.

“Daniel.” Falkirk prompted. Lifting his hand as high as possible to indicate the man's size. Getting a nod of recognition from the PM.

“I believe I had the pleasure.”

“Born the wrong side. His Father was Duke of Rothsea. The title was lost on his death with no male heir apparent to the title.”

Urquhart nodded again. “My sway with the King is diminished of late. But I'm sure the title could be returned to the bloodline at least.”

“Two, we must assure a smooth transition when your time comes to a close.” Falkirk said before Urquhart gave another single nod.

Urquhart could guess. “You want Gareth Mallory?”

Falkirk confirmed the Prime Minister's suspicions was correct just before a mewl interrupted them. “Would you be so kind?” Falkirk asked indicating the perspex cot a short distance from the bed.

A strange expression flickered over the Urquhart's face before he moved to comply. An Omega showing trust by allowing the non pack Alpha close to his pup. For the first time the intimidating Alpha looked unsure of himself. However, his grip of Andrew was firm, gentle and sure. Cradling the baby Urquhart mused over his regret at not having children. Passing over the baby with a last lingering touch the Prime Minister turned his back to give a semblance of privacy to the nursing Omega.

Falkirk continued to ask questions about the circling wolves as Urquhart had put it. “Someone is trying to get my Service Record released, un-redacted. A few of the small fry have been sent forth by their masters, none have drawn blood yet. Mattie Storin is also rearing its head again. You may not understand this, I do not fear an end I fear how it will end.”

“The worst fate imaginable to most of my Operatives. Is to end their time behind a desk, nine to five, income tax, mortgage, children...” Falkirk trailed off no longer wanting to think about the prospects of the ways Operatives careers came to an end.

Looking over his shoulder. He could see how uncomfortable Falkirk was. “Perhaps you do.” Urquhart said before turning back.

A knock sounded at the door. Pulling it open Urquhart was greeted with Falkirk's MI5 counterpart. Like always Smiley was in a dingy suit and long coat, already wiping his thick square glasses with his tie. “A social call?” Urquhart asked. The last time Urquhart saw C looking so harassed was when he had been feeling particularly vindictive, and George Smiley had the unfortunate position of being in front of him at the time.

“Unfortunately not, Prime Minister. MI6 reports there has been unauthorised sharing of information in the hospital.” Smiley informed. Looking to Falkirk, Urquhart waited for a nod before he let the man into the room.
Falkirk had moved onto changing the nappy as Smiley entered. “Your Q has just read me the riot act followed by Mycroft and even your mate. Apparently one of the most secure private hospital has some problems.” Smiley informed.

James arrived in time to add, “Butler and Q have removed the hospital's MI6 clearance.”

Urquhart's eye twitched at the news. Protestors had forced his car from the road a few months ago and this is where he was brought. Vivid dreams of his time in Cyprus had plagued him during that time and now people were pushing for that time in his military service to be made public. Fixing C with a cold glare. “Find every leak and, plug it!” Urquhart ordered with malice and cruelty in his cold eyes.

“M.” Urquhart said by way of goodbye and walked out.

“Report.” Falkirk snapped at the pair.

Chapter End Notes

A slight note. Mycroft, Alec, Daniel and Urquhart are trying to respect Falkirk's privacy as he nurses. This is something particularly in the older generation who are more reserved and breast feeding was considered private.
James carried Andrew, the Omega male nurse pushing the chair Falkirk was in. Any sympathy for the distressed staff was short lived after James had informed Falkirk how much the on staff health visitor had been told and her 'recommendations', dreading to think how far his information would be spreading. Special Branch and MI5 where tearing the place apart interviewing everyone.

The Governors where busting a gut at loosing MI6 security clearance and were desperately trying to keep clearance for other institutions. Relying heavily the prestigious clients that came with the full vetting that the foreign Embassies, Royalty and security services brought. That was all now in jeopardy.

The Senior member of the board of governors was baring down on the family. Drawing to a stop just in front of Falkirk's wheelchair. The white haired and rather round director said, “M, I would like to again extend the apologies of the hospital and add my personal apology for the conduct of the staff.”

The scent of the Omega nurse behind him getting more distressed by the moment. But Falkirk didn't feel it was his place to interrupt as he was not being addressed.

The Director glanced to Falkirk, following the nurse's desperate glances before dismissing him and returning his gaze to James.

James gave the man a charming smile. “Your continuing efforts towards excellence is truly remarkable.” James said getting a relieved smile from the administrator.

The Director then turned a pleasant smile on Falkirk. “Goodbye Mr McLair and congratulations.” The old doctor said to Falkirk. Then looked to James, “Sir Thomas.”

The nurse kept his head down submissively as they moved on and throughout the journey to the underground car park. Falkirk watched the Double O and bodyguard have a debate on how to secure the baby and car seat.

“Would you like the engineer to do it?” Falkirk offered pleasantly while he held Andrew.

“I have some experience with baby seats.” the driver said seeing the pair making no headway.

Growling James returned to Falkirk's side. Allowing Selene to give her consent and admit defeat for the both of them. Getting out of the front the driver came round and into the back. Pulling the tangle of safety belt and seat apart he placed the seat on the ground. Asking for the baby James reluctantly scooped the child form Falkirk's grasp. The driver first secured Andrew into his seat before placing the precious bundle in the car.

“I told you it goes back to front.” Selene hissed to James. The new father wincing when the driver tugged sharply on the safety belt making sure it was tight enough around the baby seat. Climbing out the driver proclaimed, “All done.”
Thanking him Falkirk braced to push himself up. With James' assistance Falkirk made it into the back, beside his son with James sitting opposite, with his back to the driver. Selene joined the driver up front for the short journey home.

Selene had been given charge of the baby while James helped Falkirk up the stairs to the front door. As expected the door swung open under Hudson's hand. The perfume of the bouquets filling the foyer hitting them. Keading was waiting at the bottom of the stairs. Mrs bridges was also peeking out from the entrance to the kitchen stairs.

Calling the woman out. Falkirk introduced Andrew to Hudson first then Mrs Bridges. Hudson fairly reserved just smiled at the slumbering infant while Mrs Bridges cooed excitedly, stroking his cheek.

With the introductions over James led Falkirk upstairs, Keading following with Andrew. The smaller cot had been brought into the bedroom. Sitting on the bed Falkirk watched as James placed Andrew in the crib without the baby stirring once. Pulling out Falkirk's soft flannel pyjamas and helping him change. “Keading has offered to help.” James informed.

Tucking the Omega into bed James got his laptop and phone. Accessing the MI6 networks. Falkirk started going through the active operations. Calling Darren his office phone went to voice mail as did Tanner's. Confused Falkirk looked up their schedules not seeing anything. Falkirk tried Darren's mobile.

Picking up Darren informed his boss he and Tanner where almost at the house. Warning James who had taken up position at a chair by the window, the operative went to inform Hudson.

Keading had returned. The other omega lying on the bed beside him. Falkirk accepting Polaroids, a picture of the bouquet sent and the greeting card attached to it with a paper-clip. They were organised by country then sender. Reaching the USA photos, one from the Bartlets, CIA, Daniel's brother, a personal bunch from Greer, Tony Stark, Another personal bunch from Jack Wade. “How did Stark find out. I only met him once, got ogled, and left.” Falkirk muttered, looking at the personal hand written card with a grease stained thumb print and all.

Falkirk making piles. The ones he just needed to acknowledge, meaning someone else would write the thank you in his name. And the others he would respond to personally. “White House.” Keading said handing over the square photo. Falkirk putting it in the pile for the secretary pool to deal with. The personal ones from Jeb Bartlet, with a different handwriting for his wife's signature Falkirk would write a thank you note himself(or James, the hero), just like for the flowers from Jack, Greer, Douglas Carrington and Tony.

Tanner and Darren where shown up. Both carrying more flowers and cards for the new parents. Falkirk didn't quite catch what Darren was muttering to Andrew in a much thicker than normal northern Irish accent. Tanner was looking over the Omega's shoulder observing Andrew had James' eyes and Falkirk's hair and skin tone.

“If his eyes where darker he would look just like his uncle Sherlock.” Darren said. It was nice to hear the remarks about how the child looked like his family.

“Who won the E branch pool?” Falkirk asked getting a “Me” from Darren.

Moving on Falkirk asked about the troubling reports of Double Oh One's mission in Bulgaria. “The Russians are reverting to the old ways.” Tanner informed. Apart from the background check for Villiers. Tanner offered the most mental stimulation Falkirk had for a while.
Keading cupped his hands around Falkirk's, giving silent reassurance as he held the slippery and squirming baby.

“I dropped Cody.” came the soft American voice, the dark eyes still fixed on the small bundle in their arms. “He didn't want a bath and did thus full body jerk and threw his head back. I let go with my hand to stop his head snapping back and he fell. Not far, a few inches but I screamed. Luke came running. I thought I had killed him, even when Cody was screaming his lungs out. I didn't touch him for days. When Luke put him in my hand and left us alone, I was going to call you to come get Cody. But as I held him, a second became a minute, then an hour and before I knew it Luke was bringing dinner home and I bathed Cody.

Falkirk was so rapt by the story, he hadn't noticed Keading had pulled his hands back and he was holding Andrew, by himself. Keading put a tiny spot of shampoo on his finger tip and swept his hand over the head of dark hair. Falkirk keeping the bubbles from reaching the light blue eyes.

Hearing the mewl. Then the wail. Falkirk threw back the covers. Going to the small cot shrouded in shadow, James helping to support him. Falkirk's movement still quite delicate. Picking up the small bundle, wiping the tears from the eyes. It was a familiar process before the soft lips circled his nipple and started suckling. The feedings were still short and often. Shifting Andrew to his shoulder, a small burp. Falkirk lay the already asleep boy back down. James stroked the soft and wild hair before following his mate back to the bed.

“I feel like a cow.” Falkirk complained, the humming pump attached to his chest. James slid in behind him. The rough chin resting on his exposed shoulder.

“Well it will mean you can have a full night's rest.” James consoled, watching the small bag fill with the milk.

The night came and Falkirk heard the mewl. The bed dipped and shifted. The deep and rumbling voice of his Alpha and the mewl quietened. The omega was asleep again, by the time James opened the door. Taking Andrew to get his milk warmed.

Upstairs, in the nursery. A kettle was boiled and the small bag of milk was warmed, then attached to the teat. It wasn't the first time Andrew had taken a bottle, but he still wasn't sure about it. He did eventually latch on.

James paced, his son in the crook of his arm. The big eyes going heavy but still suckling. Pulling the bottle away. James scented the brand new omega. The smell so peaceful. Coming out of the nursery and down the flight of stairs and back into his room. James placed his son down, kissing his forehead, “Goodnight, little Andrew.”

James climbed back into bed and put a secure arm around the bigger Omega. Burying his nose on the mane of hair, smelling the fatigue that was mixed with the other scents that made up his Omega.
After a week Falkirk was able to move about again without James' steadying hand aiding him. Today James and Falkirk where going to interview three nannies for Andrew. Falkirk was reticent to employ someone but Keading had his own desires to follow and didn't want to burden him.

The library had been rearranged slightly for the interviews. Falkirk's desk remained where it was on the left. The coffee table had been moved in front of the window so a single chair could be placed a distance from the front of the desk. James sat off to the side beside the coffee table while Falkirk sat behind his desk.

Falkirk had the three CVs in front of him along with the Criminal Record Checks, Security assessments and references. “Nanny Granger,” Hudson announced. The first was a veteran from a prestigious college and dressed in its full beige uniform, of skirt, blazer and white blouse. Omega, she held her head high and unhesitating.

The hawk like eyes where the first thing Falkirk noticed. The black/greying hair was held in a tight bun. It was bad to say so but Falkirk took an instant dislike to the woman. James instructed her to take a seat. The instruction split her attention between Falkirk in front and James to her side, almost behind her. Falkirk could tell his mate didn't like her either.

No one's employment history is spotless so Falkirk hadn't been too concerned about a few things in Granger's past. Using a few glossed over events Falkirk asked, “Why did you leave the Greysons after only four years?”

Listening to the explanation Falkirk wasn't convinced. “This is your third interview?” Falkirk observed expectantly.

“I don't quite understand?” Granger responded.

“Why have you been turned down twice when you are apparently perfect?” James said.

Bringing the interview to an end, “I would like to make further enquiries before we continue,” Falkirk said standing. Knowing she hadn't gotten the job Granger walked out Hudson immediately coming in.

Coming over to Falkirk, the older, blond butler leaned down, “Mr Style has arrived, he is not an Omega.” Hudson informed.

“1 am aware.” Falkirk responded looking to James unsure of how he would take the prospect.

The next a beta, the only non specially trained nanny and also the oldest. She had worked in several prestigious households. Again she had sharp eyes, a shade of hazel, hidden behind a pair of rectangular half glasses. Her hair was short and grey without even a hint of colour.

Dressed in a skirt suit of muted Argyll pattern. Her deep cultured voice resonated as she spoke. Fairly abrupt in her answers which Falkirk didn't mind and James would respond well to. Making a good impression with impeccable references and experience going back fifty years. She had worked with minor royalty and even security service personnel. Thanking her for her time Falkirk said they would be in touch in the next few days.

“Nanny, Styles.” Hudson announced the next candidate. Walking into the room underneath the suspicious gaze of Hudson to be met by James' openly hostile glare. The Alpha in the masculine version of the same beige uniform as the first candidate. A sharp glare from Falkirk silently telling
James to behave. Not overly tall for an Alpha the emerald eyes not as hawkish as the previous two. With shocking red hair and clean shaven he was well turned out. Hudson gave the Alpha one last glance before closing the door.

Highly educated and having trained in two households. This would be his first time as the Nanny. Falkirk had gotten used to dealing with Alpha males with only James able to influence him now. He even thought Styles would make a good bodyguard given some training. Handling himself throughout the interview well. When Falkirk asked if James had anything he wanted to ask his Alpha just shook his head.

Standing, “Thank you for the opportunity.” Styles said sincerely, nodding to Falkirk then James.

“NO!” James decreed the moment the door closed behind the Alpha. Seeing his Alpha's heckles raised Falkirk acquiesced to his Alpha's desire.

“Very well.” Falkirk responded getting a growl in return.

“Don't do that.” James demanded. When Falkirk looked at him curiously James continued. “I am not being unreasonable. I have to live with that Alpha” James said reference to Hudson. Falkirk could understand James' position. James could accept Hudson due to the age difference but Styles was too much of a threat to an Alpha.

“Miss Jenkins it is then.” Falkirk said.

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Giving his son a nuzzle Falkirk straightened up. James was still home but the prospect of leaving the infant was weighing heavily on the Omega. With a final look at father and son Falkirk descended the stairs to the waiting car. Falkirk had been to MI6 several times but only for a few hours at a stretch. Today would be his first full day back.

In the four days since last being at MI6. A mound of paperwork had amassed on Falkirk's desk. First things first Falkirk sent out an official communication to all station ordering a summery of the last twelve months operations. Next came the department heads, arranging a snap meeting for the afternoon.

With a cup of tea Falkirk started proceeding through the paper work. Coming to lunchtime Tanner entered Falkirk's office, “Double O Four is about to make his initial assault.”

Nodding Falkirk followed Tanner taking some of the paper work with him to the E branch situation room. Almost empty as it was Deputy Director Butler, in the alternate site, overseeing the operation. Falkirk was just going to listen in.

Going through the paper work as Masood relayed his progress through to Butler. Flicking his eyes up every so often to the images being supplied by the drone as Masood moved through the compound. Groaning as the Operative took off in a roof top chase “Why must they always over complicate things?” Falkirk complained.

Seeing the direction 004 was headed Falkirk opened the line to Butler. “He had better not make it to the Embassy.” Falkirk snapped. The statement was quickly relayed to 004 by the Deputy Director.

Watching the Operative pick up the pace. The target lunged forward, to collapse at the checkpoint of an embassy. Masood melting back into the crowd. When an embassy guard turned over the target's body, it was clear the he wasn't just injured. Opening the line to Butler again, “Good job.”
Falkirk remarked.

“From on high, good job.” Butler relayed

The reports from the Stations started arriving on schedule and the Department meeting went off without a hitch. It was pleasantly familiar when Mallory arrived at the end of the day to escort his Spouse home. Coming into Falkirk's office he was offered a drink. “I missed this.” Mallory lamented taking an appreciative sip of the bourbon.

“I was made Deputy PM.” Mallory observed suspiciously, to Falkirk.


“Come off it. Urquhart has suppressed, oppressed and humiliated every opponent. I am his most outspoken critic and now I'm Deputy Prime Minister. And I am led to believe you had nothing do with it.”

“You may say that, I couldn't possibly comment.” Falkirk shot back earning a smile at the use of the Prime Minister's favourite quote.

“I'm ready.” Darren called coming into the office. Watching the couple leave Falkirk absently packed up as well.

Arriving home Falkirk immediately went up stairs to the nursery. Where Nanny Jenkins was feeding Andrew from a bottle. A look crossed her face, too quickly for Falkirk to identify as he took over. Sitting in the rocking chair Falkirk hummed as Andrew finished his bottle. Lifting him up to his shoulder Falkirk patted and rubbed until a deep burp sounded. The scent of the baby shampoo mixed with the unique scent of the Omega. Picking up on something similar to James' scent but not quite as strong or intoxicating. Suddenly Falkirk became aware of the scent getting far stronger, oppressive, almost masking everything. “James.” Falkirk breathed opening his eyes to see the Alpha standing at the door way.

“Dinner is served.” James informed coming to help Falkirk place the sleeping baby in his crib. With Andrew down for the night Jenkins left for the evening.

Sitting down for the meal. “How has Jenkins been?” Falkirk asked casually.

“Traditional. Doesn't like her routine interrupted 'bad for baby' “ James responded.
Falkirk was sitting on the floor with James laying on the couch behind him. Andrew had grown a lot in his first months. As tummy time dictated, Andrew was on his stomach, a bit like a parachuter in free fall, with his back arched and lifting his oversized head up a bit. With a complex shifting of his disproportionate weight the baby had got his left knee under himself and was almost able to roll over all on his own.

James reached down and under his son. With his father's supporting some of his weight Andrew was able to push himself up. A few uncoordinated flail of the arms and legs before he still to rest from the exertions. “I'm going to miss him crawling. I'll miss so much.” James observed. It was a conversation Falkirk and James had had dozens of times over the passed week.

In the run up to James' first mission Falkirk could sense the trepidation in his mate. The logical, analytical part of Falkirk's mind was concerned for Operative's welfare. Was he still able to perform as an Operative given his changing priorities. The Omega part of him chastised him for doubting his Alpha and even his experience made Falkirk have doubt over his concerns.

Looking at James' face as he continued to touch the boy. Falkirk knew that some things still had not changed, James was still a lone wolf. He would be part of a pack as long as he could come and go. Stretching an arm Falkirk ran his fingers over the short pale hair of his alpha and down to his neck. James turned from watching Andrew and Falkirk leaned in and pressed his lips to his Alpha and mate. “You will return, Double O Seven.” Falkirk said, pulling back.

Subtly Falkirk had arranged for James to be assigned a mission that barely passed as a Double O level. Suspecting James knew what he was doing, James still voiced his concerns about the upcoming mission.

With the determination and iron will that had seen James throughout his life he prepared for his mission. When the day came Falkirk held Andrew as he waved James away. It was with joy and sorrow, that Falkirk supported his son's weight and the boy managed to move forward, in what would be come a crawl in time.

It amazed Falkirk how quickly Andrew progressed. The baby was working his arms and legs, shuffling along on his tummy, a bit like a commando. Every so often getting his knees under him and able to give a good push forward. Especially when Falkirk had an idea. Placing Andrew, dressed in his soft flannel onesie, on the polished wooden floor. Andrew was able to slide forward and about with much more ease. At which point Falkirk realised he was testing a hypothesis on his son, and gauging how fast he could move. About a quarter meter in three minuets. Followed by a memory of finding Sherlock doing something similar with a poor mouse.

Falkirk crouched down and scooped up the boy, getting a mewl for disturbing him. Giving his son
a nuzzle and a kiss to the chubby cheek. He handed Andrew over to Nanny Jenkins. Brushing a cheek, “Goodbye little one.” Falkirk said and gave a wave.

Tanner was in the parking garage when Falkirk arrived. The Chief of Staff pulled his door open. “M, there is a report from immigration. General Pushkin arrived an hour ago.”

Falkirk nodded in understanding. “Do we know why he is here?”

“Working on it. The news only filtered down to us about it five minutes ago.”

On the way up to E Branch. Tanner's phone beeped as they stepped off the lift. “He's here, in the lobby.”

Falkirk nodded to the lift doors. “Take your time.” Falkirk ordered. He then headed to his office while Tanner went to greet the head of the Russian Intelligence Service.

Sitting in his office. Falkirk pulled up the newest intelligence on the General. There was too much information for the five minutes it took for Tanner to escort the man himself up to E branch. Although, Tanner did managed to stretched out the journey to nearly ten minutes but it still didn't give Falkirk time to find something.

The balding man, with black hair at the sides of his head and a wispy dark beard appeared. Falkirk stood to shake the man's red and pudgy hand. “I hope you bring glad tidings?” Falkirk said and indicated the man to have a seat.

“No, unfortunately.” Pushkin said, his thick Russian accent rolling and soft. From his briefcase he pulled out two folders, explaining one was the original the other a translated version. Accepting them Falkirk sent the original for authentication and read over the English version.

Despite it being just after 8am in London and 10am in Moscow when Falkirk offered a drink Pushkin took it. The old Russian lamented the lack of Vodka. Falkirk continued to read. Although he shouldn't, after several more pages Falkirk poured himself a small glass of bourbon well.

Finishing he sat back, crossing his legs and clasping his hand on his knee. The posture made him look willow and spindly, with the pale wood of his mackintosh chair reaching the top of his head. Falkirk had been told he looked a little like a vampire on his throne when he sat like that.

Darren's Irish drawl sounded over the intercom. “M, Line 1.”

Falkirk knew his PA wouldn't interrupt lightly. Lifting the handset he connected to the line. Mallory was the chosen spokesman, he made the Government's position clear. Hanging up. Pushkin likely suspected that it was the British government making its position clear and said, “If Papava is handed over we can end this quickly.”

Knowing he couldn't afford a rogue operative and with Mallory and the Foreign Secretary wanting to avoid a full diplomatic incident. “I will consider it. Only after we have verified your accusations against Double O One.” Falkirk said.

“And don't take too long,” The General said and pushed himself up.

The moment he was out. Falkirk rested his arms on the desk. In a fit of anger, curled his fingers, gouging a scratch on his desk. “Shit!”
The rapid thudding of a jack hammer cut through Falkirk's head. The chimney of the fireplace being dismantled. The men in white forensic suits worked to expose the back of the safe that had been found. The door on the inside of the chimney shaft, but after failing with the lock they were going for bruit force. When the square of grey metal was visible the workmen switched to a torch.

Falkirk paced the small lounge while the safe was cut into. When they arrived, minutes after Pushkin had left MI6, the one bed flat had been all precise and squared lines. Blocky furniture. Lots of hard glass, pale wood. All very Scandinavian. Now it was a building site, being torn to pieces.

With a clunk the men pulled an oval of thick metal from the safe. They pulled out the files, bundles of cash and documents. Falkirk's eyes snapping to a pink file, with the hammer and sickle. He recognised an official KGB hard copy.

Pulling out his phone, ready to take photos so the translators could get to work. But as he pulled the red ribbon. Falkirk sighed, at the very front was an image of the parents of Scarlett Papava, dead, execution wounds to their head. There were other photos further back, in their proper place in the file. He took the photos and within moments he received a call. Tanner saying, “It's an order to purge a village. Between age and the accusations made by the FSB against Double O One. Only Pushkin is left alive. He was a Corporal at the time.”

Coming out of the flat and down the communal stairs. Scrubbing his face, wondering where 001 got the document from. Or who gave it to her. Real KGB hard copies were like chicken's teeth. It was one of only a few Falkirk knew of.

Selene falling in as he stepped out onto the pavement and approached his car.

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Working away in his library Falkirk could hear Mr Hudson and Nanny Jenkins coming down the stairs. The front door opened and closed. The soft Scots accent drifted through the house followed by rapid shuffling and squeals of delight. Andrew soon appeared at the doorway of the library. Like a little express train the now mobile Andrew made a beeline for his Papa. When Hudson stepped into the room he stiffened at seeing Falkirk. “I was not aware you were here?” he said coming to pick up Andrew.

Waving the man off, “I'm leaving soon.” Falkirk informed.

“I was just letting the little one explore, work out his territory.” Hudson explained.

A vague and old memory surfaced of sneaking down stairs trying not to be seen by the strangers that seemed to live down there. Then Hudson following him through out the house, never directly. Just when Falkirk turned around the man would be crossing the hall, entering or exiting another room. A silent shadow and guardian, who would always call 'Sir' or 'Madam' a little louder than necessary and give him time to vanish, run or hide.

Falkirk looked transfixed as Andrew grabbed the handle of a drawer and levered himself up right, just for a moment before he collapsed onto a heap. Mewling at the jolt. Falkirk reached down to pick up the sniffling child. After a nuzzle and a bit of codling. Falkirk placed Andrew back down and with a pat on the backside he started crawling off as fast as his arms and legs could move. Hudson acting as the ever faithful shadow, following Andrew in his exploring.

Arriving at MI6, and heading down into the understructure. Getting his instructions from Q Branch Falkirk accepted an injection with an instruction he could not feed Andrew for the next two weeks.
The chemist handed Falkirk a vial, “For oral administration.” she instructed.

Moving off Daniel followed expressing his concerns for Falkirk and his plan. “It's the best solution.” Falkirk reiterated.

“I meant you going. Let me?” The Scotsman said.

Falkirk shook his head, “I need to be the one.”

Meeting Selene and the tactical team in the garage they headed to the airport. Falkirk hated the small planes more than the large ones and if he was unable to feed anyway he decided to make sure he could have a green widow on board. He sipped the matt green drink as the coffin sized plane moved toward the destination, thinking of what awaited him he gulped down the entire glass.

Arriving in Budapest. On the tarmac, the line of MI6 stood toe to toe with its FSB counterpart. Greeting the man he had seen in London about a month before, “You will not act until I say so.” Falkirk ordered.

Pushkin wore the concealed suspicion expected of his position when dealing with M. Reiterating, “You have one chance to end this without a bloodbath. M.” Falkirk ignored the man's threat.

Arriving at the five star hotel. A white marble building of the old and opulent Russian era. General Pushkin waited out of the way somewhere with a MI6 minder. Pushkin's final remainder ringing in his ears, “If we do not get Papava there will be repercussions.”

Falkirk and Selene where shown to the suite. A plush set of rooms decorated in polished white marble and deep pile rugs. Gold fixtures and small crystal chandlers.

Finding the mini bar Falkirk popped the lid to Papava’s favourite brand of vodka. Taking the bottle Falkirk poured a shot and downed it in one, placing the used glass on the table. He then emptied the Q branch vial into the bottle before replacing the cap and making sure it was mixed in.

Placing a clean glass beside the used and with the bottle between. With some time before the Operative was to return Falkirk explored the suite. Pacing out the perimeter he entered the adjoining bedroom. Like most Double O’s there was nothing that the Operative couldn't leave if she needed to.

The spotter announced 001’s arrival. Taking a seat Falkirk poured himself another shot. Making a show of sipping it as he read over the Russian evidence of Papava’s rogue assassinations. The door swung open and Selene glared at the operative as she entered.

“Been up to anything interesting?” Falkirk asked casually. Pouring the other glass, Falkirk sipping his own. The white blond woman with pale blue eyes and hard expression on her beautiful flawless face kept a careful eye on Selene as she sat across from M. Finish his drink Falkirk refilled his own, taking note that Papava hadn't touched her glass. Taking a sip Falkirk placed the Russian evidence down and with a sweep of a hand the photos and documents spread across the table.

“Been up to anything interesting?” Falkirk asked casually. Pouring the other glass, Falkirk sipping his own. The white blond woman with pale blue eyes and hard expression on her beautiful flawless face kept a careful eye on Selene as she sat across from M. Finish his drink Falkirk refilled his own, taking note that Papava hadn't touched her glass. Taking a sip Falkirk placed the Russian evidence down and with a sweep of a hand the photos and documents spread across the table.

With a challenging look Papava leant forward to take Falkirk’s glass, using the movement to disguise the unsheathing of her gun. Downing Falkirk's glass in one Papava sat back with the gun resting on her lap, casually pointed at Falkirk, a careful eye on Selene. “They deserved death.”

“There is no doubt of that. But you have acted autonomously, in detriment to British interests.” Falkirk shot back.

Papava chuckled, taunting, “Double O states revoked? Under arrest?”
“You know we're too late for that now.” Falkirk informed with a sad smile.

Switching her challenging look to Selene. “Your attack dog isn't good enough.” Papava said.

When neither Selene or Falkirk did anything, Papava started to get concern. Seeing the same sad smile on M's face Papava pulled her gun fully out and tried to target the Omega. With motor skills diminishing Papava couldn't make a coordinated movement. The gun falling from her lax grasp.

Getting up Falkirk moved round to sit beside the distressed Operative.”I killed you five minutes ago.” Falkirk informed.

“But, you drank, I drank your...” Papava insisted.

“A Q branch trick.” Falkirk informed as he wrapped an arm around the operative allowing her to slump against him. Pillowing the Alpha's head in his lap Falkirk stroked her hair.

“I'm not going to Pushkin?” Papava begged in distressed tones.

“No.” Falkirk responded adamantly. Starting to stroke the hair that was in a tight bun.

“He murdered them, everyone...” the Operative's voice was becoming slurred now. Her eyes getting heavy.

“I know.” Falkirk responded softly his eyes glistening. His green eyes looking up, in an effort to stop the tears from falling.

“So close, only Pushkin... Please, just one more, Pushkin...”

With the operative dying in his lap Falkirk couldn't bring himself to deny her anything. “I will finish him, for you.” Unsure if she heard or not as Falkirk noticed Papava was now unnaturally still.

Wiping his eyes Falkirk nodded to Selene who called in the private paramedics. Papava was covered in a white blanket and strapped to the gurney.

Pushkin entered with a couple Russian minders in tow. “You were meant to hand her over, Alive!” Pushkin demanded.

“You did not specify alive and Raoul Silva put an end to that policy.” Falkirk shot back.

Falkirk though about asking for the body but he just knew, Pushkin in act of spit would either deny him or do something he wouldn't be able to restrain himself with. And now wasn't the time to fulfil his promise. Walking out Falkirk couldn't look back to the deceased Operative or FSB director.

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Arriving back in London. Falkirk gave the driver an address. Unfamiliar with the address the driver looked to Selene who shrugged then nodded. Pulling up to the private home with police guarding it. After assessing his credentials Falkirk was allowed to approach the private property and retreat from the chaos of the official residence.

A poised female Alpha, with shoulder length dark hair opened the door with a confused expression on her face. “M?” Elizabeth Urquhart greeted. Allowing Falkirk in she showed him to the living room.
“M, my boy.” Frances Urquhart called. Offering him a whisky the PM pulled himself up from the gaudy floral print couch.

“I was looking for an empathetic ear.” Falkirk said taking the offered whiskey from the lean and tall old man. A white eyebrow raised in confusion at the prospect of being empathetic.

“The Russian situation?” Urquhart asked having been briefed on the Double O's actions and the pieces clicking into place. “To turn over someone under your command...”

“At what point would you believe that, I would hand over a valuable asset. At best she would be interrogated before she was killed. At the worst she would be turned and sent back to us as an enemy.” Falkirk shot back cutting through the PM's placating words.

Urquhart gave a single nod and a “Ah!” of acknowledgement. Understanding what had happened.

“She died in my arms.” Falkirk admitted.

With something better than compassion, understanding, Urquhart said, “Sometimes the hardest choice is the kindest option.”

Falkirk knew the PM had an obscure sense of ethics but now the reassurance of his decision was welcome. A distant look passed over the PM's face and the sharp blue eyes clouded with memories of his own.

Elizabeth appeared at Falkirk's arm with the bottle. Falkirk held up the glass for a refill. “Have you eaten?” she asked. Thanking Elizabeth and politely declining. Falkirk turned his attention to the PM as his wife disappeared from view again.

The soft melodic tones of the Prime Minster rumbled and purred gently, thick with emotion. “It needed to be done, it was the kindest option but we are the ones who bear the legacy. Given you are here now, and I believe you may have mentioned it before. Those men, the informers, they couldn't go back. What awaited them was horrors and torture, they were traitors to their own. With me it was as quick and painless as I could achieve. I believe I did the better thing that day by my Agents. Just as you did the better thing by your Operative this day.”

Despite Falkirk's protests. Elizabeth placed down a plate of Salmon sandwiches, in triangles with the crusts cut off. Urquhart assured his wife was a bastion of trust. Falkirk caught her eye and she had a calculating and weighing gleam in her brown eyes. She was just like her husband in many regards. Thanking her Falkirk picked up a sandwich and ate it. “You are most welcome, M.” she said with a soft smile, flicking her gaze between the two men. Attempting to lighten the mood she thanked Falkirk again for the invitation to MI6 which led to gossip of the King joining the Scots Guards.

Urquhart quietly informing, “The King washed out. Couldn't meet the physical challenge. Or the mental. Walked off base and didn't look back. Should be in the stockade for an AWOL. Your Brother and Gareth are brushing that one under the carpet as we speak.”

“What about the Air Force Regiment? They are known to be less, taxing.” Falkirk offered. A little concerned, a failure would allow Urquhart to regain control over the King.

“Hardly prestigious.” Urquhart responded.

Deciding it might be time to take the toy away from both posturing Alphas. Falkirk offered, “What if he was prepared?” Earning an intrigued look from the PM. “I could arrange for private training to military standards.”
“That would certainly get the stick about. Let’s try the Navy, where we can avoid sending him to the problem areas and out of the active combat-zones. I believe you have some sway with the First Sea Lord?” Urquhart mused. Falkirk acknowledged and made a note.

Thanking Urquhart for his company and Elizabeth for her hospitality. A brief silent exchanged between the pair before Elizabeth asked, “M, it is tradition for M to have philanthropic affiliation. If you would be willing, my guild has many charities coming to speak, you may find something that you feel strongly for.” Agreeing Falkirk gave Elizabeth his card to arrange a time.

Arriving home, pushing the door open a lingering scent caught Falkirk’s attention. Following the pheromone trail to his bedroom. Falkirk stripped off climbing into bed. An appreciative low rumbling growl welcomed Falkirk home. And he was pulled into the arms of the slumbering Alpha.

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Waking up to James nuzzling him while an erection ground into him. “Missed you.” Falkirk mumbled getting a possessive growl in response. The aroused pheromones had the Omega responding. All he had to do was arch his back and the instinctive thrust from the Alpha rubbed his cock over the relaxed and slick opening. A change of angle and the Alpha didn’t even need to guide his erection, the Omega’s body welcoming his Alpha in.

Washed and dressed. James came up behind his Omega wrapping his arms around him and with quick efficient movements he tied the half Windsor knot before shutting the waistcoat and buttoning it up. Turning Falkirk around he folded down the collar and straightened the tie.

“Perfect!” James proclaimed with a nuzzle and a kiss to the pert nose. Holding out the pinstripe suit jacket James played the perfect valet for his mate.

Coming down stairs Nanny Jenkins was waiting with Andrew. Hudson setting out breakfast. James plucked the baby from the Nanny’s grasp nuzzling him. Having breakfast James kept Andrew in his lap while Falkirk ate. Taking Andrew Falkirk entertained the baby until Selene arrived for the trip to MI6.

Falkirk placed the powder-blue onesie wearing baby down. Patting the padded bottom Andrew took off like an express train towards his Father. James crouched down and scooped up the boy and raising him high, with a wide surprised smile on the Alpha’s face and a squeal of delight from the boy.

James and Andrew followed Falkirk to the door and with a nuzzle and kiss to both Falkirk waved goodbye.

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Filling out the form for Scarlett Papava to be added to the memorial wall. Falkirk moved on to the other work. Seeing James’ post mission debrief online. Falkirk started reading. Shaking his head only James could turn a simple mission into a threat to world peace. Falkirk did notice since James started answering to someone who had kicked the shit out of him, little of what he did made it to the press.

By the time Alec arrived in Falkirk’s office in the afternoon. The speculation on Papava was all through the building. Only Falkirk and Selene knew for certain what happened in the room but the speculation was close enough.

Seeing the leaner blond Double O arrive. Falkirk waved Alec in. The debrief with Alec were
always a little stiff, too close for a proper commander/subordinate relationship. But Alec had always accepted Falkirk as M. Pulling up the interviews and evidence from the debriefing after the mission. Alec having purged the asylum trail through Europe, of some of the worse and more organised terrorist elements.

Falkirk couldn't look the operative in the eye by the time the debrief came to an end. Issuing a sharp “Dismissed!” Alec hesitated before complying.

When Mallory arrived at the end of the day they had a pleasant drink together as usual. The Russian Ambassador had spoken to the Prime Minister about how Falkirk had resolved the situation. Mallory continued to explain, the PM already knew what had happened when the representative tried to shock him with the actions of M. “The PM seemed less than sympathetic to the Russian's plight or concerned by your conduct.” Mallory finished up.

'So Mallory knew' Falkirk thought.“Mycroft isn't to know.” Falkirk ordered, tone hard.

“He may already.” Mallory supplied.

Falkirk packed up before Mallory and Darren had left E branch. Selene caught up to Falkirk as he moved through the office. There was something off about the woman as they rode the night time streets. Arriving home Selene followed Falkirk up the steps into the house.

Falkirk almost walked into the door when it didn't open immediately. When the door was pulled open, it wasn't the yellow blond of an older Alpha, but the prime of his Alpha. The cold crystal blue eyes screaming a warning to Falkirk. Alec was standing at the entrance to the lounge when Falkirk stepped into the foyer. Selene closed the door behind her.

“No Hudson? No Daniel?” Falkirk speculated getting a shake of the head from James on both counts.

“I take it Mycroft will not be the only one making a mountain out of a mole hill.” Falkirk accused. Walking through to the library, his most comfortable location in the house.

“You killed, deliberately with premeditation. For What?” Alec challenged watching Falkirk take the seat behind the desk.

“Ninety eight people have died on my orders, two by my hand. As for the why, a licence to kill protects you from prosecution, not from enemies and allies when you start murdering whoever you feel like.” Falkirk said.

“The fact you remember is dangerous.” James said forcefully.

“Three hundred and seventy two.” Falkirk responded, before looking at the three in turn “Olivia Mansfield remembered her count. You are the instruments, less blunt than a drone and truly surgical, there to see if we missed something or make sure we don't hit the school or hospital next door. You are given the goal or target, it is people like me who decide on the goal or target.” Falkirk accused trying to reign in his anger.

Felling guilt over Papava, getting waylaid by the three and having the only support segregated was unacceptable. Clasping his hands Falkirk closed his eyes a moment before opening them. Alec, James and Selene all became uncomfortable with the hard stare as good as Olivia Mansfield had ever delivered. “You may be acting out of some sort of concern, but, your conduct dose not support that perception. Make your point quickly. As of now your careers, your very freedom depends on it.”
“Falkirk?” Alec started, until he was subjected to the sole focused intensity of M's hard glare “M.” Alec corrected before tailing off dropping his head. Even James seemed to have lost his voice. With a force of will James kept his head straight while the other two dropped into a submissive poses.

“Double O Six, Ms Corvin indefinite suspension. Double.. Double O... DOUBLE O Seven.”

“Will be the same.” a hard Scots accent called coming into the library. Daniel stood with Hudson a few paces behind him, both in coats and the butler still wearing his bowler hat.

“You are aware Angus Hudson was an MI6 agent. Did it cross you mind that he is still every bit MI6 that everyone else is?” Falkirk accused, looking at James.

“No, M.” James answered. Looking a little sheepish.

“Andrew? Jenkins?” Falkirk demanded still looking to James.

“With Keading, M.” he responded.

“Andrew will be back in ten minutes or else. GET OUT!”

James, Alec and Selene scrambled out of the room. Falkirk shouting to the still open door, “OF THE HOUSE!”

Hudson's superior and disapproving glare following as they passed him. The butler followed, closing the library door behind him.

Falkirk crumbled at the quiet snick of the door. Immediately Daniel gathered Falkirk up. The distressed Omega's knees buckling and Daniel controlling their descent to the floor and shifting the smaller man to his lap. Tucking Falkirk's head under his chin. Daniel stroked his back and neck.

“You want me to kick the shit out of them?” Daniel offered. It was proof how much it had hurt when Falkirk just clung tighter instead of dismissing the offer.

Not even ten minutes later a soft knock sounded. Hesitantly a dark head peeked round the door “Andrew's home, he's asleep. I put him in his crib.” Keading informed. He was fidgeting and reeking of fear.

“Thanks.” Daniel answered for Falkirk who was awake and completely still.

The door opened again a few minutes later. Keading had a mound of blankets and cushions in his arms. Approaching the Alpha sitting on the floor. Keading built up a cocoon around them. Sitting beside Daniel and pulling the cocoon closed. Keading lay his head next to Falkirk's on Daniel's broad chest.

With an Omega under each arm Daniel relaxed as best he could given the cramped overly warm conditions. Eventual the Omegas started exchanging caresses until they were in continuous contact with each other as well as the Alpha.

“Why dose he have to be a prick?” Falkirk begged, letting the tears slip out.

There was a deep sharp breath from the broad chest. The Scots brogue was rough and deep, “The answer is the same as before. You are not an Alpha to him. If you were, you would have cut him down at every act of insubordination. In time he would be forced to submit to you, even in the decisions he disagreed with, or he would have to leave. You have never challenged and asserted
yourself over him so he will always challenge you with the decisions he doesn't agree with or doesn't understand.”

“But Selene and Alec?” Falkirk whined.

Daniel wanted to rage but one Omega was having an existential crisis, reeking of despair and doubting himself. The other had been dragged into a situation, by his Alpha who should have known better, reeking of fear over what was happening. Daniel squeezed both a both a bit tighter. Closing his eyes, he found his centre, calming the biological response to the pheromones and slowed his heart rate.

"If Alec and Selene could see the world as you do. They would be M, making the decisions. They are not M because they can't put the situation ahead of their own feelings. For what it is wroth, I would have done the same as you, perhaps not poison. Mansfield would have given her over to the Russians, like she did Silva with the Chinese. But you know all this, don't let three short-sighted Operatives make you doubt yourself. “

Chapter End Notes

That's the last of the big Alpha/Omega arguments between James and Falkirk I promise. In the first Falkirk completely submitted to his Alpha, needing M and Daniel to go up against James for him. In the second he couldn't fight James but didn't submit. Now he stood firm and didn't submit. There will be a bit more context to the fight next chapter.
Final Card Arc: Discipline

Chapter Notes

Thanks for reading.

Some last moment changes and edits to this chapter and probably next. Edited something out earlier in the series and forgot to put it back in before I conclude Urquhart's part of the story. So there might be some more typos and mixed words.

Daniel stiffly stretched disturbing the two slumbering Omegas he was wrapped around. Falkirk was able to wash and change. Then fed Andrew his morning bottle, under the hard gaze of the Nanny. Daniel was going to wait until he arrived at Q branch where he had extra clothing and could shower.

Nanny Jenkins held Andrew as Falkirk headed for the door. Seeing James skulking down the street with a clear view of the door and Selene down the other end. Falkirk looked to the butler holding the door open, “James is not to set foot in this house.” Falkirk ordered. Getting a sharp response, “Yes, sir.”

Giving Andrew a last nuzzle Falkirk followed Daniel to the waiting car. The last thing Falkirk saw as the car pulled away, Keading and Cody heading towards Selene. The Alpha pulling the slightly smaller omega against her.

Entering his office. Darren's strange hazel eyes followed Falkirk, seeming to know something was up. Further confirming his suspicions when Falkirk said, “Call Brayan.”

The tall blond Alpha with aqua eyes, came into Falkirk's office, still sporting the shaggy hair that often strayed to beyond regulation length. He had been a shadow of the office for a while, a vigilant guard that often stood at the entrance to E Branch. An Alpha who had taken a shine to him after escorting Falkirk, when James had been shot and reported killed in Turkey.

The backup bodyguard took an easy stance, with his hands clasped at the small of his back and feet shoulder width apart. “Mr Brayan, Ms Corvin has been relieved of her duties. You are now my primary bodyguard. Familiarise yourself with my schedule. Ms Corvin is not expected to be a security risk, so her pre-existing plans shouldn't need to be altered.”

The blond acknowledged and Falkirk dismissed him. Coming to his door Falkirk watched the bodyguard go to the office on the right where Selene organised the security detail for M.

Calling in Tanner they reviewed the potential Double O missions. Finding something suitable Falkirk assigned it to Suzi Kew, a Beta of Japanese ancestry. Calling her in. Falkirk handed her the mission brief. Tanner and Falkirk filling in details they had picked up but had not made it into the brief.

Like most Betas, to Falkirk she seemed indistinct. He could pass Kew in the street with barely a notice. Even the strip of crimson dyed hair wasn't enough to make an impact. Absently musing he was either sexiest towards Betas or his perception was right and there weren't enough Betas to take much notice of. Standing Falkirk said, “Good Speed, Miss Kew. Report to Q-Branch, Dismissed.”
The woman in the short grey skirt suit pulled open the door and headed out. “Wait.” Falkirk called, Tanner about to follow the Operative out. “Close the door.”

It was the moment he was dreading, the moment he uttered the words there would be no containing them. “Double Oh Six, Seven and Selene Corvin are to be placed on indefinite suspension for insubordination and improper dissemination of in-field actions.” Falkirk informed. Tanner went through the procedure, if the two Operatives and bodyguard challenged Falkirk's decision, if they didn't, if the failed or succeeded.

In the boardroom attached to E-Branch. Falkirk sat between Tanner and Daniel, at the head of the oval table. A woman, who should have been Darren as M's PA but the Omega couldn't type fast enough to take proper dictation of the meeting, even though it was also being recorded.

James, Alec and Selene where called in. The three sitting at the foot. Falkirk went through the standard advisement they should have legal representation. The repercussions, up to and including execution for the charges that were being levelled against them. All three declined a lawyer and understood, their fate was in the hands of M.

“You are Double O, former and or current. A bodyguard. There are things that occur that you are not told of. Unless asked for your opinion, everything is 'Need to Know'. To challenge M, is inappropriate.” Falkirk said. He had written this down, but it was so hard with the eyes weighing on him. But it was him that needed to do it.

Falkirk laid out how inappropriate it was to challenge M over his actions in Budapest. None having the full facts, not even Selene who hadn't seen the evidence and only over heard conversations. Also Falkirk further chastised Selene for discussing what occurred in her duties as his bodyguard. Finally Falkirk said, “I am being lieutenant when I say you are being given 6 months to undergo the usual 18 of an assessment period. There will be no leeway, you must pass every assessment by an exceptional margin. Including the most stringent, loyalty assessment available to us.”

With a chorus of “Yes, M.” from each in turn they were given the disciplinary forms to sign.

Selene and Alec filed out theirs pretty quickly. James, going a little slowly. “You had better not be there when I look up.” Falkirk stated. When he did look up James wasn't there any more.

Looking round Tanner was fidgeting slightly. It didn't take long for the Beta to buckle. “Your brother called me, at home. He knew about Budapest and last night.” Tanner informed.

Nodding Falkirk stood coming out of the board room. Noticing the man in the black dress uniform with gold rope, heavy rank strips at on his cuffs and white epaulettes. Approaching his office, the bald man stood, tucking his cap under his arm. “Admiral Roebuck?” Falkirk greeted.

“M.” the man returned. Indicating the silver maned woman at his side. “Double O Four.” Falkirk greeted before Roebuck could make the introductions.

The cultured voice gave a purr, “Please, M. Victoria.” Falkirk returned the alpha's name and shook her hand, guiding his guests in to the office.

Coming round his desk, Falkirk held up the decanter, Roebuck nodded and Victoria accepting, “Please.”

Accepting the glass, watching the lean omega take his chair. “You leaned well, from your master.” Roebuck mused smelling the bourbon.

Falkirk fixed the woman with a cold hard gaze. He knew who she was, and probably why she was
here. And with Roebuck, a nice friendly face for the first official meeting. “Not to insult the esteemed First Sea Lord, but he was my predecessor's friend. I find myself closer to the Prime Minister.” Falkirk taunted.

The woman smiled. Roebuck chuckled and made a comment about liking to swim with sharks under his breath. “You are quite formidable, M.” Victoria purred, with the same sultry tones as the best Double O on the offensive prowl. “The Trustees worry about a rumour, three pack mates getting information they are not entitled to.”

Surprise, well concealed. Falkirk sat back and crossed his legs, to gain a few moments to think. “Papava?”

“How you deal with a threat is the concern of M.” Victoria said. “The ability of M to do his duty is the concern of the Trustees.”

With complete innocence and big sparkling, youthful green eyes, “And how, Alpha, has M failed to do his duty?”

Roebuck decided the window had a wonderful view and looked at it intently. Victoria gave a slight gulp at the sudden change. “There are rumours that your Alpha and pack mates...”

“And who brought these rumours to the trustees?” Falkirk said, even letting his slight lisp become more pronounced to help with the act.

“The point has been made, Victoria.” Roebuck said. “M is aware he can't let his pack be given special treatment. I think we should end this on a civil note.”

“Of course, Geoffrey.” Victoria purred.

“A pleasure. Do call again.” Falkirk said head tilted forward and eyes up, with a smile, just a little too wide and dangerous.

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“You kicked James to the crib, literally.” Mycroft mused coming into the lounge. The Alpha in question had been hanging round the street. Sometimes Falkirk saw him at the front and sometimes the back, Hudson nearly shooting him when he saw a person crouching behind the shrubs. James seemed to be somewhere whenever Falkirk looked. It was becoming a game of ‘Where's Wally?’

Mycroft was still fairly wary of Andrew who Falkirk was holding, letting the boy feel his feet. When Hudson called, “Dinner is served.” Falkirk handed Andrew to Jenkins so he and Mycroft could eat in peace.

Over the poached salmon and asparagus. Mycroft said, “James was incorrect. You had to resolve the situation with the Operative. Your solution was... elegant.”

Falkirk wanted to cringe at the last word. Of all the words that wasn't the one he would have chosen. However, the Prime Minister, Daniel and now Mycroft agreed with him. Mycroft then quietly said, “James is forgetting his Officer training. The argument is an old one. Some only have to see the fight, others the battle but a few must see the entire war.”

“Speaking of the war.” Falkirk said, interrupting. He didn't really want to know were Mycroft was heading with the supposedly supportive story. “The King?”

Mycroft sagged in response to the word and said, “He stopped speaking to me.”
“Why is that, he seemed eager to be free of the Prime Minister?” Falkirk asked.

Mycroft avoided the question at first. Then said softly, “One of the Prime Minister’s toadies whispered something in his ear. I was told never to contact him again.”

“I hear the King will be going into the Navy.” Falkirk said and got a tight uplift of Mycroft's right cheek in answer. Falkirk looked at his brother, “You can tell me anything. I will be an ear if nothing else.”

The cool poker face didn't leave Mycroft. Nor did Falkirk's suspicion that Mycroft had taken another blow from the Prime Minister.

It tore him up. Falkirk truly didn't feel the man was the threat Mycroft made him out to be. And for most of the Alphas Falkirk dealt with the Prime Minister was one of the fairest, as long as you treated him carefully, like swimming in shark infested water. But he couldn't watch his Brother being continently knocked down by Urquhart. “Would you like me to, do something?”

“That will not be necessary.” Mycroft snapped. Falkirk thinking he had offended the Alpha's pride. Mycroft leaving not long after.

Going to the library Falkirk worked away for a few hours before retiring for the night. Dressing in pyjamas Falkirk climbed into bed pulling James' pillow and hugging it. “Why couldn't you have given me a few days before being a complete arsehole.” Falkirk mumbled into the pillow and the fading scent. He fell asleep cursing the man, the alpha, the operative, the bastard.

Coming awake almost instantly. Falkirk looked about to what could have woken him. Nothing was out of place, no unusual scents and no noises that Falkirk could detect. There was rain battering the window but that wasn't unusual so Falkirk dismissed it until bright light flickered, casting strange shadows around the room. A moment then the violent crack and roll of the thunder.

Brief flashes illuminated the room again. Shortly followed by the slow rolling rumble of thunder. Standing, Falkirk pulled back the heavy curtains, looking out onto the street the rain beating down and sweeping the tarmac. Looking for James Falkirk couldn't see his mate anywhere. Pulling on a dressing gown Falkirk moved to one of the back room and looked out. Still nothing of his Alpha in the back garden or the lane beyond it. Deciding to have a cup of tea he went down stairs.

Going down the final flight of stairs into the basement kitchen. Not bothering with the light as the windows supplied just enough to see by. Coming to a stop Falkirk could see a bundle through the window onto the tiny courtyard up to street level. “So you aren't that smart.” Falkirk complained. Going to the door Falkirk punched in the alarm code before unlocking and opening it. Despite the darkness the blue eyes pierced through the gloom. Going to the kettle Falkirk flipped it on to boil. Pouring the water into the teapot Falkirk picked up a mug and took the teapot upstairs leaving James standing at the door. Dripping water onto the tiles.

Sitting on the bed the tea going cold, unpoured, still in the pot. Falkirk having lost all notion for it. Lifting his legs Falkirk slipped back under the covers and laying down. A light tap at the door sounded as it opened slightly. Falkirk geared up for round two. Feeling an urge to scream and shout at the man that he had not felt since being pregnant.

“I should have supported you and have trusted your judgement.” James admitted. “You where right, we were out of line.”

The sudden lack of recrimination hit Falkirk like a punch. Releasing a choked sob he was wrapped
in James' arms before Falkirk knew it. Apologies, praise and reassurance tumbled form James' lips in an incoherent jumble to Falkirk. “Bastard!” Falkirk spat beating the muscled chest and James letting him.

Calming down Falkirk felt cold and damp, his pyjamas clinging to his skin. Pushing back from James the source of the rain soaked wetness. Falkirk started peeling the damp clothes from James' chest. Helping him James slipped off his shirt and trousers climbing into bed beside the Omega. Wrapping his arms around Falkirk and and nuzzling the Omega's neck James gave a lick of apology.

“I can't stop the...” Falkirk said quietly before James interrupted him.

“I know you're big bad M, she would be proud of you.” James insisted. There was only one she Falkirk could think of at the time and James confirmed it. “You gave a royal bollocking to your Alpha and two pack mates. I don't think even M was that much of a hard-assed bitch.”

“I had to do it. Papava was reckless, she had been all but caught red handed. If I let her disappear MI6 would still be held responsible and I couldn't hand her over like M did Silva.” James listened to Falkirk's confession as he should have done days ago instead of confronting his mate at three to one. Giving kisses and nuzzles James could understand the precarious position Falkirk had been in and not just seeing it from the point of view of an Operative who had one of their number executed for convenience.

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Falkirk stood in the observation room as an old Sgt. Major screamed at the new recruits. Amongst the veterans of the Air Force, Navy, Army and those non military who had been identified as being a potential benefit to MI6. James, Alec and Selene stood rather ungracefully beside the the rigid military types. Included in the group was a sixteen year old assigned the code name G. Everyone knew who he was. He was not here as a genuine recruit but to vastly improve his fitness and mental resilience. Still quite long and gangly, before he developed his muscle mass. The pretty wavy locks were buzzed and you couldn't even tell he was blond.

The three veterans did, however, leave the rest of the group in the figurative dust during the fitness assessment. Tuning his back on the gym. A ringing, and Falkirk pulled his phone out. Tanner's rushed and panicked voice came through, “Your brother and the Prime Minister.”

Falkirk arrived in E-Branch. Darren coming up to him and guiding him to the boardroom. The spindly white haired man, showing a slight superior smug glee for being able to take the commanding head of the table. His cold hawklike eye fixed on the reddish haired spindly man at the foot. Standing behind the PM, the Lurch like Special Branch bodyguard, Corder. A vacant rectangular man, uniformly broad and long, with a small square head, emphasised by the short back and sides with flat top. Behind Mycroft was an easily overlooked Beta male, in a grey suite.

Falkirk moved down the side of the table, with the two glaring alphas at each end and sat exactly half way between. “To what do I own this pleasure?”

Mycroft beat the Prime Minister, “He intends to leak Moriarty was our brother.”

“I thought your friends would like to know, with whom they are dealing.” Urquhart threatened. “And do not forget, you started this, my service record is 'Restricted' for the next 50 years.”

Falkirk could feel a band of pressure building around his brain.
“You did murder two people.” Mycroft taunted

A dismissive snort, “You care little for life. How many have you and your brothers murdered, and killed?”

“Leave family out of this, or I might turn my eye to the loyal, Mrs Urquhart.”

“What about your wife?”

“Do I need to be here for this argument?” Falkirk said, looking form one glaring man to the other.

“Prime Minister, please leave Sherlock, Moriarty and my other siblings out of this feud.” Rounding on Mycroft, “You will not divulge restricted information.” Falkirk said.

Standing Falkirk went to the door. Looking back at the men, still glaring at each other. “Do not involve me again. Or it will be me that ends both of you.” Falkirk warned and left them.

“M?” the Irish voice coming over the intercom. Looking through the wall, Darren sitting at his desk with the tall Prime Minister standing beside it.

Permitting the PM in, the old Alpha entered. The intense blue eyes softened, almost imperceptibly as he closed the door behind him. “I must extend my apologies, M. Your brother and I are at a stage where we are fighting for our lives. We both need neutral territory, and you are the only neutral territory we agree on.”

“I won't arbitrate. And while I won't fight Mycroft's battles, Sherlock...”

Urquhart nodded, “A dangerously stupid boast in the heat of the moment. I would not have courted your wrath by exposing the actions of Moriarty, your brother or yourself, and Mycroft might have called me on it, if pushed.”

Falkirk pulled out the decanter and indicated his guest to sit. Urquhart took the offered glass and sipped. “I can't promise the same for Mycroft. He started this fight. And it might be dirty before the end.” Urquhart warned and Falkirk reluctantly accepted.

“What was that about a wife?” Falkirk asked.

“That's the threat, there isn't one.”

“Mycroft's homosexual?” Falkirk said, he couldn't really say he was surprised.

“You might might say that, I couldn't possibly comment.”

“He wouldn't be cowed by just any relationship being exposed. Who?” Falkirk asked and the malevolent man just gave a smile that sent a shiver up Falkirk's spine. Urquhart thanked him for the drink and made his excuses. Falkirk watching the tall man leave.

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Falkirk and Keading where at Daniel's with his grandmother cooing over the new Omega. The new arrival along with Daniel being given the old family title had decreed a visit was in order. “You're
part of the 'Woman's Temperance and Ethical Responsibility' guild?’ Falkirk asked Mary.

The little round Omega confirmed she was. Falkirk explaining he had been invited to a meeting. Mary was able to name the date. “Lady Violet, you remember her, friend of Daniel's sister. She was asking if I was attending. I can come with.” Mary informed.

When Keading asked about the guild Daniel butted in giving the Omega a one armed hug, “A bunch of busy bodies. Who like to stick their interfering beaks into other people's business.”

Mary agreed with the sentiment if not the crassness of her grandson's comment. “Lecturing people with nothing, by woman who have never so much as cooked a meal or changed a nappy doesn't go over too well. Even when the intentions are good.”

When Mary mentioned Daniel coming home for a visit. Since the title was going to be reinstated. Daniel made a token protest against visiting but his heart wasn't in it and he just needed a bit of a push.

“Is it really a castle?” Keading asked.

Mary delighted in describing Daniel's ancestral home. The American was intrigued by the history and the romanticism of a lone castle built into the sea atop of a huge lump of granite. The mountainous island, the only access to the castle a long stone bridge. Telling the American about the sieges how the sea protected the castle. Daniel mused, “Should have used starvation.”

Mary debunked the plan telling Keading how boats were used to ferry supplies to the castle.

“We could go next weekend. James, Alec and Selene will be in Scotland anyway. They could probably use a break.” Falkirk prompted.

Mary insisted, seeing her grandson's desire and Keading excitement at a real life castle. “That's settled we can go up together.”

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True to her word the Countess of Grantham was at a centre of a group of woman giving her opinion on the day's topic. Elizabeth Urquhart was at Falkirk's side. Mary came up to them offering Falkirk a greeting. “Elizabeth Urquhart, Lady Mary Dowager Duchesses of Rothsea.” Falkirk introduced before reversing the introduction.

Being called to order Falkirk took his seat. Elizabeth one side of him and Mary the other. The Countess of Grantham took a seat beside Mary greeting her old friend followed by Falkirk, “Mr McLair.”

“Sir Thomas.” Falkirk corrected with a smile, getting a placating one in return. Mary absently adding he was knight of the garter which Violet paused at, one of the more prestigious awards in the British honour system. Elizabeth gave the countess a tight smile and nod which was returned.

Elizabeth adding, “I think Francis wishes you on the privy council. All very quiet at the moment.”

Not knowing what was up between the women, Elizabeth's remark more like a dig at the duchesses. Falkirk made a note to find out when he could get Elizabeth alone.

A very upright old Alpha woman came up to the small podium calling for silence. 'Oh goodie' Falkirk thought. In horsey tones the woman named the speakers and described the epidemic of, 'Sex clubs', 'Prostitutes' and 'pornography' Falkirk suppressed his wince. There where just some
words ladies of a certain age and background just shouldn't say in public.

The first speaker was a charity worker. Clearly uncomfortable addressing the privileged group. She was glossing over a lot of the worst, to keep the interest of the group without offending them or worse losing their donations. The same old Alpha stood up, thanking the speaker as Falkirk and the others clapped politely.

Introducing an Inspector, a policeman in full dress uniform stood. A rather handsome Alpha with just a ting of distinguished grey above his ears he was calm, articulate and experienced in wooing an audience. Again just graphic enough to make the aristocratic audience sit up but not offend. He explained the policing of the sex industry.

Concealing he was board out of his mind. Falkirk subtly looked to Elizabeth who was stony faced. Mary seemed genuinely concerned about the plight the inspector was describing while the Countess was sitting with rapt attention. Finally the speaker changed. A beautiful dark haired Omega male stood, introduced by the old woman as Bailey.

Sliding down in his chair and covering his face. “Are you alright dear?” Mary asked Falkirk. Elizabeth and Violet where also looking at him.

“We may have met when I introduced myself to Guy Haynes.” Falkirk informed. Violet was confused but Elizabeth looked to Falkirk speculatively.

“The only time I know you met Guy Haynes was when his career came to a grinding, custodial halt.” Elizabeth stated.

Mary whispered, “Oh, when you helped the police raid that Bunny Boi Club?” Falkirk raised an eyebrow and nodded, it looked like he was going to see what Daniel had been discussing with his grandmother.

The soft voice of the omega drifted over them. “And then one day I was sitting in a clients lap and this Omega walked in. He commanded the room and everyone obeyed him. It showed me I could be more than an object.” The speaker proclaimed getting a small polite round of applause from the crowd.

“You're going to have to speak to him. You're his hero.” Elizabeth insisted.

The way the speaker's eyes kept flicking to him indicated he remembered Falkirk too. “Yes I believe so.”

Returning to his seat the Omega cast a quick glance over his shoulder to Falkirk before returning his attention the the host. As the Woman thanked the speakers and the guests she declared there was tea and sandwiches at the back. With that everyone started to stand. Immediately the three speakers where surrounded by well meaning little old ladies and fewer but just as old and little Omega males.

“So?” Mary prompted, holding a cup of tea. Falkirk with his own kept an eye on Bailey, two woman had taken up permanent residence beside him. The Omega had moved towards him before stopping himself and no longer looking to Falkirk.

Seeing no better opportunity Falkirk approached. Clearing his throat. “May I have a word?” Falkirk asked. Elizabeth appeared one side and Mary the other, the two woman intercepting the ones who had attached themselves to Bailey.

Taking the opportunity Bailey excused himself from the women giving Falkirk a thankful smile. “I
saw you in the paper. I've been following you.” Bailey said shyly. Nodding Falkirk asked about Bailey, listening intently as he described his charity work.

“I am glad to hear you have found something you love doing.” Falkirk insisted pleasantly causing the Omega to blush slightly.

Returning to Elizabeth as she spoke with Violet Grantham. The veiled disdain passed between the pair, disguised as pleasantries. Watching the two female Alphas in the politely vicious argument was perplexing to Falkirk, accustomed to having at least one male involved. The fight involved an innocuous and overtly meaningless comments that had some form of greater meaning and was deliberately ignored by the other. For the other to say something that was then taken at face value but also had another meaning. To Falkirk he felt the argument rather then understood it.

“Lady Grantham, is that not your son?” Falkirk said indicating the young man waiting by the door. Giving a tight smile that reminded Falkirk of his brother's, Violet reluctantly backed down.

“Insufferable woman.” Elizabeth snapped. “Thank you. I know these things are boring and tedious. But I need to be seen at them.” Elizabeth said taking Falkirk's arm.

“I did get the chance to reconnect with an old acquaintance.” Falkirk returned with a pleasant smile. Seeing Mary disappearing with the Countess and her son Falkirk turned to Elizabeth asking if she wished to have lunch.

In the Hotel, despite not having a reservation the head of MI6 and the wife of the Prime Minister where able to get a table. Falkirk could see the doubt the Alpha had, she didn't see what was so special about the Omega. She obviously trusted her husband's judgement but didn't understand it.

“They don't see me coming.” Falkirk informed the sudden change taking Elizabeth by surprise. “They see a harmless, young, Omega and it is usually the last mistake my opponent makes. Your husband made the same mistake, twice. For a moment he saw a weak little Omega and not the person who waylaid his entire interview panel and he paid the price.”

“Francis always appreciated intelligence and determination.” Elizabeth observed.

“I think there are only three people who respect me, fully and truly. Francis is one of them and even when he failed to usurp me he was gracious in defeat.” Falkirk said.

They lapsed into silence for a while. “Frances has been pushing me to befriend you?” Elizabeth accused.

“He wants you to have an ally, one that you can both trust.” Falkirk informed.

“How far would you go for him?” Elizabeth said dropping her voice below the din of the room.

“I wouldn't. I will not help or hinder the Prime Minister nor will I help or hinder his enemies. That has been the guiding point of our relationship.” Falkirk stated.

Elizabeth looked disappointed until she processed Falkirk's words “What if I needed your help?”

“It would depend on what needs to be done.” Falkirk responded.

With a speculative look Elizabeth leaned back falling into thought. Coming to an end Elizabeth thanked Falkirk for lunch before they went their separate ways.
Very early, the morning still night time the car arrived. For the journey Falkirk's usual Black Jaguar Saloon had been exchanged for a Land Rover. Securing Andrew while Hudson placed the bags in the back. After Falkirk secured his son he gave his goodbye to the butler. With Brayan up front beside the driver Falkirk climbed in beside his son. Under police escort the car pulled away heading for the far north west of Scotland. Daniel would be picking up Keading and Cody as they didn't need a police escort.

Dozing off, along with the already asleep Andrew. A grumbling whine woke Falkirk up as the sun was rising. Looking around they where now on the motorway. A growing smell indicating why Andrew was upset. After a brief stop at a service station. Andrew now fed, watered and change was much happier. Falkirk, Brayan and the driver ate out of a pick-nick hamper provided by Mrs Bridges.

On the road again, recognising the large metallic blue Bentley overtaking them. Falkirk waved, getting a response from Keading, before the dark haired Omega slipped from view. As the car moved through the different jurisdictions the police escort was replaced along with a pre arranged driver.

Meeting Daniel and the others for lunch just beyond Glasgow. Everyone was stiff after being immobile for several hours. After lunch the journey continued on to Skye where the two cars met up again on the tiny ferry to the smaller island just off it. Following Daniel's car. It was sunny day, a unique thing for the west coast of Scotland making the sea a brilliant sparkling blue. The whole island a single peak of a large mountain. Following the single road round the island. Passing tiny fishing villages of just a few houses. In places the narrow road had the sea lapping at one side and on the other, a shear rocky rise off dark blue granite with clinging vegetation of dark mustard yellows, brown and greens, occasionally there would be a patch of blooming heather in bright yellow or deep purple.

When they circled the Island, true to Mary's description, a castle came into view, looking like it had been built on he sea itself. Just before coming to a larger village, the road split. The car taking the path over a long and narrow stone bridge not much wider than the car itself. Passing under a high arch of a gatehouse, with the vicious spikes of an open portcullis hanging down. Pulling into the courtyard the driver parked by Daniel's car. The courtyard beyond the gatehouse was large and square, of large flagstones, shadowed by the high walls. Falkirk flung open the door, looking about with wonder at the dominating and claustrophobic view.

“Well it's good to be home.” Mary mused heading for the Keep at the back of the courtyard. The basic rectangle of building spanning the width. Either side of the courtyard was a stable block and what looked like a barracks.
Falkirk unbuckled the belt releasing Andrew's seat. Flipping up the handle Falkirk lifted him out. Keading turned slowly, wide eyed at the high walls and battlements. Falkirk joined him. The courtyard was in shadow, and the stones making up the wall were a dull brown, but further up the high walls where they caught the sun, they became a blue/grey and sparkled a bit.

“Bloody hell! Alec was telling the truth.” James called, coming out a smaller door to the side. He looked leaner and there where bags under his eyes. Falkirk could tell the Alpha was exhausted despite the the vibrant smile that made the eyes crinkle. Going over Falkirk pressed himself against his mate. He still smelled of earth, sweat and his the masculine Alpha was more intense. The Omega breathed deeply his Alpha's scent, clinging. “Missed you.” Falkirk breathed into the crook of the thick neck, where his nose was buried. It was a minor act of manipulation to get James and the rest here, but Falkirk was glad he had pulled the stings. Opening his eyes Falkirk could see Selene and Keading in an embrace as well.

Daniel, with a sagging and tired looking Alec beside him, called to the others. Keading's shrill voice taking on a particular tone that mother's develop, “Cody Matthews, get back here!” then having to chase the little alpha down. Falkirk far more easily, just having to picked up Andrew's car seat. James brushing the chubby cheek of the sleeping boy in hello.

Keading having reacquired his wayward son. They entered the same door as Mary. The building was bit under whelming as it just narrow hallways. Coming to a large but innocuous door. Daniel flung it open onto a large hall with vaulted ceiling. A grand stone staircase leading up. On the end of the grand hall, lots of high narrow windows made an arch shape like a church's, looking onto a cloistered garden with an arch at the far end.

From upstairs you could see over the wall and onto the bright blue sea and mainland beyond. Opening a door onto a small suite. Daniel indicated a door for Selene and Keading's room, the adjoining dressing room had been tuned into a small bedroom for Cody.

Showing Falkirk and James to their suite. It had a large four poster bed, done in dark wood and it shone with years of polish. The thick rugs covered stone floors. In the hearth a gentle fire crackled and spit.

“That was mine. Father's and Grand father's too.” Daniel said placing his hands on an old carved crib, in wood so polished it was almost black. Daniel then took Alec further down the hall and disappear around the corner.

Falkirk wanted nothing more than to snuggle with his Alpha. But after he had a bath, James crawled into bed and with a deep breath fell asleep. Andrew got hungry and bored so Falkirk picked him up and allowed James to catch up on his rest.

Going down stairs Falkirk started opening doors at random. A thumping. Looking up, Cody was doing an odd lope down the stairs followed by Keading. “Selene asleep as well?” Falkirk asked, getting a nod and a “Yes” in response.

Looking into another room. Falkirk was met with a long dining table in an panelled hall. “Are those whales?” Keading asked looking to the old tapestry surrounding the top quarter of the walls.

“Killer whales, I think.” Falkirk said. The design was a bit obscure but that's the only thing Falkirk could think of. The fish, lobsters, crabs and oysters where more easily identifiable.

Moving on Keading was happy to follow Falkirk as they moved about. Coming into a Library
Falkirk just paced the room before moving on. In a small and cosy room, covered in fabrics tapestries, photos and a small table with a round frame and cloth for needlepoint beside a floral print chair. A dark and well used log fireplace was all ready to be lit. The single arched window had a view across the sea to the island the castle was linked to. Smelling heavily of omega, age, of Mary. “Drawing room?” Falkirk guessed.

“Yes dear, it is.” Mary said from the other door.

“Is that a village?” Keading asked looking out the window.

Sitting in the well used chair near the fireplace Mary described the village and the beach. Letting Mary rest Falkirk continued into a formal lounge that led back to the main hall. Seeing Daniel walking through the cloistered garden. Falkirk and Keading followed. Catching up to the Alpha he pointed out the window of his old room and that of his brother and sister.

Walking though the arch at the end. They came out onto a lawn covered ward, the large area surrounded by a not very high curtain wall. Going to the far end of the bailey. Daniel climbed the steps to the battlements. With the others following.

Cody climbed up onto the low part between the parapet, determined to look over the edge too. Keading, seeing the shear drop onto the jagged rocks far below grabbed his son's jumper and kept firm hold. “Mom!” Cody whined. Keading giving a stern warning, not to come up to the battlement without an adult.

Turning around Falkirk took in the residential part of the castle. The section with the cloistered garden was about two stories with the four story keep behind. Daniel explained the passage ways either side of the keep led to what used to be the barracks and the courtyard beyond.

“What's the village like?” Keading asked. Rather then answer, Daniel asked if they wanted to take a walk. So with Daniel pushing the pram, Falkirk and Keading walked beside him. Falkirk's bodyguard walked several paces behind. While Cody was a blur, running about at random, looking over walls and round corners. Crossing the long bridge they headed for the village. It didn’t take long to get to the village, it was just beyond the bridge. The biggest settlement on the island it used to support the castle, it now supported the tourist trade for the castle. A pub and a small hotel along with a baker/butcher along with a general store all intermingled with the cottages.

Tugging his Papa's trousers Cody pointed to the pristine white sand of the beach and sparkling sea. Indulging, Keading followed Cody to the beach. Rolling up his trousers Keading was going to wade into the water.

Seeing Papa and son, holding hands and approaching the water. “Wait for it...Wait for it...” Daniel warned Falkirk quietly.

The first gentle wave covered their feet and Papa squawked, dancing, lifting his feet high to avoid the retreating wave as he ran back. While son just ran back up the beach. Daniel letting out deep laughter. Sitting on the wall, to brush the sand off and pull on his sock. The soft brown eyes glaring cutely at the still chuckling Alpha, Keading replaced his socks and shoes. Even Falkirk had trouble keeping his laughter in check, while he tied the laces on Cody's. Daniel saying, “Despite us being on the sheltered side, that stretch is fed by the North Atlantic. With all the coldness the Arctic can give.”

Still complaining how cold the water was, with teeth chattering a bit. Daniel told Keading about
the New Year tradition his Father had insisted on continuing. Striping off on the morning of the first of January they had to swim to a rock and back. “Nuts!” Keading proclaimed with Daniel agreeing whole heartedly.

Having walked to the end of the village with Daniel pointing out his first school and a few other points of interest they turned back. Falkirk and Daniel exchanging glances as a group in blue tracksuits tumble out of the pub. The smallest being almost dragging by two of the more broader and upright. They kept a casual pace, following the group across the bridge.

Just as the group entered the courtyard. A blond barrel of a man with bushy yellow moustache, was waiting for them. The retired Sgt. Major, Drysdale stepped out as if from nowhere. Sounding off as he gave the recruits a severe bollocking, his voice echoing around the walls. He saw Falkirk and Daniel following the group. “I HOPE YOU LOT HAVE YOUR AFFAIRS IN ORDER BECAUSE GOD ALMIGHTY IS ON YOUR HEEL.” Drysdale blasted pointing to Falkirk, making the recruits turn and almost fall in there inebriated state.

“WHERE ARE THE OTHER THREE?” Drysdale snapped. The recruits looked at each other, shaking their heads and looking confused. Or drunk, the expressions was vastly similier.

Falkirk stepping forward, “As Bond, Corvin and Trevelyan know when to work, rest and play. And were here to greet us on arrival. They get the five star treatment. While you lot can enact a local custom.” Falkirk said with an evil smile.

Walking up and down the swaying line. Even a tall carrot shaped man, an experienced recruit from the SAS gave and uncoordinated blink. Falkirk held up his hand in front of the brown eyes, gently swaying his hand to the left, then right. The eyes followed the movement, then Falkirk sharply moved his hand close to the Alpha’s nose. The recruit took a step back and landed on his backside. Drysdale blasted, “GET YOUR WORTHLESS ARSE UP, UUUUPPP!” He kept screaming in the drunk man’s ear until he was on his feet.

Falkirk stopped at G, looking him up and down. The teenager went green and lurched. Falkirk barely got out the way before the teenager’s body violently rejected the alcohol. “Get a mop.” Falkirk ordered the suffering recruit. A mumbled heavily slurred but still very posh, “Yes, M” before he stumbled to comply. The most sober, Falkirk ordered to accompany G.

Looking to the furious Drysdale. His wide neck twitching wanting to scream and bellow and his face gong rather red. “When that is cleaned up have them burn off the alcohol. And I think that we should re-enact a local custom, have them on the beach for the break of dawn.” Falkirk ordered.

“With pleasure, M.” Drysdale responded unsympathetic of the plight of the recruits.

“You're rather mean.” Keading said as they headed in for the keep.

Shrugging. “They have to learn. Despite how much James drinks, he is never that compromised. If we had more personnel I would have forced them to do a training scenario. Recreated what would happen if an enemy found them in that state.” Falkirk said. Daniel gave a small snort, noticing Falkirk had glossed over the capture, torture and threat to life if an enemy found an operative drunk off their arses.

James, Alec and Selene where awake and in better spirits when Falkirk and the rest entered. Mary was having a sweet sherry. James, a silver cocktail shaker in hand and pouring Vodka Martinis as an aperitif.
Daniel informed his grandmother of the demonstration of the new year tradition. Falkirk cut in telling James, Selene, Alec and Daniel they would be on standby as lifeguards. “We have drysuits” Daniel informed, to the others relief.

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A fair few people had turned out to witness the spectacle. Still quite dark, the sun not having broken the horizon yet and very cold. Mary and Keadin sat on the sea wall, on a tartan shawl. A large flask of tea, which Keadin poured and handed the plastic cup to the little old woman. Andrew was wrapped up and sound asleep in his pram on the walk way behind them. Cody sat beside his Mom, sipping a hot chocolate, gaining a wide brown moustache.

Falkirk approached the line of recruits in their tracksuits. Drysdale had been informed of what was going to happen and despite the fatigue and hangovers he didn't see any reason to deprive the recruits of the valuable experience.

“You see that rock?” Falkirk said pointing to a high narrow point sticking out the water, about fifty meters away. Getting acknowledgements Falkirk continued “Out, round and back, stark bollock naked.”

Looking to the assembled crowd. The dozen recruits complained until Drysdale barked at them. James’ zip screeched prompting the other recruits to strip as well. The dozen stood, most with hands clasped in front of their crotches, even the few women. All shivered, and teeth chattered a bit. None more so than the lean teenager with shaved head.

“Why do they get wet suits?” G complained.

“Because they will be hauling you worthless arse out if you get into trouble.” Drysdale snapped.

Alec, Daniel, James and Selene made no hast to taken up position at regular intervals between the shore and rock. Letting the recruits stand and shiver a bit longer. Falkirk spoke up, “The winner will get a proper breakfast. But if all of you manage to swim out there and back, everyone gets a proper breakfast.”

The recruits all looked to each other. Then all eyes landed on the smallest. G, knowing he was the weakest of the group looked apologetically to the others. But three, all Alpha two male and one female, let their arms fall to the sides. All from the elite, two SAS and a Royal Marine. Then dug in their feet and bent their leg to get good purchases and a strong thrusting start, like a sprinter.

Seeing James and the rest at their position. Falkirk pulled out a long pistol. Aiming the flint lock out to sea he waited to raise anticipation. The three more assertive jostling at the line drawn on the sand. Bang, and plum of smoke, the recruits were off. The ex-marine of the group charged into the water headless of the chill, the SAS male and female behind him. But G wasn't the only one to come to a grinding halt before forcing themselves on.

Unsurprisingly the ex-marine was the first back, Drysdale handing him a towel before he redressed. One by one each recruit returned until only G remained. The teenager was struggling as he rounded the rocky point, Daniel and James keeping pace with him allowing Selene and Alec to return.

The other recruits waited to see if just the winner or if everyone would get more than just porridge
for breakfast. “Come on boyo! Not far now!” a welsh voice blasted. The others started joining in.

Picking up a towel Falkirk approached the waterline. It was with pride Falkirk watched the gangly teenager pull himself out of the water. G sagging, hunched with arms hanging and legs lumbering. His skin pink and shaking. Holding the towel open Falkirk wrapped it round G and rubbed his arms. The others coming up to G, helping with the circulation, warming his arms and legs. “Good job” Falkirk said, letting him walk up to a cheer from the other recruits who didn't make it back first.

In the main dining room the recruits joined the family for breakfast. Platters of sausages both slice and links, spiced beef ham, black pudding, eggs, fried pancakes and potato scones along with plenty of tea coffee and toast. The boisterous atmosphere livened up the often disused dinning room and Mary although quiet had a soft smile as she listened to the complaints and stories of the survival assessment the recruits had been on.

With a gift of the rest of the weekend for down time. There was no surprise where James spent his. Pressing Andrew into Daniel's arms. Falkirk gave his son a last kiss and slammed the door shut.

As he and Alec had been roped into babysitting. Daniel offered to take Cody out as well. Another door slammed as the child was pushed out with an instruction to have fun from his Mom.

With Andrew strapped to his chest and Alec carrying the baby bag. Daniel led them back to the village. Cody zooming about them looking at everything. Calling Cody back Daniel led them between the small stone cottages.

Seeing where the track was leading. “We're not climbing the bloody mountain.” Alec complained. Grumbling, “Been doing enough of that bloody stupid nonsense.”

“We aren't climbing it, well not all of it.” Daniel responded undeterred. The path wound and climbed. Much of the view blocked by the trees.

Eventually Cody had transferred to Alec's shoulders. A gentle trickle and Daniel led them along the path of a trickling burn, of crystal clear water. A dull roaring started to grow as the trees thinned into a clearing. “I remember them being taller” Daniel said looking to the waterfall about three meters high.

“How long is he?” Daniel said looking at a protruding out crop at the top.

“I did the same to James, he had been dancing around this blond for weeks so I locked them in a room together. I was a bit guilty afterwards, when he nearly got an AWOL for it.” Alec responded.

They didn't stay long before heading back. Stopping at the hotel Daniel prepared Andrew's bottle. Cody licking a spoon and wearing a wide ice cream strip across his face from the tall sundae.

“Danny boy!” A wild red head, Beta woman gushed as she closed in on them. “I heard you were back, didna belevit” she said in a thick accent, eyes transfixed on Andrew. The baby going wide eyed at the strange bouncy woman with bigger bouncy hair.

Reluctantly Daniel introduced Senga to Alec. “Sarah!” she corrected, despite Daniel being correct.

“How old is he?” She asked, plucking Andrew from Daniel's grasp, without much choice. The big
head wobbled as the baby looked for his godfathers letting a stranger hold him.

“Seven months and he isn't mine.” Daniel informed. Sarah making all the googoo noises expected. Andrew looking like he was dealing with a crazy person. Daniel's hand caressing the head and neck of his Godson, to keep him calm.

“And what is your name young man?” Senga said in a tone that immediately identified her as a teacher.

With a face covered in ice cream. The big brown eyes blinked owlishly at the strange woman. “Cody Matthews.” he informed proudly and returned is attention to the tall glass.

“I married Pat.” Sarah blurted out suddenly.

Daniel chuckled remembering the wimp of an Alpha. The old doctor had diagnosed him as being born two drinks below par. “Let me guess. He took his mother to Church one day and you where standing at the front dressed in white?” Daniel teased. Pat not being assertive, and his mother being very ridged and devout, and often grounded the man right up until he was working and bringing in a wage as a teacher himself.

“He's not that afraid of her.” Sarah defended.

“I was. She was an evil old bag that should have been burned at the stake.” Daniel said. The old friends continued to talk for some time until Cody had finished his ice cream and he and Alec became quite board. Giving his excuses they headed back to the castle.

On the grassy area of the ward a large blanket had been set out so Andrew could crawl about. Alec keeping an eye on their godson while Daniel set up a telescope on the wall over looking the sea. Letting Cody look through the eye piece Daniel said, “That's a Destroyer. H.M.S. Dragon.” with Cody repeating the name as he looked.

“Those are Orca.” Daniel said, quickly getting out of the way. So Cody could see before the whales moved on.

“What are you looking at?” Keading asked walking up to his son standing on a chair. Wrapping his arms about him, from the back, in a hug. And brushing the soft straight hair of the little Alpha.

“Oca.” Cody responded, frowning, knowing the word didn't come out right. “O’r’ca” he tried again.

“Ore-Ka.” Daniel said sounding out the syllables for the boy.

“Killer Whale” Keading said looking through the eye piece.

“You see the one with the V out of it's dorsal fin?” Daniel asked getting a conformation from Keading. “He's been coming back here since I was a boy.” Daniel informed, leading on to reminiscing on memories with his grandfather and their time with the telescope and time in the shed.

James and Falkirk came out. Mary with her arm looped with James’. Andrew who had been climbing over Alec detached himself and made beeline for his parents, floppy hat falling of halfway to them. Falkirk picked him up inspecting the grass stained hands and knees.
Suspecting his grandmother was out to tell them dinner was ready Daniel collapsed the tripod and hefted the telescope over his shoulder and picked up the chair Cody had been using to stand on.

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After dinner and the children had been put to bed Daniel showed Alec, Falkirk and James to 'the shed'. A winding path of warrens led them to part of an old stable attached to the courtyard. “So this is where you learnt your craft?” Falkirk said looking over the long room with custom guns on the walls, and work benches in the middle of the room.

Alec immediately moved to a large revolver with three cylinders. Daniel explained he was trying to copy a gun from a computer game that shot elemental bullets. “I got the explosive and incendiary rounds to work but the cryo, lightning and Venom where a bust.” Daniel informed pulling out a bullet about the same size as a shotgun cartridge. “I've also seen cannons with a lower recoil.”

James was intrigued by what looked like a old fashioned percussion pistol. Getting permission James lifted the pistol with intricate vine inlay decoration covering the barrel. Inspecting the hammer that didn't look like the other pistols James had seen or used. There was also a slot for a magazine. “My grandfather's design and was the inspiration for the farSight” Daniel informed, peaking Falkirk's interest.

Pulling out the stock, barrel extension and the bullets. Falkirk inspected the bullet tracing the odd spiral pattern and looking at the protruding tail from the back. “Want to see what it can do?” Daniel said with a teasing smile.

“Can I?” Alec asked holding up the big revolver.

Setting up a target in the enclosed grass ward. Daniel asked for a volunteer. James gave a solid shove to Alec causing him to take a step forward. “Excellent, stand there.” Daniel ordered pointing to an area in front of the target.

“IF YOU SHOOT ME I WONT BE PLEASED.” Alec called as Daniel walked to the far end.

Tracing the movement in the air a few times. Twisting, Daniel arced his arm around and fired. Alec flinched but was otherwise was unharmed. And in the centre of the target he was blocking, there was now a hole. “Ever seen a bullet curve?” Daniel challenged.

Alec looking from where Daniel had been standing, to the hole in the target behind. “The bullet went around me?” Daniel just nodded at the dumbfounded disbelief on the other man's sceptical face.

While James and Alec inspected the gun, debating if Daniel had pulled a trick or not. Falkirk picked out the spent case, a spiral cylinder. Prying the bullet out of the target, a squashed point with a helical tail, a bit like a pig's tail. The impact had distorted the bullet fragments but not by much. “This is weird.” Falkirk said, something coming to mind but not clearly.

“Scaramanga may have been the worlds most notorious assassin but he was never the best.” Daniel whispered.

“Okay spill Carrington.” Falkirk snapped.

“OUT THE WAY!” Alec called as he loaded the revolver.
Heading back to James and Alec, Daniel gave a final warning about the recoil.

Taking careful aim Alec pulled the trigger. The recoil collapsed his arm to his chest, with still enough force sending Alec to the ground. Swearing and hissing, rubbing his chest where the gun hit it. Alec coughed and looked to the target. “I thought you said red tipped was an inferno round?” Alec complained. Daniel just shrugged. Eventually a gentle flame stated.

Unwilling to fire the gun again Alec handed it to James who took aim. Thrown to the ground, James' grunt of pain was inaudible over the target exploding. The group ducking as the tightly packed wood bust into a splintered cloud.

“I will admit some rounds work better than others.” Daniel informed. Cleaning up as the sun disappeared behind the mountain of the island. They put away the weapons and threw away what was left of the target.

In the lounge Keading was reclining against Selene. “Having fun?” Selene asked pleasantly giving the Omega reassuring caresses. Pressing James into a chair Falkirk sat in his lap and sent a glare to Daniel. “Spill the beans.” he demanded, holding up the fragments of the bullets.

“Once Upon a time there was a group of assassins. Master assassins, the best the world had ever seen. This group of assassins learned different martial arts techniques in order to develop a new form incorporating guns...” Daniel started, going on to tell the story his grandfather had told him about the technique Gunkate. Daniel never quite believed it. But his Grandfather had taught him how to move while shooting, that few other could do. And the few who could were all from the same group of friends of his grand father's. Along with how to be a gun smith. And the unbelievable part, “My grandfather and his friends had a vision of being warrior assassins.”

“I don't believe it.” James proclaimed with Selene and Alec agreeing. Falkirk was still looking at the bullets, casing and fragments from the gun of Daniel’s grandfather.

“Neither do I. The Brotherhood was a dream.” Daniel added.

Falkirk safely tucked away the bullet for later. There was something about it. A memory refused to come forward like the indistinct music from a far off room, unclear, unfocused and pernicious.

Coming in from the drawing room, “You boys have fun?” Mary asked.

The woman's soft features and kind knowing eyes made something click. A look when she saw Mummy and how she wasn't surprised by Daniel's warning about her. How she knew things, like the raid on the Bunni Boi club when Daniel swore he wasn't the source but warned his grandmother had her own connection. Like when she knew about M being fired before even M was told. An old grainy photo, Sherlock and he had found, a strange mashed bullet in the shape of a 6. Which he could now identify as a bullet with spiral tail.

Pulling out the bullets Falkirk held it up so Mary could see the twisting tail. “If I was to say Rada Holmes...” Falkirk trailed off as Mary's caring smile faltered, just for the tiniest of moments.

Looking to Daniel Falkirk gave a teasing whine, “Your Granddad assassinated my grate granddad.” and threw the bullet at him. Catching the bullet easily, Daniel looking to his grandmother.

“He, Rada Holmes..” Mary started before Falkirk interrupted.
“Britain was on its last legs, the Germans where cutting off sea ways, the farms where becoming baron. The weather was all that stood between us and being invaded. Rada Holmes started playing both sides against the middle.” Taking a breath Falkirk continued. “Sherlock and I found the reports. He obsessed over it for months. Deduction after bloody deduction and theory after theory, drove Mycroft nuts. When daddy found out he burned all the evidence. Including an offer of £250,000 bounty. Most of the family fortune at the time. But better poor than being labelled a traitor during a war.”

“You knew about this?” Daniel asked his grandmother.

“Of course I did, dear.” She responded. Going on she told Daniel and the rest about how she and her Alpha along with others prepared for an oncoming invasion. When Falkirk's great grandfather started speaking to the Nazis, he knew enough to put their plans in jeopardy so he had to be eliminated. As it turned out the Little harmless Omega was the brains behind the formation of an ultimately unnecessary resistance movement. When the war ended having built up resources and connections throughout the world the Carrington Institute was founded on the back of the coordinated resistance moment.

Looking to his grandmother with a new sense of respect. “The Stone of Destiny isn't laying about somewhere is it?” Daniel asked.

“No dear the English think they got it.” she shot back kindly.

“Sherlock might want to know.” Falkirk said.

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The Alpha's strong arms were around his neck, keeping his head close to the neck. The thick fingers in his hair. Both reluctant to pull apart. Alec's teasing voice interrupted, “Come on. Time to freeze our nuts off.”

Falkirk pulled away, brushing a brief kiss to the rough cheek as they parted. James catching up to Alec and thumping him in the shoulder for interrupting, Alec shoving back and Drysdale blasting a warning to both. Then the barrel of a man blasted, “Now Ms Corvin! Move IT!”

Daniel putting a reassuring arm around the small Omega, watching his Alpha join the others with an unhappy down turn to his mouth. But trying to be brave.

Falkirk watched as the recruits including James climbed into the minibus and were driven off. Securing Andrew before thanking Mary for her hospitality. Falkirk climbed into the Land Rover to head back down to London.

The drive was as long and laborious as the journey up but having spent time reinforcing his bond with James. And having the pack around had left him in better spirits. The only thing missing was his brothers and maybe if Mallory let him, Darren. But that was wishful selfishness. There was no way he could separate the Omega from his Alpha.

Arriving at his house Falkirk disconnected Andrew's chair while Brayan came to open the door. Mr Hudson came to take Falkirk and Andrew's bags from the boot. Nanny Jenkins was standing at the bottom of the stairs waiting for the return of her charge. Falkirk hesitated before handing Andrew over, suppressing a sudden urge to quit and become a stay at home mother.
Going up stairs Falkirk changed into a suit. Fixing his pocket watch in place Falkirk checked over his appearance in the mirror before heading down stairs and into the waiting car.

Walking through E branch Falkirk gave a smile and nod to Darren as he passed. Just in to show face Falkirk looked through his messages from over the weekend. Groaning at a message from another outraged father with the resources to get his direct number. Falkirk made a special note to give 005 an extra long and special, Royal Bollocking.
Sitting at the desk, in his library. Andrew in his lap, dressed in a babygrow of light blue fuzzy fabric. Falkirk read over 005's report. Making notes in the margins Falkirk prepared for the berating he was going to give the operative. Putting the report down Falkirk checked something on the computer when a sequel brought his attention to Andrew who had grabbed, Falkirk's (Red teacher's) pen, and managed to make several squiggles on the top secret document.

Getting the brightest of gummy smiles. Falkirk gently coxed the pen out of the surprisingly tight little fingers. “Please don't draw on official documents?” Falkirk said to the oblivious child. The big adorable blue eyes blinked slowly in response.

“Yes! The Double Os have the same level of comprehension when they do something wrong too.” Falkirk continued speaking to the upturned face. Realising he was being talked to Andrew made a “Yayaya.” noises in return.

“As coherent as well.” Falkirk added. Said in an excited tone with a wide smile. Getting in return a bounce as Andrew said, “Ah! Ah! Ah!”

“Time for baby's bed.” Nanny Jenkins said coming into the library. Falkirk wanted rid of the woman but she had been the most acceptable of the candidates. Competent and efficient she was just a bit too traditional in her attitude for Falkirk's liking. Pushing back, Falkirk lifted Andrew so Nanny Jenkins could take him. With the emotionless efficiency he had come to expect. The Nanny disappeared upstairs Andrew grumbling all the way.

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Sitting in his office Falkirk looked to 005's closed report. He could see Darren being subjected to the over the top innuendos. The voices of the Irish PA and the handsome sandy haired Double O, coming in clear over the intercom. Falkirk deliberately left the man waiting in order to reinforce that he was in charge and not the Operative. A trick Falkirk's predecessor was a master of.

It was with a sense of pride Darren used the line, “Graham, I'm a married man.”

“Since when did I that stop me?” the Double O teased.

Pressing the button so his voice could be heard at Darren's desk, “Never, as far as I know.” Falkirk answered. “Now if Double Oh Five has finished his flirting, send him in.”

The lean alpha with a cute sprinkling of freckles over his nose and cheeks and a soft and charming
smile entered. Knowing full well the power of his smile, despite M's best efforts to remain stoic when confronted with it. Addison brushed the lit form his blue trouser leg as he sat. Adjusting and making himself comfortable in the seat, with legs crossed. Addison settled in for his debriefing.

Falkirk steepled his fingers, just watching the relaxed and blasé alpha. “Let us begin with Mrs Kross, or more precisely the message from her Husband. I mean, MY GOD, she had nothing to do with anything. Did you just screw her because you knew her husband might be able to call me?” Falkirk said, going on to waylay the Operative for his conduct with an official's wife this time, instead of their daughter. Falkirk didn't actually care how an Operative completed their mission he just cared that they where discrete.

With 005 still wearing the unrepentant and charming smile, he gave an apology that was so believable and sincere Falkirk knew it to be an outright lie. Centring himself, and reining in his exasperation Falkirk flipped opened Addison's report trying to hide Andrew's scribblings. Knowing the perceptive blue eyes had seen them Falkirk changed tack. Laying the document flat.

“My son happened to scribbled on your report, Double O Five.” Falkirk started casually. “I must admit however, I am having trouble distinguishing between the incoherent marks of an undeveloped mind and the random marks of a flailing arm.” With good humour the Operative took his reprimand with a cocky smile.

“Dismissed!” Falkirk snapped in frustration, the bollocking was all water off a duck's back. Unless Addison really did something to endanger MI6 or the UK, he knew it was just M blowing hot air.

Addison stood, giving a respectful, “M.” in response.

Turning his attention back to his screen it took longer than Falkirk expected to hear the door shut. Looking round Falkirk noticed the top page of Addison's report was missing, the one with Andrew's scribblings. He hadn't even heard the paper being ripped. “Now that is impressive.” Falkirk mused, with an affectionate smile.

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Sighing, Q sipped the tea. His phone was on privacy. Darren had taken a walk to the coffee shop. Tanner was out for lunch. Pulling open the bottom drawer, Falkirk found a packet of biscuits that survived the last time he bulked before a heat. Ripping open the honey-oat biscuits he nibbled one gently. Enjoying his quiet time.

A ringing. Falkirk thought about ignoring his mobile, or dropping it into the teapot until it drowned and went blissfully quiet. Reluctantly he pulled out the tingling and vibrating anoyance. ‘PM’ on the display. “Prime Minister?” Falkirk greeted.

“A heads up, M.” came the very dangerous drawl, all predator. “Your brother has done something rather silly. Something I could not forgive or overlook. But it is the King that concerns me.”

Falkirk was feeling the headache building, the one that appeared whenever he spoke with his brother or the Prime Minister regarding their war. Rubbing his temples Falkirk said, “The King is in Norway. Cold weather assessment. Middle of nowhere.”

“Good!” the Prime Minister purred. “No one knows you have him. Keep it that way. And don't let him make a statement. I will deal with the fall out.”
“May I ask, what is to come out?”

“Ask your brother.”

Within moments of the call Falkirk was arranging his car, when Tanner crashed through his office door. The harassed beta hesitated. “Your bother asked me to give you a message. He wishes to see you.”

“I'm already on my way.” Falkirk responded, pulling on his coat. Wondering why Tanner had been the one Mycroft called, and why the beta had cut his lunch short.

Arriving at Mycroft's club. A polite nod from the doorman in his top hat and long coat, before pulling open the heavy wood and brass door. At the small reception desk, another nod from the footman and Falkirk was handed a card with, 'Refectory' printed on it in gold lettering.

The plush carpets absorbed the sound of Falkirk's hard soled shoes. He more or less knew his way around and it wasn't long before he found the dinning hall. Almost empty, but for the back of a figure sitting alone. Mycroft's hand reached out to the three tiered cake stand, snatching one of the ornate cakes and stuffing it in his mouth. A rather disconcerting move for Falkirk to witness, who had only known his brother to be so prescience in everything, going so far as to use cutlery to eat fruit.

Before Falkirk could reach his brother, Mycroft's hand reached out. Eating another cake, with little time to chew and none to savour the flavour. Falkirk placed his hand on the tailored grey suit covered shoulder. Mycroft jumped, gasped and almost choked. With a swallow that to Falkirk looked painful. Mycroft pulled off his napkin bib and tossed it down and marched out.

In the rounded library. Mycroft shut the soundproofed door behind Falkirk. Falkirk scenting the heightened agitation of the Alpha. Mycroft seemed unable to be still, he paced, sat in a wing back chair and moved to pace again.

“I was doing something. The Prime Minister discovered I was manipulating his wife.” Mycroft admitted. “The new Cyprus boundary negotiations. An Oil firm wanted to know on whose side a recently discovered oil field would fall. I pointed them to Elizabeth Urquhart. As I hoped she abused her position and managed to find out the field would fall into the territory of the Turkish Cypriots. She then collected her substantial fee.”

Falkirk felt the band around his head. “I'm not dealing with your war.” Falkirk said and pulled open the door.

“Wait!” Mycroft begged.

Against his better judgement Falkirk closed the door. “Be warned I am growing tired of this feud and your secrets.”

Mycroft sank into the brown leather wing-back chair. Cradling his head, and whispering, “I was fucking the king.”

His brother's voice was so quiet Falkirk wasn't sure what he said at first, then the words sank in. “G-George? He's a boy!”

Mycroft lifted his hollow eyes, Falkirk sure if it had been anyone else they would be red rimmed at
least. Then Mycroft frowned in confusion. “No! Not King George. His father. It was never made public but I was the third person in the marriage and named in its dissolution.”

Falkirk perched on the edge on the chair closest to Mycroft. The alpha had pulled out his watch and played with it, in a nervous gesture Falkirk was unfamiliar with. “You made an offer.” Mycroft said. “I need you to intervene.”

“I think it’s too late for that.” Falkirk warned. “Urquhart called me and I was here within minutes. I doubt he would have spoken until it was too late for me to interfere.”

Mycroft leaned back scrubbing his face. Beginning to mutter. “The King needs to be briefed...”

“King George is going through special training to prepare him for the Navy. He won't be contactable for two months.” Falkirk said, but was sure Mycroft hadn't heard him. The Alpha's muttering had gone on a rambling path of G’s father, Urquhart and Mycroft himself.

“Mycroft!” Falkirk snapped and the pale blue eyes focused on him. “The public do not know or care about you. The Old King is in Australia, in exile. King George will not be seen throughout all of this. Put your embarrassment aside and think objectivity. How bad is this?”

Mycroft’s eyes darted about. “Nothing illegal. So it will only play out in the media. And I'm owed a few favours there...” Mycroft mused, trailing off beginning to think.

“Treat it as a flash fire. The public get bored very quickly. Don't feed it and let the scandal burn itself out.” Falkirk advised.

Mycroft nodded. He clasped his hands, sinking deeper in thought. Falkirk asked, “Do you know what proof Urquhart has?”

Mycroft shrugged. “Anything. From before the divorce Urquhart was the confidant of the Princess of Wales. She could have told him. After her death and the King’s abdication George turned to the person his mother trusted, Urquhart. There are bodyguards that could have seen things. Prostitutes.”

Falkirk cringed at the last whispered word. “Just remember. Urquhart respects me because he knows I'm a fanatic. For James, Andrew, MI6. I would destroy myself to destroy a threat to them. And Urquhart knows it. M.A.D. we have lived by it. If you go for the Prime Minister, like Sherlock was willing to do with Moriarty. You may have to be willing to get your hands dirty, or sacrifice all you hold dear.” Mycroft just glanced at him, and Q took it as his cue to leave.

Arriving back at E-Branch. Falkirk saw a small bouncing blond omega male beside Darren. Nodding to Ewan, someone Falkirk had worked with in Q-Branch and the biggest gossip in MI6. Darren held out a phone, a standard I-Phone, not one of their normal secured ones. “Ewan showed me this.” Darren said and indicated Falkirk's office.

Falkirk took the phone and entered, the two other omegas following. Tapping play. A view of a bed. A young man with dark wavy hair, reclining nude. Slowly the man, an Alpha by the looks of him, stroked his waking erection. Then a shorter man, a little sagging with tight curly hair. The old King lay beside the man and kissed him. A lean, freckle covered and rather bony backside blocked the the camera a moment. Mycroft lay on the young man's other side, kisses and touches being shared amongst the three. Falkirk paused the video and handed over the I-Phone to Ewan, “Thank you.”
The blond Omega took back the phone and left, his head swivelling taking in everything with a curious eye. Until his escort guided him out of E-Branch.

Darren said, “From the news breaking it took Ewan 30 seconds to find the video.” Falkirk pressed his fingers to his temples and massaged them. He sat behind his desk, pushing aside his stone cold tea and half eaten biscuit.

A ping made Falkirk look to Darren. The wiry haired Omega looking at the message, “It's Gareth. Smiley is pressing for the video to be investigated. It came form Special Branch.” Falkirk wasn't surprised. Special Branch were loyal to Urquhart, responsible for protection details and would have supplied the King's bodyguard at the time.

“Problems with Special Branch are an internal security matter. Outside of MI6's jurisdiction.” Falkirk said, and told Darren to relay the message to Mallory.

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So far the media storm around the old king and Mycroft had left Falkirk alone today. He just dreaded what Mycroft's retaliation would be. Plucking his ringing mobile out of the inside pocket. With an unknown number, Falkirk placed it to his ear cautiously. Hearing Selene calling his name Falkirk relaxed and responded, “I didn't think you where allowed phones?”

“We're not.” Falkirk sitting up at the forced casual tone and hearing James whispering in the back ground.

“Have you seen Keading recently?” Selene asked. Responding Falkirk described the visit to the park at the weekend.

“Could you check on him?” Selene pleaded. With James hissing in the background, “fifteen seconds!”

“I'm on my way.” Falkirk said before Selene disconnected.

On his way to the car. Falkirk tried phoning Selene's flat and Keading's mobile. Not getting an answer Falkirk ordered the driver to hurry. Keading's tracker identified him as being in the flat having only gone out to take Cody to school.

Arriving at the high rise flats. Falkirk buzzed the flat getting no answer. Pulling out his key and opening the security door. Falkirk headed for the lift. Still getting no answer at the door Falkirk unlocked it as well. The long hall, ended in the lounge, with the kitchen on the left and the two bedroom on the right. Finding a mound in the corner of the master bedroom. Falkirk waved Brayan, his bodyguard, out of the flat.

Approaching, Falkirk slid down beside the nest. “Selene is worried.” he said placing his hand where he thought Keading's head would be. The only thing Falkirk could guess at, “Is this because of the interview?” but that was days ago, and he had spoken to Keading at the time.

Loathed to force the omega but not seeing an alternative. “Keading I need you to respond.”

The nest tightened, defensively. Falkirk moved his hand to a seam. Knowing a nest to be a safe place and to breach one was inappropriate Falkirk tried to get Keading to talk again but he still refused. Sliding his hand in Falkirk felt the other Omega flinch as they made contact.

Feeling his way up Keading’s arm to his cheek. Falkirk could feel the dampness as he stroked the chin. Not breaching any further Falkirk leaned against the nest letting Keading feel his presence. Rubbing his neck against the nest as he continued to stroke Keading’s cheek.

Hearing a stuttered intake of air. Falkirk could feel new tears falling. “I don't know what is wrong but I, we will do what we can.” Falkirk insisted. Slowly the nest opened slightly. Taking it as an invitation Falkirk slipped in as best he could. Pulling Keading’s head unto his shoulder Falkirk stroked his neck and back. Without the mounds of fabrics the scent of disperser flooded over him, thick and rank.

“Is this about the interview?” Falkirk asked getting a dismissive shrug.

“No experience. Employment gaps and lacking formal education.” Keading said in a hollow voice. “They just wanted me to copy things and make coffee how hard is that?”

Taking a shuddering breath Keading continued. “Don't wanna be a bum. So I went to Starbucks. They could hire someone younger for half the price.” Keading lapsed into silence, apart for some sniffs and gasping breaths, before he managed to continue. “I took Cody to school the other day and one of the Dads was there. He asked how much for an Up & Under, I didn't know what he was talking about. Until I looked it up.”

Not even with all Falkirk could do, both as a hacker and as M could he get rid of all the videos of Keading off the internet. And was sure there was more to come. Beyond a creep dad and the slang for a quickie from a prostitute.

“Some of the other parents heard and when I got back there was a message. The principal wants to see me.”

“Do you want me to come? Or Daniel?” Falkirk offered as Selene was currently in Norway and it fell to the rest of the pack to take care of the Omega.

Keading didn't seem to hear him saying, “I should go back.” before looking to Falkirk with red rimmed eyes, pleading “You could take Cody. Better if I just disappear.”

As quickly as he could Falkirk grasped Keading's chin forcing him to maintain eye contact “No! You are part of this pack and Selene's mate. I will not let you disappear. Because of them.” Falkirk said in hard tones before softening his determined features and voice. “Please, I need you.”

Letting go when Keading moved to nuzzle him with Falkirk returning the gesture. After sending a subtle text from his pocket. Falkirk waited until quarter to three before reminding Keading of the time. Getting Keading out of the nest. Falkirk sent him to the shower to get rid of the scents of desperation and depression. There was little Falkirk could do about the scent clinging to his clothes so he washed his neck and face and aired his shirt, waistcoat and jacket as best he could.

Keading coming out of the bathroom found Falkirk striped to the waist with his braces hanging down. Keading offered one of his formal shirts which was gladly accepted. “Would you like to stay a few nights?” Falkirk offered. Getting a small smile and nod Falkirk instructed Keading to pack a bag.
Arriving at the gate of Cody's school. A rather nice building, in a classic style but with high fences and high quality CCTV cameras around it and even a permanent police presence. A bit far from Selene and Keading's because of the security needed for students like the brother of M, or the children of politicians and diplomats.

Amongst the Nannies, most reminding Falkirk of Jenkins, all hawkish and dispassionate and efficient. A few parents, in their designer sun glasses that made them look like flies with huge eyes. Amongst the sea Falkirk spotted Daniels 6’ 5” mass towering above all. Not even the few Alpha males dared get close to him.

“The office is over there.” Keading said pointing to the main entrance, beyond the closed heavy gates painted a sky blue so they weren't so intimidating and jail like. Falkirk recognised the lecherous, cautious or condescending looks some of the parents where giving Keading, they knew of his past. The Omega ducked down and hid behind Falkirk and Daniel, the Alpha putting a reassuring arm around him.

“Is he here? The Father who spoke to you.” Falkirk asked. Shaking his head “No” Keading answered.

When the bell rang and the kids were released. Cody didn't show. A woman emerged, in a skirt suit and a mane of shoulder length grey hair. Cody's teacher cautiously approached Keading, instructing him to follow. When she noticed Daniel and Falkirk she looked like she was about to protest before dismissing it and continuing back into the school.

The teacher Miss Tingle an Alpha in her late fifties led them into an office where the Head Master another Alpha, a balding man with round head and rather small sat. The last woman was a long and willowy beta in a sapphire blue outfit, who identified herself as being from social services.

“Hello I'm Mr Giles” the headmaster introduced in an overly pleasant manor. Looking to Daniel then Falkirk

“His Grace the Duke of Rothsea.” Daniel introduced himself. His voice deep and cultured with a rolling and malevolent edge to it. The head master responded politely, “Your Grace.”

“Sir Thomas McLair.” Falkirk said, putting on his softest and poshest tone of voice. The Head Maser didn't look comfortable, a non bonded Alpha and Omega taking charge, too unusual for comfort.

“The thing is..” Giles started before Diane the Social worker interrupted him. “The school has received several concerned phone calls.” She said before fixing overly sympathetic eyes on Keading and continuing “We have heard about.. We just want what's best for everyone.”

Ms Tingle placed a drawing down in front of Keading. “We asked the children to draw their pack”

Falkirk slid the paper closer to him and then let Daniel see it. A crudely drawn but accurate hierarchical structure had been depicted. Falkirk and Daniel at the top followed by James, Alec and Selene. Keading below Selene. Then Cody and Andrew on the lowest level below their respective parents.

“What would the problem be?” Falkirk asked casually “Daniel and I are clearly indicated and here we are as the head of the pack.”
The head Master looked uncomfortable at the prospect of an Omega at the head of a pack but as Falkirk had been doing the lion's share of the talking he was having trouble questioning it.

Looking to Keading, Falkirk asked, “May I end this charade?” Getting a nod Falkirk fixed the Head Master in his sights. As his features dropped from a pleasant smile for dealing with Keading to the cold fury he used when a Double O had been particularly stupid.

“You are nothing but a bunch of middle class twits looking down their noses. If you continue on this course I will make it my personal goal to end you. Your professional credibility will be in ruins and I will have politicians, Individuals and charities lining up to condemn you for your discrimination” The Head Master, Teacher and Social Worker started to protest at the use of 'Discrimination' reacquiring Daniel to use the deep resonating voice to cut through, “SILENCE!”

“Be under no illusion Discrimination it is and how I will ensure it is perceived. You discriminate against Mr Corvin for his pornographic past. You discriminate because a pack doesn't conform to your narrow perception. Has Cody ever appeared with suspicious bruises? Has Cody caused any concern what so ever, your narrow bias aside?”

There were three shakes of the head. “Well as that is everything, Home.” Falkirk declared looking to Keading for confirmation.

“Will you be staying for dinner?” Falkirk asked Daniel. Moving out of the office.

“Why not, thank you.” Daniel answered.

Falkirk snapped his fingers at the Head Master, like he was a rude waiter Falkirk deliberately wanted to offend and demanded his brother. In his most arrogant, Alpha-esc way. Even adding a 'Chop-chop I'm waiting.'

Putting his arm around Keading's waist. Falkirk walked with him. Letting his voice carry to the teacher still following them. “I'll be contacting the board of Governors. I understand the need to ensure children's safety. But to pander to the hysteria of paranoid parents is not acceptable.”

Keading nodded, Falkirk felling the move against his head. “I will always fight for you, no matter who it's against.” Keading moved to his neck, where Falkirk felt a lick, a gesture of regret or deep gratitude.

Daniel parked in front of the house after Falkirk's driver had pulled away. It was with a force of will, a break of deeply engrained tradition Daniel acknowledged the butler, something he had never done in his youth. He owed the man for his initiative in calling him when James was at his short sighted, bull headed best.

After taking his coat. Hudson showed Daniel to the lounge where Falkirk and Keading where making a fuss of Andrew while Cody did his home work at the small coffee table. Suddenly a tumbler appeared at Daniels elbow. Thanking Hudson Daniel splashed a bit of water into the glass of whisky, taking the glass from the sliver tray and sat.

Nanny Jenkins came to take Andrew upstairs just as Hudson call, “Dinner is served.”

It didn't go unnoticed the mutual act of ignorance that passed between Keading and the Nanny. In Daniel's experience Nannies believed themselves above a servant. “My Nanny was a vicious battleaxe. Only ever had time for the legitimate children of a marriage, hated Douglas and I, adored
Doreen. Never trusted them since.” Daniel mentioned.

“Why do I get the impression that story ends with an act of unspeakable terror?” Falkirk said taking his seat.

Taking his seat to the right of Falkirk. “No, No. I outsmarted her. I knew what would set her off and Granny just happened to oversee. Given what I now know about her it’s no longer a surprise she tore her and Mother to shreds. That’s when mother moved out, taking Doreen. Leaving Douglas and I with our grand parents.” Daniel said.

Falkirk though he was being given a warning. Daniel implying, the Nanny had a problem with someone she wouldn't consider a legitimate part of the pack. “She is traditional 'Baby needs routine'.” Falkirk responded quoting the Nanny's favourite line. Keading seemed to deliberately ignore the conversation focused on cutting up Cody's meal so he could feed himself.

After the meal, Keading took his son's hand and went upstairs to supervise bath time and to get Cody ready for bed.

“You noticed it as well?” Falkirk stated. Seeing Daniel nod, and finished his second whisky. “You can stay if you want? I think Keading needs the pack around him. I had forgotten, for a few years M arranged James and Alec so one was with me most of the time.”

“Well that saves the taxi ride.” Daniel responded helping himself to more of James' whisky.

Pressing the buzzer Falkirk waited for Hudson to appear. When he did Falkirk instructed him to close the door before asking “How has Nanny Jenkins been doing?”

Getting a similar assessment to his own Falkirk thanked him and dismissed him. Daniel, giving a shrug. On a purely professional level the Nanny was acceptable. But Falkirk was just trying to justify the decision he had been considering for a while.

In blue pyjamas Cody appeared at the door holding a book. Going to sit beside Falkirk he handed his big brother the book. Keading joined them sitting on the other side of Cody. Snuggling happily between the two Omegas. Cody demanded a story.

Opening the book Falkirk found a mix of short stories and poems. “Anything in particular?” Falkirk asked. Cody knowing the book found his favourite page easily even if he couldn't read it yet.

Falkirk pulled his brother close and nuzzled the top of his head. “Come gather round my children and you will hear of the midnight ride of Paul Revere…” Falkirk continued the poem in even slow tones to help lull the child, instead of stimulate. Reaching the end of the poem, Falkirk kissed the top of the soft straight hair. Daniel stood and scoop up the floppy boy.

Keading, leading the way into the bedroom Falkirk had offered up for the child. On the second floor, beside Andrew's. Keading pulled back the thin quilt, making a space for Cody on the simple pine single bed, making sure the sliver bear was within easy reach in the strange bed. After placing the boy down, Daniel watched for a moment as Keading tucked his son in, getting a sleepy “Night, Mom” in response.

Coming out of the room they met Nanny Jenkins in her coat, heading home for the night. Keading subtly moved so Daniel was between him and the Nanny. “Nanny Jenkins.” Daniel greeted.
“Sir.” she responded waiting for Daniel to precede her.

“A Duke, not a knight.” Daniel corrected pleasantly. It was like watching a switch being flipped. The downward turn of her mouth lifted slightly. “Of course, Your Grace.” she responded in sickly sweet tones.

“Duke of Rothsea.” Daniel informed at her curious look. Knowing she recognised an old and hereditary title and not one of the modern peerages. Daniel suppressed a cruel smile.

Looking round to the Omega with his head down and neck exposed Daniel gently took his arm and interlocked it with his own to escort Keading down the stairs. “A marvellous boy you have there.” Daniel said getting a proud smile in response. Keeping up the prise and familiar chatter Daniel kept his voice just loud enough to carry to the Nanny following several paces behind. It was an act, a reminder Keading was pack and family and she was a servant.

Entering to the lounge, Nanny continued down to the kitchen. “Do the aristocracy get lessons in insulting people without actually saying what they mean?” Falkirk asked the returning pair.

“Yes. Right between the lesson in saying Yahaaa and air-hair-lair.” Daniel shot back. Then having to explaining the air, hair, lair joke that was used to say 'Oh Hello!' in a posh way. And making a suggestion they go to a pantomime, where the joke was fairly common.

“Can you speak like Falkirk, British?” Keading suddenly asked.

Letting the insult slide. Daniel proud he was Scottish and having consciously worked to keep his accent while Falkirk had an English accent and both British. Closing his eyes and when Daniel spoke it was with the precise pronunciations of the Oxbridge BBC English, the aforementioned 'British' accent. “If you can look into the seeds of time, and say which grain will grow and which will not, speak then unto me.”

Falkirk remarked on the similarities with Urquhart while Keading said, “You sound like the Emperor.”

Daniel fixed Keading with a cold emotionless eyes and a nasty up turn of his lip. Putting more of a rasp into his voice, “Now witness the power, of this fully armed and operational battle station.”

Keading let out a relived breath, recognising the quote. Falkirk remarked “Sounds like Davros.”

As it turned out everyone had a passing interest in some form of Sci-Fi. Debating the pros and cons of everyone's individual choice. A moment of confusion rose when Keading mentioned 'The Avengers' and Daniel confused it with the old British series he used to love. After describing the series and with a good internet connection Falkirk was able to get a few episodes to watch. Sitting back in the dimmed lounge. The big Alpha, with an Omega curled up under each arm. The three watched the adventures of Emma Peal and John Steed.

When a black and white image of a young Michael Gough appeared, Keading pointing a finger, “That's Alfred!”
The tree had been delivered and Hudson was helping Falkirk decorate. With Andrew charging about on all fours they couldn't put anything down for a moment. Even the couch and chair weren't safe since Andrew figured out how to climb. A rather ungainly action, where Andrew used his large head as an anchor and used it to counter balance his body to lift up his legs.

Using the aforementioned climbing technique, the small boy got closer to his target on top of the couch. A chubby hand stretched out to the boxes and bags. Blue eyes locked on the the sparkly silver thing. Grasping the silver, and pulling, giving a happy squeal as the sting of silver just kept coming. Andrew managing to get the string of tinsel and bite into it, and with the final tug a crash as he pulled the boxes and bag of balls and ornaments over. A big face filled Andrew's vision, Papa, gently coxing the silver from him. Andrew's face scrunched getting ready to let out a wail.

Desperately Falkirk held up one of his son's plastic doughnuts that rattled. Giving the rattle a shake and watching the small and round face droop in complete unhappiness. Grabbing the toy, Andrew set it flying through the air not wanting it, wanting to be a part of what his Papa was doing.

Just as Andrew was gearing up to continue, Falkirk watched the big blue eyes go wide in amazement and look right passed him. “Always one.” the soft Scottish voice said. Turning from his son, to look at the butler, who seemed overly pleased with himself. Falkirk congratulated the man on getting the lights to work. The laid out strings glowing in the neat lines on the floor.

Between the two of them and keeping the tiny third from trying to eat the lights, the strings were soon strung around the tree.

Falkirk and Hudson stood back, admiring the tree that had been placed in front of the French doors. The glass reflecting the gently twinkling reds, blues, greens and whites. Even Andrew had stopped for a moment to just look.

The front door flew open. Falkirk and Hudson jumped preparing for trouble, the butler's hand reaching under his jacket. Falkirk chasing Andrew who crawled towards the noise, then as fast as he could move, charged. Falkirk a step behind his son came to a halt, singling Hudson to stand down. Andrew crossing the tiled foyer like a little train, aiming for his Daddy.

Dropping the kit bag and with a groan James swooped down picking Andrew up. Getting happy little mewls as he bounced Andrew, and nuzzled into to the small neck and giving a kiss to the chubby cheek. The infant nuzzled his Alpha as best he could.

Despite knowing James was technically AWOL Falkirk joined his son. Happy and relieved to have his Alpha back.

With bone deep aches and completely exhausted James wound his arms around the omegas. “We were politely told our assessments where finished.” he purred nuzzling Falkirk, basking in his Omega's scent. The scent of home.
With muscles screaming in pain, James handed over Andrew to Falkirk. Giving a kiss to Andrew's cheek and one to his mate's lips. James picked up his kit bag. “Shower then food.” he said dragging one foot in front of the other to go up stairs, leaning on the banister like an old man.

Falkirk had to close the doors onto the dining room and hall to prevent Andrew from following James. Continuing to decorate the tree, a high pitched grunting sound brought Falkirk's attention to Andrew again. The boy had managed to stand, leaning heavily against the door, stretching as high as he could. Andrew grunted, the handle just brushed the fingers of the outstretched left hand.

“Determined little thing.” Hudson observed in wonder.

“I dread the day when size and motor skill aren't a problem.” Falkirk returned. He hoped it wasn't just a Mother's bias but Falkirk was adamant Andrew's eyes where too sharp. He had seen the child working out problems with a cunning intelligence reminiscent of Sherlock and a fierce determination that could only be described as James'. There was also a restlessness that was of himself and Sherlock. Falkirk just hoped Andrew didn't develop the cold distance everyone else had. Keading's affections where all that sustained Falkirk at times.

Pulling Andrew from the door in case James barged in and sent him flying. Grumbling and whining, the moment Andrew touched he floor again he made for the door again.

Trying to distract Andrew Falkirk held up an ornament. Letting the little fingers grasp the ribbon of the bauble. Falkirk first made a show of hanging his plastic bell on the tree. With a bit of help Andrew was able to take he ribbon out his mouth to copy his Papa, hanging an oval bauble of clear blue plastic. Praising and nuzzling his son, Falkirk let Andrew hang another not noticing the door swinging open.

Picking up bauble at random. James came over to Falkirk and hung his next to Andrew's. The butler slipping out with barely a notice. James wrapped his arms round mate and child. Relaxing against them. “Welcome Home” Falkirk said, resting his head against the Alpha's shoulder and sighing in contentment.

The door opening made them realise how long they had been in the embrace. Even the active child had settled in his parent's arms. Hudson placed the tray on the coffee table and backed out the room again. James detached from the Omegas in favour of the plate of sandwiches and coffee. Andrew crawling over, so he could climb onto his dad and sit in the Alpha's lap. James hugging his son, watching he mate hang more ornaments on the tree.

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True to his mate's words. James, Alec and Selene had completed their assessments ahead of schedule. The physical assessments where a mixed bag. The endurance where as good as ever but the extreme short term exertions were lower. The psyche assessments where the best the three had ever had. They were approved for filed work with no concerns about motivation. There was only one problem, he could see. “Not a Problem.” Falkirk corrected himself.

Selene walked passed the glass wall of Falkirk's office to the door. Her black hair was damp looking and ruffled as it usually was. She had dressed up since becoming the bodyguard of M but still didn't look right in the trouser suits she wore. The combat trousers, boots, and coat where still much more her style.

Instructing her to take a seat Falkirk opened Selene's assessments. “Well to start with, you have passed everything and reinstatement has been approved by all. But you have also been presented with a very unique opportunity. You could return to the field as an operative and given your
experience you would go to the top of the roster to be assigned a Double O.” Falkirk stated

Selene stilled at the possibility. She had accepted her position as Falkirk's bodyguard. Given some of his adventures it certainly hadn't been a boring assignment. But to go back in the field.

“Keading?” she whispered, concern evident for her Omega.

“I and Daniel are here. He is part of the pack, and will be fine.” Falkirk insisted trying to keep his tone even. Not wanting his own desire to keep her as his bodyguard, to be a factor in Selene's choice.

“I see the strain another Omega goes through, when his Alpha is away for months on end. I have a duty and a responsibility, to you as your bodyguard, and to Keading as his Alpha. I decline reinstatement to the field.”

It was with relief Selene turned down the reinstatement to field work. Falkirk was about to give the order to return Selene to his security detail when she called, “M?”

When Falkirk nodded, she continued. “I do trust you, that was why I didn't say anything. But when James asked bout Papava, I wasn't trying to challenge you, I just wanted to understand.”

Falkirk leaned back in his chair. Taking his glasses off. Wanting to move beyond this, but Selene's request wasn't unreasonable and she had clearance to know. She had just not been there when some things like the accusations or evidence were being discussed. It meant she missed out on the blocks of information to complete the full picture of Scarlett Papava's actions.

Replacing his glasses, Falkirk brought up Papava's file, sending the information to the internal glass wall. He started with Papava's village, that had been purged by the Russian army. Then brought up the proof of Papava's crimes, the CCTV, DNA, a knife with a palm print belonging to Papava, all used in the death of people who had become quite powerful or influential in the Russian state.

Falkirk scented a changed in Selene, although outwardly she was still. But her scent que was agitated, excited, almost like the alertness of an Alpha preparing for a fight. “I did something, 'In detriment to British interests', would you have executed me?” Selene asked quietly.

Falkirk looked at the wall, with the photos showing a range of different men. The only one left alive, Falkirk's counterpart in the FSB, General Pushkin. “Murders, Rapists, war criminals, I don't defend any of them, they were scum. If Papava had made friends, or even if she came to me I would have helped.” Falkirk said. Looking to the only survivor, “I did promise to complete her work.”

Pointing to the picture of one old man, with long narrow sagging face, very long drooping ears and nose. Falkirk said, “Koskov, had a severe heart condition. It would have been so simple to switch his medication for something else. His pacemaker was also susceptible to electronic interference. His death could have been done discreetly. With no real proof, the Russians couldn't throw around accusations or make demands.”

“But I killed Alexander Corvinus? He was a British asset?” Selene said, referring to the grandfather of her lost Omega mate and one of the people responsible for his death.

Falkirk shrugged, “You were the prime suspect in Corvinus' death. Did you know your old associate Tannis was interrogated, others too, in the attempt to get proof it was you. But they knew nothing. And you had something Papava didn't, friends. One of whom could get information without leaving a trail, who also destroyed or corrupted what little evidence there was. Through the
help you gave, you earned further favours from R and two Double Os. So if M went for you, she would have to deal with me, Daniel, James and Alec as well. But what really saved you, despite sending a retired Hungarian Cruiser to the bottom of the Danube, you were discreet. No one knew it was you and all the suspicion in the world couldn't change that.”

“Thank you. I didn't know you did anything.” Selene muttered looking at her clasped hands.

Asking to speak frankly and warning Selene, she might not like part of what he had to say. When Selene gave her permission Falkirk said, “I didn't know what I was seeing at at the time. But now I know what it meant. You are the worst Double O I have ever seen.” The bright blue eyes flicked to Falkirk, angry and annoyed.

“It was the day we first met Keading I saw it.” Falkirk said, forging on wanting to explain quickly. “You were more concerned about the vulnerable Omega. Almost forgetting your mission, orders or why you were meant to be watching James, Alec and I. A Double O doesn't do that. I don't even think James would put me before an active mission.”

“I'm sure he would.” Selene said, seeing Falkirk really meant the last sentence and wanted to comfort the omega.

Falkirk smiled at the woman that had been at his side so long it felt like she was his very shadow. “See!” he said with a watery smile, never had Falkirk spoken of his secret fear, the holding back James still did. “Even now you're more concerned about the distressed Omega than what I said a moment ago. I think you're the most selfless Alpha I have see. Keading is very lucky to have you. And I wish there were more Alphas like you. That is why I have trusted you as my friend and bodyguard, it plays to your greatest strength, to protect.”

Selene looked away again, at the mention of the trust the Omega had in her and what she did to betray it. “I'm sorry,” she muttered.

“I forgive you. Please talk to me next time? I will tell you as much as I can, or tell you what I can't tell you.” Selene nodded, in agreement. Falkirk then said, “You may relieve Brayan and return to duty.”

“M.” Selene said, with respect and stood.

--

An afternoon, in the week running up to Christmas and it was Alec's turn to report to M. The Alpha lazed casually opposite M, giving a wiggle in the uncomfortable chair. Falkirk went through the man's assessments. The greater ties to pack and partner were noted as a cause for potential compromise in 006, but that was just like James and Selene. “Welcome back, Double O Six.” Q said with a smile. Felling a slight gnawing, with Selene apologising and explaining herself, it was now only Alec who hadn't.

Alec smiled, his teasing and easy going smirk. “You want to see something?” Alec said with genuine excitement. “I saw it when I got back.”

Falkirk nodded. Alec bounced to his feet. And Falkirk followed more sedately. “I'd hug you if it wasn't unprofessional.” Alec whispered on their way through E-Branch. Falkirk nodded, he was trying to maintain his normal appearance but was sure Alec could see through it and noticed the slight strain in him.

They entered the lift. Q had the horrible thought Alec was taking a trip to the memorial wall but
they dropped below the ground level. The doors opened, they weren't heading to the lift that would take them to the vast understructure of the bunker network but were still a safe distance below the streets of London.

Q recognised the route to the Double O division. A suite of secure offices, rarely used but needed. Often referred to as the War Offices, due to the enhanced privacy and security. There were no signals here, no cameras, and the guards were the dedicated elite of MI6. The decoration was a little old fashioned. Panelled walls, heavy wood and leather padded doors, thick plush carpets, with reproduction painting in heavy frames. A little too 'gentlemen's club' for Falkirk's liking.

Alec pushed open a rich wood door, padded in thick leather and with buttons giving it a riveted appearance. The room beyond was a semi circle, with a corridor and nine doors lining the curving wall. Brass plaques on the doors, starting on the left, '001' and ending with, '009' on the door to the far right, with the corridor between, 004 and 005's office. Sitting at the desk in the centre of the room, an old beta woman with a beehive hairdo looked up. “Good afternoon, M. Welcome back Double O Six.” Mrs Ponsonby, the secretary for all the Double Os greeted.

Alec led Falkirk around the desk, both giving the woman a greeting in passing. Along the corridor between two offices, and through a maze of warrens. Alec pushed open a door into a small locker room, one attached to a small private gym for the Double Os exclusive use. Nine large wooden front lockers lined one wall, and a mirror along the wall opposite, with a bench running length between. Man and Woman, Alpha, Beat and Omega all used it, mostly because when the war offices were built the Double Os were exclusively Alpha/Male and the locker had not been updated when the first Alpha woman, then beta men were slowly added to the ranks of the 00s. Now the facilities were just labelled unisex.

At the end of the changing room, between the two door holes leading to the showers and gym. A large noticeboard, an informal memorial wall of sorts. Falkirk had known of the wall's existence, it was populated thought the life and career of the Double Os, not a mark of their death. Falkirk smiled seeing the picture of himself, being served by a Boi in the corset and bunny ears and fluffy round tail, in the background the similarly dressed Omega who had come to speak at the society. Alec pointed at something. Falkirk looked to the the indicated page, torn from a report, with a yellow post it stuck to it. He recognised his notes and Andrew's scribbles. The post it, was of Addison's writing, proclaiming it to be 'Baby M's first bollocking’

Falkirk was rather relived that that was all Alec was showing him. “They're rather sentimental.” Falkirk said. In the privacy of the secure suites, when Alec put his arm around him, Falkirk didn't feel the need to brush it of.

“Come on, something else.” Alec said and tugged Falkirk out. Through more corridors, Alec pushed open a door, into a circular room. Nine chairs fixed into position and looking to a wide table. It was the Double O briefing room. Alec was heading for the door behind the wide desk, the door to Falkirk's secure office.

The office beyond had not been updated since it was first built. It would have been classed as traditional in the 40s. A wide oak, leather top desk. Hanging behind the desk, James' 'Bloody Big ship'.

Falkirk was slammed against the wall, Alec's hand around his throat. The blue eyes were empty, not that of Alec, this was Double O Six, the assassin, the brute, the torturer. “You remember when I had you like this before?”

Falkirk nodded, one hand digging his fingernails into the hands cutting off his air supply. The other hand reaching for the gold taser in his pocket. Alec plunged a hand into Falkirk's waistcoat pocket,
fist clenching around Falkirk's, keeping the little taser safely inside the Omega's grip. Falkirk was panicked, the room was designed to isolate, the only communication was the hard line phones on the desk. There was no one to see, or walk in at random. He was alone, with the dangerous Double O Six.

“I believed you.” Alec purred in the shell of the long ear, that Falkirk hide under all that wild hair. “You spoke, giving and holding back information perfectly. I really thought you knew everything. Then what I saw you do, it reinforced the belief that you knew everything. But you know nothing!” Alec let go on the last word. “You said you read my file. I suggest you Do it!” Alec ordered.

Backing away, Alec scrubbed his face, and letting out a shout of frustration.

Slumping, Falkirk took in deep gasping breaths, his wide and panicked green eyes watching Alec sag then kick a chair suddenly. Now the absence of emotion was over, the emotion Alec was showing looked on the verge of being, overwhelming. Falkirk not quite sure if Alec was going to rage or cry. Alec looked pained, his face showed the lines of his age and looked so tired.

Alec mused, he didn't look at Falkirk as he said, “They(the psychologists), you and Daniel just thought I was following James' lead when I confronted you. I wasn't. I didn't know how you could have murdered her. I didn't think you could be that, bad. But when I was away I figured, or hoped, that you didn't know everything. Find my file and for fuck's sake don't let anyone know what you're looking for.”

“Why?” Falkirk flinched and backed up, the wall hitting his back. Alec closing in again and Falkirk was trapped, but he was just pulled into a gentle hug that only tightened as Falkirk relaxed. Pressing his nose to Alec's neck, the man's scent cues were muted like they always were, there was a bit of agitation but beyond that Falkirk was having trouble interpreting the scent. Felling Alec rub his head against his, and a quiet whisper washed over Falkirk's ear, “I'm already breaking orders.”

Falkirk nodded. “Keep quiet until you know.” Alec warned and let go. Falkirk sagged, sliding down the wall. Thoughts running in circles in his head.

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Claridge's, a few days before Christmas, Falkirk and Elizabeth Urquhart where having afternoon tea. Falkirk couldn't deal with the societies she dragged him to but some of the charities that came to speak where interesting. Some causes he couldn't identify with others were of close interest. The first charity along with one helping Omega's escape abusive situations where at the forefront for Falkirk.

Elizabeth still didn't trust him and their conversation was still forced most of the time. While Falkirk was running an idea by her, Elizabeth seemed politely positive about it. Suddenly she dropped the conversation, looking round Falkirk. Turning, to see what Elizabeth was looking at, Mycroft sitting with Tanner of all people.

“Now what are those two doing together?” Falkirk mused.

“You know the other one?” Elizabeth asked.

“My chief of Staff.”

Falkirk and Elizabeth watched Mycroft stiffened and his eyes snapped passed Tanner who had his back to their table. Slowly the Beta turned around and came face to face with his boss and brother to his companion. Tanner froze, his eyes going wide and face tingeing red. Mycroft gave a tight little facial expression, lifting his cheek muscles in a strange and rather intimidating parody of a
smile, like a snake wanting to put a mouse at ease. Mycroft's lips moved and he drew Tanner's attention again. Falkirk could see his chief of staff squirming in his seat as he turned back to Mycroft.

“ Aren't you going over to speak with your Chief of Staff?” Elizabeth challenged.

“I do not go into a situation blind and he will be stewing until I confront him.” Falkirk said coldly.

“You sound rather like Francis.” Elizabeth said.

--

Falkirk arrived in E-Branch at his normal time the next day. Tanner charged out his office and heading to Falkirk's the two meeting at the door. “ About Sunday.” Tanner said, closing the door behind him.

Falkirk taking the seat, he had been doing his own digging but a small part wanted to hear this. Sitting cross legged, with his hands clasped on the upper knee, with a wide and curious smile. “ Yes, Mr Tanner?” Falkirk prompted innocently, when the beta still hadn't continued.

“The thing is.” Tanner fell silent.

“The thing is?” Falkirk prompted, innocently. Enjoying this far to much. “ I, Myc, we...”

“Myc? Are you skipping over his name? Or are we onto pet names?” Falkirk teased.

The Beta's eyes widened, realising his boss had figured it out. “ Pet name.” Tanner admitted. “ That day, your first year here, you hit your panic button and I gave Myc that bollocking for stalking you. After that we started talking when we saw each other at meetings and things. Then after Moran's bomb we started, you know, seeing each other.”

Falkirk nodded. “ I'm having a big Christmas Dinner. Would you like to come?”

“ Were keeping it quiet.” Tanner said.

Not a big surprise, there was still a stigma for male/male relationships were participants were Alpha or beta, but Mycroft's sexuality was well and truly out. “ You may keep it as quiet as you wish. I will not tell anyone, but you do have my support.” Falkirk said and Tanner gave him a shy smile and took his leave.

--

The same day as Tanner's revelation, Shane and David arrived. Falkirk leaving early, to make sure he was home to greet his Brother and Nephew. Coming to the lounge door at the sound of the bell, Hudson already there and pulling the door open for the guests. The tall, dark brown haired and broadest of the Homes brothers, Shane, gave a greeting to the butler he knew as a boy, in the Homes house. David, following his father in. Not a second later, and to Hudson's annoyance, Sherlock burst in, the door hitting the butler as the detective barged passed.

In typical flamboyant fashion, with coat billowed behind him Sherlock bounced around his big brother. Shane pulled Sherlock against him, in a loose hug, which Sherlock tried to brush off but all could see it was just an act. Hudson had just closed the door when the bell rang to announce John's belated arrival.
Falkirk called across the foyer for Hudson to bring coffee, then herded the guests into the lounge. Hugging Shane then David as they passed. Shane shook James' hand and greeted the wide eyed Omega in James' lap. David, the fairest of the Holmes line with hair a very light brown, and rather long, well on his way to the 6' mark but very thin, without the developed muscle structure yet. The teenager also shook James' hand and greeted his cousin.

Sherlock gestured wildly, showing off to the bother he had respected and looked up to as a child, describing a recent case. The Alpha's excited pheromones in turn gave Andrew a little high, who bouncing excitedly, squealing with delight and waved his arms just like his uncle. John issued a sharp “Sherlock!” when the detective started deucing what was wrapped in the gifts under the tree.

--

Falkirk put Andrew down, the boy's arms and legs hanging heavy. With a press of lips to the brow, Falkirk stood back, to allow James to say his goodnight. The Alpha brushed a large hand over the wild and dark hair, giving a soft smile then leaned down to press his lips to his son's forehead.

“Alec paid a visit the other day” James prompted, pulling up the lowered side of the crib. Wrapping an arm around Falkirk and leading him down to their room. “I never quite thought Hudson had what it took to pull a trigger in cold blood. But the way he looked at Alec, he was prepared to kill. And he all but ordered me to hand over Andrew. I also noticed the internal security cameras were online.”

James was desperately trying to stay calm, but Falkirk smelt his Alpha's state. The que was alert and on edge. Falkirk said, “Something cropped up on Alec's psyche profile. Until it's sorted, I'm being careful.”

“Can I know what?”

“That's the problem. I don't even know. And Alec has indicated there are historical orders he can't discuss.”

James pulled the omega to bed. Curling around him. “Will...” Falkirk pressed his lips to his alpha's to stop him. Pulling apart Falkirk whispered, “I'll deal with it. When I know what I'm dealing with I will tell you what I can, when I can.” Falkirk said and pressed his lips again to James'. Hands slipping up James' side hooking his t-shirt, pulling it over the Alpha's head. They continued on, entwining and sharing in each others bodies, until spooned, the Omega's back the the Alpha's front, the knot tying them together, they drifted off to sleep.

--

On Christmas Eve, the first of a few big meals. Falkirk had reluctantly taken on a kitchen maid and a footman. Hudson and the footman worked away in the dinning room setting the table while Mrs Bridges slaved away down stairs.

Daniel and Alec arrived first. Falkirk hugged both, deep down he still trusted Alec, but in their world secrets were a necessity they had to live with. Alec for his part, clung a little more tightly and desperately to Falkirk than usual. James greeted his old friend with an easy smile, good enough to deceive Alec, and if Falkirk hadn't know of his Alpha's suspicions he would never have been able to guess for himself.

Mycroft was the next, greeting Shane who he had not come to see on their arrival the day before. Selene, Keading and Cody were next. Snagging Keading's arm Falkirk took him into the library.
Needing to shove Mycroft, who was on his phone, out.

Sitting beside the other Omega on the small settee. “I have a bit of a job for you. If you want it?” Falkirk said. After a hesitant nod from Keading Falkirk continued, “It's customary to help charities in my position. I was hoping you would do the administration for me?”

Pulling out the literature for the charities Falkirk had chosen he handed them to Keading. “There is the money but someone like me is also meant to help pull stings and help the charity speaks to the right government, business, political representative, department, whatever.” Falkirk explained.

“What would I have to do?” Keading asked hesitantly.

“No idea, you'll have to find that out. Villiers dealt with M's charities. I don't think she even knew she supported any.” Falkirk responded.

James knocked and stuck his head in. “Dinner's served” he called and closed the door again.

“Think about it and let me know.” Falkirk said standing and heading for the door.

“I'll do it.” Keading insisted before Falkirk could open the door.

--

At the sound of the crying from the monitor sitting beside the bed, Falkirk was up and pulling on a dressing gown. With Andrew still not knowing what Christmas was the only predawn start was due to his desire to be fed and changed. After seeing to his son's early morning needs, Falkirk took Andrew down stairs to get a cup of tea and to just spend time with his son while he was awake, although he was dozing off again after the warm milk. A quiet noise from the lounge drew Falkirk's attention.

Finding his nephew sitting with his back against the couch just looking at the presents under the tree, eyes glassy and watery. Sliding down to sit beside David. “Your mum?” Falkirk asked getting a hiccuped breath and a nod in response.

Transferring Andrew to the boy's lap. Falkirk pulled his nephew against him and cradled David's head in the junction of his neck. “Mum would be the first one down. Even when I was little and could barely sleep.” David reminisced. Falkirk listened to a few more anecdotes from his nephew and keeping up the gentle caresses.

Andrew waking to the ugly and rank scent que of a distressed Alpha started grumbling and mewling his own discomfort. The sudden panic from David almost comically turned his mood, looking desperately to his uncle for guidance. Falkirk just stroking Andrew's neck and letting him scent his calm Papa, he soon settled down until an old ambition(for a baby) resurfaced. Squirming until David allowed him to get to the floor Andrew crawled for the brightly coloured boxes determined to make it this time.

“Why don't you help him?” Falkirk asked David, pointing to a box. Andrew grumbled again when his big cousin came closer, until he noticed he wasn't being stopped or picked up. Continuing his journey to the tree, a bright red box with Santa faces suddenly appeared in front of Andrew. Grabbing hold of the box almost as big as him Andrew tried to use it to lever himself up. A bright flash distracted Andrew and he wobbled as he looked to his Papa, the big blue eyes blinking in confusion. The paper gave way and with a rip Andrew landed on his arse a strip of paper still in his chubby grasp. With wonder Andrew forgot about the camera flash, in favour of tearing more paper from the box.
James and Shane soon arrived to witness the mayhem of Andrew sitting in a doughnut of coloured paper, ignoring his presents in favour of turning the wrapping paper into confetti. Giving a happy little squeal at the sound of ripping and how the paper fluttered when he waved his arms.

--

Everyone started arriving throughout the afternoon. Sherlock and John being the first, Sherlock breezing in with John weighed down under a pile of presents. Falkirk quite liked the the jumper the doctor was wearing even if James made a snarky comment in the background. Much to Falkirk's pleasure John had gotten him a similar jumper and in an act of rebellion and to spite James he put on the bright green wool with spots of different colours. James declaring it, “Adorable!” much to Falkirk’s delight.

Mycroft arrived as serenely as ever. A mound of neatly wrapped gifts in his arms, all in elegant paper and expensive ribbons. At first glance you would think the gifts would have been wrapped for him, but Sherlock and Falkirk knew no one but Mycroft would be that precise in anything.

Selene arrived with Keading and Cody next. Selene demanding, “Is Alec here?” and looking ready to kill.

Keading, beside Falkirk gave a jaw popping yawn as he said, “Cody, come tell Falkirk the wooden toys you got.”

The boy, with his Papa's soft brow eyes and straight hair looked up at his brother very innocently, “I got a slide whistle, a flute thing and this other thing that spins and make a loud noise.”

“Football Rattle?” James identified. And once he described the toy, Cody nodded and confirmed he had been given one.

Keading whispering in Falkirk's ear, “At four frigging a.m. crackcrackcrackcrak!” Falkirk put a consoling his arm around the omega and pulled him down beside him on the couch, demanding James get a glass of Keading's preferred white wine.

When Alec did arrive with Daniel and Mary, who had been visiting her granddaughter the night before. Selene marched up to the blond, backing him up against the front door. Her blue eyes gleaming righteous death to the man for his crime. “You...Toys...I'm going to kill you...four fucking A.M. I nearly had a heart attack. You? You?” Selene ended in a groan aware she was being watched.

It was Mary who instead, “There has to be something that makes a noise, or what is four a.m. for?”

Alec gave a wide nervous smile. Selene realising it wasn't Alec. She rounded on Daniel who was unrepentant and unafraid, and using his grand mother as a human shield. “I will get my revenge.” she warned Daniel.

Coming to James and Falkirk, Alec whispered in a faux German accent, “Do not mention za vaw.” and indicated Mycroft. Mary who overheard sent them a glance that could have frozen water. Knowing Alec and James' sense of humour, they would lord and hint at the secret. Falkirk decided to end the jokes before they got out of hand.

Going up stairs Falkirk got the bullet and fragments from his drawer. Returning to the lounge he gave the fragments to Daniel. After a brief and quiet conversation Daniel agreed it was time to settle the old feud.

Falkirk returned to the group, of James, Alec, Mary and Selene. “Gentlemen start your engines.
Half an hour.” Falkirk said, with his prediction and bet of how long it should take Sherlock to solve the puzzle of the bullets.

“Is this a good Idea?” Mary insisted.

“Most things come out in time. It's better to know when and where.” Falkirk answered.

Accepting Falkirk and her grandson's judgement Mary added, “After dessert when he has relaxed and everything is winding down.” she said giving Sherlock a weighing look.

With all bets in Falkirk nodded to Daniel who approached Sherlock and handed him the strange bullets from his father's gun, one unfired and complete, the other in two sections, the tip section with its unique corkscrew tail.

Mycroft and Shane knowing something was up approached Falkirk who refused to answer their questions.

Hudson announced the arrival of Tanner and Falkirk moved to welcome him. After being offered a drink Tanner moved to mingle. And if Falkirk noticed the small wrapped box moving from Mycroft's pocket to Tanner's he didn't say anything.

Falkirk's time came and went with the end of the aperitifs. Followed by Alec's bet of an hour over the starter. Selene's two hour mark went as James carved the goose. Mary's bet of Sherlock figuring the bullet's secret after dessert was fast approaching and James' bet of Sherlock not managing it tonight was also looking more likely. As the dessert plates were cleared and the sweet accompanying wine was drunk. Sherlock declared, “I would like the suspects to gather in the library.”

“I think the library is a bit small, how about the lounge?” Falkirk stated.

Petulantly, “Yes, Yes the lounge is fine.” Sherlock responded.

Mary looked to Falkirk, from her place about halfway down the table on his right. For the briefest moment, the normally kindly face had a smile of victorious smugness.

In a scene reminiscent of Agatha Cristy. Everyone sat in the lounge, nursing a post dinner drink of their choice, loosening belts, letting out groans and complaining they were about to explode.

Sherlock paced about. Falkirk was sure Andrew would regret missing this, there was lots of bouncing and arm waving to attract his attention. Sherlock stopped suddenly and tapped his index finger against his lip. “I first noticed Falkirk disappear up stairs to return, giving something to you.” Sherlock said, pointing an accusing finger at Daniel. Treating it as a game Sherlock was really hamming up the the theatrics.

Moving the finger to Falkirk. “Deep in conversation with the conspirators.” Sherlock spun on his heels to move his pointing finger to James, Alec, Selene in turn and finally the finger pointed to Mary. “The movement of lips 'After dessert when he has relaxed', then the go ahead is given.”

Sherlock switched his attention to Daniel. “I was presented with, this!” Sherlock declared holding up the bullet for everyone to see.

“At the appointed time I called everyone together.” Sherlock spun back to Mary “And what did I see, Victory!”

“You don't know!” Mary accused with a weighing look. James' miniscule, victorious smirk, didn't
go unnoticed by Sherlock.

“If I figure it out now, you win” Sherlock declared to Mary before looking to James “You win if I don't get it.”

Shrugging James informed, “Falkirk solved it in about an hour.” Seeing something in James’ words. Sherlock fell into thought.

Clearing his throat Mycroft held out his hand for the bullet. Turning the metal in his fingers for a few moments Mycroft first looked to Daniel then the harmless looking Omega sitting beside Falkirk. Holding the bullet fragments back up for Sherlock to take. “You know?” Sherlock asked getting a tight smile from his older brother.

Sherlock was getting annoyed now. Falkirk needed an hour, Mycroft two hundred and eleven seconds.

“Dear...”

“NO!” Sherlock snapped interrupting Mary “No hints.”

With his hands in front of his face Sherlock's finger made a sweeping gesture as if dismissing something from a screen. Looking to James, Sherlock did dismissive gesture before doing the same for Alec and Selene they were incidental and irrelevant. Concentrating on Falkirk, Daniel, Mary and the bullet.

“Laddie!” Sherlock shouted looking to Daniel, the nickname he used for Falkirk. That rooftop, with Moriarty, when he first heard the term of endearment. Observations, facts and deductions popped up in the detective's mind's eye. (No Laser sights because the marksmen didn't need them. Lasers for show. Lasers painted onto a target's chest, but the shot was a perfect head wound. Expert Marksman. Assassin!)

Looking to Mary, more observations popped into Sherlock's mind's eye. (harmless, Sharp, knowing, intelligent, grandmother, age, old?).

“A Historical Assassination, within Lady Mary's lifetime, conducted by a member of the Carrington family. Involving Falkirk?” Sherlock deduced.

Looking to bullet in his hands, Sherlock pictured the mechanics as Alec had once described them and applying them to the strange bullet. Picturing a gun, the explosion that propelled the bullet, the projectile spinning as it was forced down the barrel, coming from a gun, spinning, separating at some point on it's journey then impacting the target and distorting.

'This bullet isn't distorted!' Sherlock thought.

'What would it look like if the bullet was compressed?' Sherlock wondered. When bringing forward the vast catalogue of mental images of bullets an old photograph emerged. Opening his eyes Sherlock smiled to Daniel

“I think he has it.” James said.

“Rada Holmes.” Sherlock declared and flopped down into the empty seat beside John, exhausted.

“I was right.” Falkirk declared “Half an hour after he actually started thinking about it.”

“Poppycock!” Mary snapped, “It doesn’t matter how fast the horse eventually runs. If it stands at
the gate for the entire race, it still looses.”

“Who is Rada Holmes?” David asked. Shane and Mycroft gave a dispassionate assessment of their Grate Grandfather. With Mary giving a more accurate and factual information on the treasonous actions of the man. Then explained how her husband caught up to Rada in Switzerland, assassinating him and a member of the Gestapo he was meeting with.

Mycroft defended, “Great Grandfather was on a sanctioned and official mission, for King and Country.” Sherlock, Falkirk and Shane snorted, not believing the story for a second.

Mary made her voice soft and accepting, “He may well have been, but we couldn't take the chance. He knew too much about the various resistance movements around the country.”

“I need a drink.” Sherlock said, leaning more heavily against the doctor beside him and taking the whisky out of John's hand.

Chapter End Notes

Been doing some last minute edits. Brought forward the Alec scene, because I thought it worked better here. More edits to the next chapter as a consequence and delayed update(another week). And when I have completed the Prime Minister's part of Falkirk's life, I will need to look over the main storyline to see what I have affected with the edits so slower updates for a little while.
Entering Tanner's office, on the first day back after Christmas. After the pleasantries, of the 'How are you?'s and Tanner thanking Falkirk for the invitation. Falkirk said, "I was wondering, after Sherlock's show. There are things in my past that aren't in my official records, my real name for one. I know there are things missing in Daniel's file too. Where would the records of these things be kept?"

"Probably in Archives, unless the information was deemed too dangerous to exist." Tanner answered. Seeing Falkirk didn't quite know what he was talking about and after expressing his disbelief Tanner asked if Falkirk had a spare pair of glasses. Taking Falkirk to the physical archives. The deepest part of MI6's bunker network. The lift door opened onto a shallow anti-room, a reception desk, with lots of guards for such a small place, and a line of doors on the back wall.

The pinch faced woman at the reception, with hard brown eyes and a narrow nose looked up, "Door 1, M. Strip completely, place all your clothing in your locker. Then move into the second chamber. In the third chamber, dress in the scrubs provided."

Moving forward Falkirk noticed only he had been instructed towards a door. When Falkirk looked back to Tanner. The Beta said, "Insufficient clearance" Tanner then handed the receptionist Falkirk's spare glasses. Her brown eyes scanned the rectangular plastic frames. She lifted a trapdoor on her desk and placed his glasses inside.

Stepping through the door with the 'No.1' on it Falkirk was met with a changing room. A series of locker with employee serial numbers or IDs. At the far end, was a wide metal door, with a press button on the wall at the side. Stripping off Falkirk placed his clothing in the locker marked 'M'.

Cupping his crotch, naked, Falkirk approached the metal door. Pressing the button at the side. The meter thick metal door slid to the side and Falkirk stepped into the confined space at the end. Every surface, including the closing door behind him was made of glass, with bright lights and scanner arms behind the surface. With a dull thump the door behind closed. Behind the glass, the scanner arms shone bright green light and started moving, with a low hum. Falkirk knowing somewhere a 3D full internal body image was being built up. Someone looking for any anomaly or anything inside him that hadn't been recorded on his medical file.

Eventually the scanner stopped moving and the door in front slid open. Stepping into the next changing room. A cabinet with scrubs arranged by size and those cheap and thin hotel slippers. A row of cubbyholes, with a name or designation. A square box like bin, with a drop down door on the front, for the used scrubs, that looked more like a tube sticking out of the floor.

Dressing in the medium pair of scrubs, Falkirk stepped out. Another reception, this time with only one guard, a receptionist and a familiar dark haired man with a pleasant smile. All in the same grey scrubs and slippers as Falkirk.
The familiar dark haired man in charge, the Archivist, who used the abbreviation A. He was an Alpha with a rather pleasant smile and narrow bright blue eyes. The soft voice was rather posh, low without being deep and rather nice as he greeted Falkirk. They had met in branch head meetings, but A had always been on budget and rather pleasant so Falkirk didn't take much notice of him.

The receptionist lifted something from a trapdoor on her desk. She handed A the glasses, and the Alpha looked them over. "I believe these are yours." A said holding out Falkirk's glasses. "I'm sorry to say when something enters it doesn't leave."

Slipping on his glasses the reception came into focus. As did the youngest of the current branch heads and the second youngest ever after Falkirk.

The tour began. A led them through a door. "This is the record room" A informed his voice nearly being drowned out by the loud rattle and dings of over a dozen typewriters, old fashioned mechanical ones.

The typists, each at an individual desk, separate with a good distance between, but no cubical dividers to hide behind. The eyes of the guards scanning the room continuously, looking for suspicious behaviour.

A, described the typewriters, a large and square contraption, how the ribbon was collected and destroyed in the furnace that was attached to Archives, and how all the rubbish bins connected to the furnace.

Picking up a piece of blank paper, A described it, explaining it wasn't actual paper, it was cloth. With a powerful magnifying glass, A, showed Falkirk the weave of the fibres, "Each piece of paper is its own UID, the likelihood of two pieces of paper having the same weave is 23,000,000,000:1."

Moving to the next room they where in a well lit warehouse, that seemed to stretch back and back. Not since a trip to Ikea had Falkirk seen a warehouse so big. A, continuing the commentary of the tour, "This Archive is a mix of evidence and records, we do have dedicated storage rooms, for when special environmental conditions are needed to maintain the evidence. We save originals where we can but sometimes they are destroyed and only a record is maintained. This Archive is organised chronology by era: Falkirk Bond, Olivia Mansfield, Admiral Robert Hargreaves, Admiral Miles Messervy, back to the very beginnings of MI6 during the Second World War." A, listed off indicating the sections of shelving, stretching back.

"There are no other record of what's here?" Falkirk asked.

"No."

Going to Mansfield's section a hand on Falkirk's shoulder stopped him. "There are secrets that should stay buried. Only go looking for what you need to find." A, warned and lifted his hand.

Entering Mansfield's section Falkirk looked for Daniel's file. Pulling out a folder, containing a signed amnesty on top. Mossad had hit the Carrington Institute hoping to end one of its projects by force. The Carrington Institute, Daniel more accurately, wasn't the soft target Mossad anticipated. When Daniel hunted down the Mossad agent, it didn't end well for the agent. A few years later, after tracking Daniel to MI6, Mossad started to negotiate for him. Personal notes of M's indicated she was considering handing him over until a supposedly 'unsanctioned' assassination attempt. But
MI6's investigation pointed to the attempt being authorised by the Chief Negotiator.

“Shit!” Falkirk said, reading the name of the man who had become his counterpart in Mossad, Eli David.

While David negotiated on behalf of Mossad, his driver planted a bomb on Daniel's car while it was in MI6's secure car park. Along with an intercepted letter from Mary to a cousin at Whitehall, cited as the one sources of imminence pressure from the government. The Carrington Institute also threatened to withdraw its support for the several prominent military projects if M handed over Daniel. It made up M's mind and she denied Mossad Daniel. The file indicated a severe souring of relations through the incident.

It was interesting and in the past so Falkirk flipped over most of the technicalities. The final document after Daniel's medical report was a letter from Mary to M. It was an outright threat, to not put her Grandson in the field.

Despite knowing the circumstances and Silva admitting to arranging his kidnapping. Falkirk still looked to see what M's involvement was. Strangely, finding a psyche assessment for James, Falkirk flipped it open. A bog standard assessment, the only difference Falkirk noticed where some key points. '...questionable loyalty...low boredom threshold...wanderlust...' Falkirk had never seen before in James' file. Nor the warning '...without an emotional tie, recruit's loyalty and obedience can not be assured.'

Apparently MI6 didn't view James as a loyal patriot. But Falkirk and James had figured out a long time ago M wanted them together, to keep James in check and to keep Falkirk out of his father's hands. With ties to MI6, the dubious loyalty didn't matter now, which was why it didn't show up on James' latter assessments. Falkirk replaced James' record.

Despite A's warnings Falkirk flipped through a few more files, mostly to throw the watching A off his desire to go to Alec's. Most of the files were from Falkirk's time at MI6 but he knew nothing of the incidents described. Coming to a stop on one, there was a transcript of Selene's disastrous mission as 002 and the lengths Falkirk went to to help her. "She knew everything." Falkirk mused, referring to M and her obliviousness at the time.

This was it. 'Alexis Trevelyan', Falkirk pulled out the file. There was the secrets Falkirk already knew about but few others did. Going from Alec's Omega parents, through Alec's birth, to when he became an orphan, Falkirk's eyes going like saucers. Whispering under his breath, “ShitShitShit!”

Rounding on A and brandishing the file. “Why was I not told this?” Falkirk snapped.

Calmly the blue eyed man looked on the furious M. “When it became necessary, it was here for you to read. As you are doing now.”

“I NEEDED TO KNOW MONTHS AGO!”

A gave a slight shrug. "To find answers, you may wish to read the journal." A, said and indicated the book at the end of the aisle.

Picking up the journal "Are you aware of what is in this?" Falkirk demanded. Flicking through the pages.

As Falkirk found the last entry A answered, "Only what M discussed with me or what I happen to
see. I do not go looking."

The last entry, in M's scrawling script.

M

Your were strange. I hoped for a gifted hacker and someone who could keep James anchored here. I got far more than I ever imagined.

Over your time here I saw you slowly become something more. You stood firm, challenge after challenge. You expand your influence, making your own friends. When the opportunity arose I took the chance and pushed you up.

When the time came you even disobeyed me. The day you put the mission and operative above my orders you showed yourself truly capable.

As my time comes to a close I do not know how this will end. I write this if I am unable to guide you personally.

You will be my heir. Steer MI6 well.

M

"That manipulative old bitch!" Falkirk blasted, making the A chuckle. Falkirk looked at the man, "You should have called me down, the moment this room was accessible to us again, after Silva compromised the building. An operative is dead because I didn't have all the facts. And the blood is now on your hands now too, Archivist."

The Alpha nodded, looking down and away. Falkirk adding, "As of now. I am making a standing order. Every M is to tour this room. And I am requiring you to assure M sees anything that affects current operations of MI6."

The Archivist acknowledged the order. A then said, "Your order will require me to read the most sensitive information MI6 holds. While I have clearance to see what is here, no Archivist has ever been given permission to actively search and read through the archive."

One solution just makes different problems and Falkirk wanted to swear again. "Understood. You will be assigned a bodyguard and be given the due protection equal to M." Falkirk said.

Putting away the journal Falkirk moved to his own section surprised to see it beginning populated, despite never having sent anything down. The first folder contained intercepts, discussing his conduct during his interview including the blackmail material he used against the interview panel.

"No you may not destroy anything in this room," A, informed, pre-empting the calculating look that passed M's face. Seeing the Green eye flash in his direction, confrontational and showing the hardness that made the Omega M, A added, "The Archivist is a member of, and appointed by the trustees. Only they can dismiss me." The trustees being a collection of former MI6 and affiliates making sure no one used the service for their own personal benefit.

Getting the hint Falkirk replaced the folder and gave A, a pleasant smile. Despite his desire to rifle
through the information and documents. Falkirk knew he had work to do and moved towards the entrance with A following. In the dressing room, Falkirk put his glasses in the cubicle for M and dumped his scrubs in the bin, before moving through the system of sensors and rooms. In the main reception, Tanner had returned to E-Branch and Falkirk decided to wander so he could think.

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Keading and Falkirk were in the library discussing Falkirk's charitable support. Telling Keading to set up a meeting with his lawyer as he would be setting up a trust and pulling together the scholarships and grants Falkirk had created in America. They also arranged for Keading to go see the charities that had piqued Falkirk’s interest.

Coming to the end they were just waiting for Selene to return from the park with Cody. Keading asked about Andrew. Falkirk said he was upstairs. Keading was eager to see him until he found out Nanny Jenkins was here as well. Falkirk didn't want to force the other Omega into doing something he clearly didn't want to do. But the omega's avoidance of the Nanny was becoming more noticeable. James and Selene had both remarked on Keading's avoidance of the Nanny and Hudson had kept a sharp lookout but had not reported anything to Falkirk. Keading had assured him that Jenkins was a good Nanny and had been polite to him.

Taking his hand Falkirk led Keading upstairs to the nursery. Nanny Jenkins was sitting reading a book while Andrew had pulled himself upright against his crib. Bouncing slightly before dropping down and crawling to his Papa. Nanny Jenkins stood as well before Falkirk waved her back into the chair “We are just hear for a quick visit” Falkirk reassured pleasantly.

Picking up a fuzzy ball. Falkirk knelt on the floor and rolling the ball about until he gained Andrew's attention, the nanny just visible from the corner of his eye. When Andrew went for the ball Falkirk rolled it slowly passed Andrew to bounce off Keading's feet. As Keading sat, crossing his legs, the soft brown eyes were fixed on Andrew, steadfastly ignoring the stern gaze of the beta woman. Slowly Keading did the same, rolling the ball to get Andrew's attention then sent it rolling passed him towards Falkirk. Andrew chased after the ball, Falkirk waited for his son to reached him. Helping Andrew Falkirk rolled the ball to Keading praising his son for the good shot then let Andrew chase after the ball.

The three played for some time and one thing was clear Jenkins didn't like Keading, for some reason Falkirk didn't care about. Every time Falkirk praised or touched the child Jenkins' features would soften slightly, just as they would cool and harden every time Keading touched Andrew. Falkirk didn't know if it was class, she just didn't like Keading or something else but she couldn't continue. She wasn't good enough at suppressing her own opinions. Keading and Falkirk could read her and eventually so would Andrew and Falkirk didn't want his son to doubt his uncle.

When Selene arrived Falkirk waved the family off. Instead of letting Hudson return downstairs Falkirk called him into the library. After explaining the situation Hudson warned, “Dismissing a person because of a look, may be problematic. There is no concern about her treatment of Andrew. I have watched and listened, she has been polite and respectful when speaking with Mr Corvin. It may be convenient to allow Nanny Jenkins to find a post and resign with full references.”

Falkirk sat back in his desk chair. Nodding, agreeing with Hudson's assessment. “Would you please ask Jenkins to come down and watch Andrew?”

The older blond man gave a sharp nod and pulled the door open. Moving to the library's coffee table Falkirk offered the other chair to the Nanny.
“Am I to be dismissed?” the poised grey haired woman asked, peering over her rectangular half glasses. Able to read Falkirk and ignoring the offered chair.

“I am hoping to do this amicably.” Falkirk responded carefully. Giving Falkirk a weighing look the woman took the chair.

“I have never had concern to doubt your capabilities or excellence in dealing with Andrew.” Falkirk appeased “But I can see your disapproval or dislike of Keading and I can not allow that in this house.”

Nanny Jenkins didn't argue Falkirk's point. “I would like you to remain until you find alternative employment. I will pay out your notice and will give references to your new employer.” Falkirk stated.

“I expect you to buy out my holiday time as well.” Jenkins demanded and Falkirk agreed.

It was quicker than Falkirk imagined, the next day, when Hudson placed a message on his desk. A Lady Britten looking to enquire about Nanny Jenkins' references. Calling the number Falkirk asked to speak to the Lady in question. Speaking to Lady Britten a rather forceful personality indicating an Alpha but a phone could be deceptive. Falkirk had been confused for a Beta or even an Alpha at times, when devoid of scent ques.

Lady Britten, not a fool focused on why a supposedly good Nanny was leaving his employ. As Lady Britten had already indicated, her Daughter had giving birth to an Alpha. So Falkirk said, “I feel for an Omega to prosper a less severe personality would be beneficial” Falkirk said making his voice softer and less confrontational. Letting the Woman think Falkirk's problem was just an Omega's quirks. It took a bit more convincing before Falkirk could lean back and hang up.

Writing up Jenkins' final pay check with the extra that had been agreed. Falkirk called “Come In” at the knock. Stepping into the library with Andrew on her hip Jenkins informed Falkirk she would be starting next Monday. As Lady Britten had already told Falkirk as much he just needed to print off the pay slip. Placing the check and slip into an envelope he handed it to her “Thank you for your service” Falkirk said pleasantly.

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There were two C.V.s before Falkirk. One for a person he had dismissed when he phoned her and another, an Omega male. Dismissing the woman Falkirk concentrated on the Omega. It didn't take long for Falkirk to hack the Omega's google account. Finding declarations of love, after declaration love to the Alpha male of each household the omega served in, all carefully archived.

Banging his head against his desk, making Andrew's big head wobble as it swivel to look at the bang and groan his papa made. Putting the Omega's C.V. in the bin along with the rest Falkirk leaned back groaning and scrubbing his face.

The bell, Falkirk could hear the butler already approaching to answer it. Recognising the visitor Andrew darted into to the hall as fast as he could crawl. Soon Keading stood with Andrew perched on his hip at the doorway to the library. “Selene and Cody have gone to the park.” Keading informed as he placed Andrew down in the centre of the blanket on the floor.

Hudson soon appeared with a tray containing a small teapot and cafetière. Coming out from behind
the desk Falkirk handed the collection of C.V.s, in the bin, to the butler with the instruction to, “get rid of them, please.” The butler gave a polite nod, with a hidden amusement at Falkirk exasperation.

Sipping their drinks. When a lull in to the conversation came Falkirk casually informed, “Jenkins got a better offer. She is leaving us.”

“Is that..” Keading trailed off indicating where the C.V.s once sat. After Falkirk discussed his problems in finding a Nanny including a few choice quotes from the Homme Fatale and his undying love. He knew it was selfish but when Keading offered to babysit. Falkirk made a show of being conflicted and accepted. Swearing to himself and Keading he would find a permanent Nanny as soon as possible.

Looking out the window Falkirk suggested they go find Selene. Ten minutes later with Andrew in a thick insulated onesie and woollen hat. Strapped into a push chair. Falkirk and Keading, without the onesie but similar woolly hats, gloves and long scarves they headed out into the chill of the January afternoon.

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Darren buzzed and announced Alec was here. Calling in the operative. Alec beaming a smile as he sauntered in. “I'll have one.” Falkirk prompted, jerking his head to the decanter on the sideboard behind his desk.

Alec went to the silver tray with the Scrabble 'M' decanter on it. It meant Falkirk could turn his back completely to E-Branch when he looked at Alec. So none could see his lips. “I was always a fan of Detective comics #66.” Alec looked at him in confusion, he held out the glass of bourbon. “Thank you. And I believe you were right Mr Kent, I wasn't as informed as I thought I was. I'm sorry.” Falkirk said, to Alec's continued confusion.

Falkirk then straightened up at his desk. “Now Double O Six. There is something happening in Alaska, the Americans don't seem concerned but I'd like you to have a look.”

Alec took the file from M and broke the seal. Reading over file as he sipped the smoky American whisky. On the surface, the mission was just a look around a fish processing plant. Even when Falkirk pulled up a video, Alec didn't see the problem. An aerial view of a big warehouse thing, built stretching out onto the sea itself. Only as the video speed was increased did a bulge and wake in the sea become noticeable, moving against the current like a shadow, but not cast by the sun and it moved directly to the large white building. “A submarine?” Alec asked.

“The boys in analyse are unsure. Which is why you're gong in.” Falkirk ordered. "Good luck, Double O Six."

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Looking around the room, the atmosphere so tense it may as well be a war zone, with the battle line drawn right down the length of the conference table. Falkirk was beside his brother, MI6 the senior of the civilian services. The senior of the Military the far side of Mycroft, Admiral Roebuck in his resplendent black uniform with gold braiding and medals over his chest.

To Falkirk's other side, the old and scruffy Alpha, Smiley head of MI5. Then further along a round privileged twat in charge of GCHQ. Miller, the smarmy Irish twat, who Falkirk keeps forgetting to
deal with was commissioner of the Met. Beyond Roebuck, the head if the Army a General Sir Something-or-other. And finally, Air Chief Martial, Philips, head of the RAF.

Across the table, Mallory was in front of Falkirk. One side of Mallory, Falkirk's boss, the Foreign Secretary, the only thing weaker than the alpha was his chin. Falkirk never saw the man. In attendance was all their bosses, the Home Secretary, Armed Forces Minister. But across from Mycroft was the rake thin and cruelly smiling Prime minister.

Mycroft matched the old white haired Alpha's cruel smile. “We have proof, the Resurgent IRA was in fact, Special Branch.” Mycroft purred, with smug glee.

“Did you hear that Corder?” Urquhart said with a chuckle, his ministers forcing themselves to chuckle with the joke they couldn't understand, all but Mallory who remained neutral.

The Lurch like man standing in the corner of the room gave a genuine chuckle. The Prime Minister's Special Branch bodyguard said, “Yes Prime Minister. But I like romance, not fantasy stories.”

“So you are going to ignore the evidence...”

“Accusations.” Urquhart corrected Mycroft. As Mycroft gave a condescending smile, Urquhart headed him off. “How brave you are, fighting from littl...Mother's apron strings.”

Mycroft's face hardened, deliberately not looking at his little brother. Falkirk glanced at the Prime Minister, not quite sure how he knew of one of the nicknames bestowed by the Double Os, sure it wasn't just chance. Most of the others in the room, knowing a bigger dig had been made but they didn't quite understood.

“Given your baseless accusations.”

“Hardly baseless, how many inconveniences to you have been caught up in the Resurgent IRA bombings. Tim Stamper, Sarah Harding but to name a few.” Mycroft purred.

Falkirk scented his brother's anger rising along with his fear and panic. Mycroft was realising the Prime Minister was prepared and not willing to surrender.

Urquhart smiled, softly, kindly as if he truly felt for his opponent. “As Mother protects you, it is those around you who must fall.”

Falkirk clasped his hands and interlaced his finger, atop the deeply grained wood table. He could see what was coming. Falkirk himself having done it more times than he could count.

A nod from Urquhart and he let his ministers attack. The Foreign Secretary looked to the head of the Army. The man's voice was privileged and nasally as he acused, “Are you aware that much of the 'Moderate Opposition' that you sang the praises of in the Yemen civil war were once called al-Qaeda. It has been decided that we can't support such groups, now we are aware who they are.”

The General was looking about, not quite sure what was happening. Until the Armed Forces minister, a woman with dark hair and almost black eyes said, “The army, and you personally gave this government information on the Moderate Opposition. That information was deceptive and we reported it as fact to Parliament and the people.”
“I am not resigning.” The General barked, as if he was on a parade ground.

“You resigned a few moments ago.” The Prime Minister stated, “We took the liberty of releasing the press statement for you. You may keep your reputation and honour, or not, the choice is yours. Dismissed, Mister Reese-Butler.” The man in green uniform, with sagging wattle hanging over his collar stood up and stormed out, slamming the door behind him.

Falkirk scenting the que from the Prime Minister, he was thrilled at his show of power. The Prime Minister had gotten into his stride and his ice cold blue eyes landed on the Air Chief Martial. “That 'accidental' drone strike on the Hospital in Afghanistan, is still a war crime, need I remind you. The government is considering, for the reputation of the UK, if we should turn the incident over to the international Criminal courts. Of course, it will be a stain against the RAF and you will have to bare the ultimate responsibility.” The man in the bluish grey uniform nodded and the Prime Minister smiled. All knew Urquhart didn't care, he was just using the hospital as a way to force the Air Martial out.

Urquhart's eyes landed on Roebuck. “Prime Minister.” Falkirk interrupted and for a moment he was the sole focus of the cruel man's dead eyes, before they softened and Urquhart gave a genuine and soft smile. “The First Sea Lord. I was going to ask to help with, you know.”

“Right you are M.” Urquhart said with a nodding bow. His eyes skipped over the bald man beside Mycroft, then over Mycroft too, giving both a cruel smile. A warmer smile for Falkirk then they landed on George Smiley.

“You will have to fire me.” Smiley said matter-of-factly, as if discussing the weather. He wasn't meeting the Prime Minister in challenge, either in voice or posture or even gaze. But the small Alpha, even as he slouched a bit and wiped his glasses, while not looking at Urquhart conveyed a determination to make his departure as inconvenient as possible.

Falkirk saw the Prime Minister smile, ready for the challenge.

“Your wife. Fraternising...” Smiley snapped his full attention to the white haired Alpha at the soft dangers drawl.

“Prime Minister.”

Urquhart's eyes took on a long suffering edge at the interruption by Falkirk. “Allowing another to fight from your apron stings?” Urquhart accused Falkirk.

“It will take me months to put the new Air Chief Martial, Chief of the General Staff, Met Commissioner, and GCHQ Director in their places. A little consideration, would be greatly appreciated.” Falkirk said with an air of bored exasperation.

“So I can get rid of them?” Urquhart teased, and looking to the two beyond Smiley.

“Feel free. I may have a recommendation for the GCHQ Directorship.” Falkirk mused, then sat back to watch the Prime Minister force the Director and Commissioner out of their posts too. For no apparent reason other than he could.

--

Taking his seat, in the rather nice lounge of Claridge's. Not sure if the Prime Minister's meeting
had been a blessing or a curse, it meant he could miss the Society lecture, a charity to do with ponies or something. But having to witness his brother taking another blow, and the PM, he was feeding off the conflict like a junky looking for a fix.

Sitting at the table Falkirk waited for Elizabeth. When she appeared the Alpha woman looked as poised as ever in her cream and flowing trouser suit. But she carried a well concealed weariness Falkirk had seen in many an Operative trying to show M they were not exhausted both physically and mentally.

Over the afternoon tea. Falkirk lifted the china cup to his lips, inhaling the steam through his nose before taking a sip. The citrus and bergamot, dispelling the reminders of the scents in the meeting. “The Prime Minister was in fine form today. Wiped out the army, air force, police and that fool in GCHQ who calls tech support when someone switches his computer off.”

The poised woman brushed her dark shoulder length hair off her face. “He was practising his glare in the mirror all morning.” Elizabeth mused.

Forcing the casual conversation that they usually indulged in Falkirk almost missed when Elizabeth asked for a private meeting somewhere. “I have set up a trust to deal with my charitable commitments, perhaps you would like to come look it over?” Knowing the invitation for what it was Elizabeth readily agreed.

--

Seeing Alec saunter into E-Branch. Drugs weren't MI6's usual concern, but when Double O was there, they tended to take the initiative. The factory Alec had been sent to investigate, having blown up, an old diesel submarine sinking, leaking enough white powder to contaminate all the fish in the bay. The grin the man wore was well earned. As M, Falkirk was particularly pleased, because no one knew MI6 had been in Alaska.

Falkirk waved the man in, before Darren could announce Alec. “Had some time in Anchorage, found a comic book store and this.” Alec said and threw a brown paper bag on Falkirk's desk.

Pulling from the flat brown bag, a comic book, sealed in a plastic bag containing a not quite mint Detective Comics #66. “So we're now on the same page.” Falkirk said slipping the comic back into the bag. Handing the bag back, Alec waved it off and told Falkirk to keep it.

Turning right around and trying to position the comic on the sideboard behind his desk. “Did you supply KGB file?” Falkirk asked without moving his lips. Knowing he would need to get a proper stand for the comic to sit properly. For the moment, Falkirk tried propping the comic against the black sword of Helmsley's as best as he could, before giving up and letting it flop down.

Alec had moved, and stood a little further along the long sideboard, helping himself to a bourbon. Only when Alec was sure M was watching did he give a tiny nod in answer. “I'll have one.” Falkirk tried looking at the man, his face away from the the workers who could see in. “There is plenty of misunderstanding and blame and to go around. Me, You, M, Archivist, Papava, Pushkin, even Tanner assumed I knew about A-Branch.”

Another tiny nod from Alec, as he handed Falkirk the glass. Holding his glass, “To Double O One. She will be avenged.” Falkirk said, and Alec saluted with his glass and they took a sip.

--
The teenager known as G sat in front of Falkirk as he read over his assessments. “You failed, everything.” Falkirk informed as he watched the young Alpha’s face fight a losing battle to stay straight.

“Be under no illusion what you have done is still remarkable.” Falkirk reassured. Seeing a light of hope in his light blue eyes. “I have seen war veterans, pinnacles of physical and mental fitness do worse.” Falkirk continued with a soft proud smile.

“I am happy to give a reference for this.” Falkirk said placing an application to the Britannia Royal Navy College in front of G. “And if you apply yourself with the determination and dedication you have shown here. I have no doubt you will succeed on your own merit.”

“You are going to have people telling you what to do, where to go, how to act and even how to think. There will be times enemies, friends, users and the needy will be clawing for your attention and you will make good decisions and bad. You will be criticised, condemned and praised usually in the same breath. Urquhart won't be here to protect you much longer and despite his self belief Mycroft can not, even I can't.” Falkirk informed emphatically.

Coming round Falkirk sat beside the young Alpha as he looked at the blank application. G had failed at school, the army and his assessment at MI6. “What if I fail again?” G asked without the self assured cockiness he once had.

“What if you don't?” Falkirk challenged back with a teasing smile. Unable to help himself G returned the smile.

“I've already picked out my suit and ordered my ticket for you turning out” Falkirk added. Picking up a pen G started filling out the application form. Patting the alpha on the shoulder Falkirk stood to return to his desk chair. Needing to arrange another reference for the teenager. Dialling a familiar number. “If you go anywhere near a prostitute make sure you're not bare” Falkirk stated pointing to the shocked teenagers crotch

“Make sure you're not bare no matte who it is. I'm no having you catch the clap or father a child” Falkirk corrected. A hoarse clearing of a thought brought Falkirk's attention to the person on the other end of the phone.

“Admiral Roebuck?” Falkirk greeted pleasantly.

“A new recruit?” Admiral Roebuck asked not unfamiliar with the warming.

“Sort of. I need a favour?”

--

Elizabeth arrived as scheduled. Hudson announcing her. Selene was left in charge of Cody and Andrew while Falkirk and Keading took the Prime Minister's wife into the library. Introducing Keading as his right hand man for his charitable work. Falkirk let him show Elizabeth the portfolio.

Showing the scholarships and grants in America, moving on to the similar schemes now operating in London. Keading explained how he had spoken to the same refuge charity that had spoken at the Woman's Society.
“Could you get us some more coffee?” Falkirk asked. Getting a nod from Keading he excused himself and closed the door behind him. “He knows not to hurry” Falkirk informed Elizabeth.

“I still don't trust you but Francis does and that is all that matters.” Elizabeth started as the fatigue and stress of the last year settled on her making her look older and more weary than Falkirk had ever seen her. “He is not the type to go gently on to the night. Francis will fight even when it is not in his interest to do so. If he continues all the good he has done will be tainted” Elizabeth seemed to be convincing herself as much as she was trying to convince Falkirk.

Going over to a row of books Falkirk folded it down to reveal decanter and glasses. Giving him a look of relief Elizabeth accepted the glass of whisky.

“Retirement doesn’t suit old warriors like Francis, I can only see one solution” Elizabeth said holding up the empty glass for a refill.

Filling the tumbler “I can arrange most anything but there must be no doubt on what I'm arranging” Falkirk said, relieved that he wasn't the only one seeing a new edge to the Prime Minister.

“And here we have the crux of our problem. I don't trust you enough to say it and you're not going to say it.” Elizabeth challenged.

“It's the kindest thing.” Falkirk said using Urquhart's own words.

Shaking off her outward show of emotion “Yes, yes it is. He would not want a lingering demise. We need to, He needs to, die.” Elizabeth admitted downing the last of the amber liquid.

“This won't be an MI6 operation. It will take me time to find an appropriate, assassin” Falkirk said.

“Just make it quick and painless” Elizabeth beseeched and Falkirk nodded.

--

A building full of spies and assassins and none of the ones he trusted enough to ask could supply Falkirk with a Freelance. He had thought about calling Alec or James but both had dropped off the radar as they usually did at this point in their missions.

Nathan Maloney had offered to do the job but Falkirk didn't want an MI6 hand on it. Daniel had been similar ‘what do I need an assassin for? If I wanted someone dead. I can do it myself’. With no other option Falkirk stood outside the only other reliable link to the criminal underworld he knew. Pressing the bell, the silence reminding Falkirk the Omega who would usually answer in a flap would not appear.

John opened the door onto the rebuilt 221 baker street. The flats where now gone. John setting up a small practice on the ground floor with Sherlock turning the basement flat into an office/lab. John led him to the upstairs apartment where Sherlock was playing the violin.

Sherlock took one look at Falkirk, “No!” he stated.

“No Andrew, Middle of the work day” Sherlock continued almost immediately. Pointing an accusing bow as Selene “You did bring your attack dog” before using the bow to pull back the net curtain “but no official escort” the bow swung to point at Falkirk “I don't want the job.”
Placing his finger on the tip of the bow and pushing it aside. “I don't have a job for you. I need a contact?” Falkirk said.

He couldn't help it, curiosity was the down fall of Sherlock. “What?”

“An assassin.” Falkirk responded

Disappointed Sherlock pointed the bow to John. “Ask him.” he said and flopped down into the ugly chair that had somehow survived Moran's blast.

“Just because a woman is interested in me dose not mean she is an assassin” John hissed.

Sherlock punctuated the comment with two descending low notes indicating 'wrong' before he verbally asserted “No, the fact she is an assassin makes her an assassin.”

“Name?” Falkirk demanded ignoring John's further protests and trusting Sherlock's judgement.

“Mary Morstan.” Sherlock answered.

Thanking his brother Falkirk turned to leave.

John shouted to Sherlock and Falkirk, head swinging to each in turn with every word. “She, is, not, an, Assassin.”

--

Hacking John's phone logs Falkirk quickly found the woman Sherlock had mentioned. After a quick background check that didn't hold up to the most cursory of sweeps. Falkirk quickly found a list of aliases as long as his arm.

True to Sherlock's assessment there where a list of deaths associated to most of Morstan's aliases. Back tracking the woman's movements her meeting with John did seem to be by chance. John's tenaciousness kept her from slipping away as she tried to do when she met Sherlock.

“Why can't those two just shag and get it over with” Falkirk grumbled. Taking a note of Morstan's phone number. Falkirk pulled out a pay as you go, dumb phone and dialled her number.

“Who is this?” the clipped voice of a woman demanded.

“Someone who needs something and is willing to offer something in return.” Falkirk said.

“Is this Sherlock's brother?” Morstan said. Reluctantly Falkirk confirmed her suspicion

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Watching the blond Beta woman enter the gallery and sit opposite The Fighting Temeraire. Falkirk knew is was stupid to use the same meeting place but he had only ever used it three times in his life and apart from the people he met only Selene knew about it.

Detaching himself from a group of tourists. Falkirk headed to the bench. Dressing down, Falkirk was in comfortable trousers and the jumper John had got him for Christmas. Sitting down. The
blond woman demanding, without looking, “Get lost I’m meeting someone”

“Sherlock has more than one brother.” Falkirk said in hushed tones making Morstan look at him. Falkirk quietly listed off Morstan’s hit list. Starting with the most recent going back until she asked him to stop.

“I can't offer amnesty, nor would it be of any use. You have too many enemies. I can give you a legitimate new identity, a past that will stand up to the most rigorous of scrutiny. A life.” Falkirk offered.

“What do you want?” Morstan demanded. Clearly tempted by the offer.

“The unavailing of the statue to the late Henry Collingridge, Francis Urquhart and his attack dog Corder.” Falkirk informed handing over a close up photograph of the two men.

Falkirk knew the look Morstan wore, the fact her instincts weren't telling her it was a trap was itself putting her on edge. “There may be others, competition. I need the job done right. Only Urquhart and Corder.”

“Who else is after him?” Morstan demanded.

In soft tones that didn't carry Falkirk informed. “Exactly, unknown.” Falkirk stated before going on to inform Morstan on the Cypriot with a grudge who had just bought a revolver and requested a ticket to the memorial.

“There is also Mycroft. I Don't think he will go for Urquhart physically but you never quite know with him.” Falkirk speculated.

Then there was Corder himself, the Prime Minister's bodyguard, was the main suspect in murder and bombings. Tom Makepeace the deputy leader of the party, a recent enemy that Falkirk had helped create when he had insisted Gareth Mallory was made deputy Prime Minister.

“What's in it for you?” Morstan asked still not understanding Falkirk's motivations.

“I don't think you would understand” Falkirk started. As she was still expecting an explanation Falkirk indulged Morstan deciding to go for the unbelievable truth over a plausible lie.“My respect for Francis Urquhart is only equalled by my distrust of him. I think it's the end he would most want, no lingering demise, or humiliation, while he is still feared and respected.”

After giving Falkirk a weighing look Morstan nodded “Identity up front” she insisted.


Standing Falkirk went to move away before turning back “And do please stay away from John Watson.” Falkirk demanded pleasantly and walked off.
Falkirk had barged into the Diogenes Club enough times that the doormen had given up any attempt at stopping him from entering the Alpha Male only club. The receptionist, indicated the sign in ledger and Falkirk made a squiggle, nothing like his true signature. As a guest he should be escorted but Falkirk was left to wandering about. Falkirk knew Mycroft was somewhere, it was just where that somewhere was.

The private room, a library of sorts, was devoid of its usual Alpha. Moving on Falkirk nodded to a few of the politicians he knew. A very old and round sagging faced Admiral, who had once been M cast his crystal blue eyes to Q as he walked by, the two exchanging a nod. Falkirk praising the policy of complete silence, as the few times he had met Admiral Messervy the old Alpha had lamented at length on his days of MI6. Finally Falkirk found Mycroft in a cafeteria of sorts. The clinking of cups against saucers and cutlery off porcelain was almost deafening in the general quite of the building.

Falkirk sat opposite his brother surprising him. Plucking a small triangular sandwich from Mycroft’s plate Falkirk ate it whole. Standing, Mycroft dropped his napkin on the plated and Falkirk followed plucking another sandwich on the way passed.

In Mycroft's private room they where able to talk. Falkirk thinking how best to say this. “You're planning to go for special Branch. If I were you, the only hope now is evidence in Special Branch itself. Terrorism legislation will get Smiley and MI5 in. But they might have destroyed any evidence already. I would like you to do your raids, early, on the 3rd of April.” Falkirk informed.

Mycroft gave a frown. Wondering what his brother was up to. Falkirk adding, “I believe Corder would make an acceptable scapegoat.”

Mycroft knowing Falkirk wouldn't be giving any more information looked to his brother suspiciously. With a calm impassive look Falkirk didn't react to Mycroft's suspicion. Breaking eye contact, Mycroft made a several notes on his phone.

“I'm not doing this for you.” Q said rather cryptically and exited.

--

The Woman's Guild where having a delightful lecture from a rather strange woman from the cats home. A beta, she was a bit of a hippy, with wild grey hair and glasses with lenses like milk bottle bottoms, that magnified her brown eyes comically. Of all the causes Falkirk had listened to, the cats home was a new low point. The blue/grey cat that wandered about his back garden had quickly ended any sympathy he had for the animals. Falkirk had watched the evil, fat creature ponce on a young sparrow still with its fluffy juvenile feathers and hadn't forgiven the cat since.

After the lecture Elizabeth and Falkirk forgoing the tea urn at the back of the small hall. The Prime
Minister's wife accompanied Falkirk in his car to their usual post meeting haunt. Claridge's, even on a week day afternoon was still busy. They were given a small table, in the elegant room, in an out of the way corner. “Francis dismissed the head of the civil service. That's another enemy to add to the growing army.”

“Another group who will just leak this memo and that memo. Achieving nothing but harming the country.” Falkirk mused. He truly disliked politicians, they made an art of doing nothing but lining their pockets. Perhaps that was why he liked Urquhart so much, Urquhart did, where others just talked.

“I have fixed the date for the 4th of April.” Falkirk said casually. Knowing what he meant Elizabeth nodded and continued the conversation in a different direction.

Arriving home. Selene followed Falkirk into the house. The voices of grown up conversation. The American voice deeper than most omegas, but smoother than the English voice. All interspersed with happy little sounds from a high pitched voice that had not learnt to make more than a few sounds without understand their meaning.

Coming to stand at the door way of the lounge, Falkirk just watched a moment. Keading and James where on the floor, playing with Andrew between them. James as usual, his face looked like it had been used to block every punch sent the Alpha's way. At least James had showered and cleaned the cuts, the short blond hair sticking up a bit like a hedgehog. Moving to sit beside his Alpha, James immediately wrapped an arm around Falkirk rubbing against the top of his head. Falkirk nuzzled his neck.

Keading gave Andrew a kiss and stood. He called out a bye, to make sure they knew he was leaving. Andrew calling out a “BiBiBiBi” sound, having pulled himself up to stand by the coffee table and bounced slightly.

Falkirk pulled from the kiss to called a bye and apologising for not seeing his friend out.

Hearing Keading saying a bye to Hudson and the butler responding. James waited for the sound of the door and the sound of Hudson retuning down stairs. “I hear you've been looking for a contractor?”

Falkirk looked at his Alpha, there seemed to be a bit of hurt in James' words. “Are you insulted I didn't ask you?” James gave a shrug. But a twinkle in the crystal blue eyes, indicated he was being teased, so Falkirk thumped the Alpha's chest. “Well I would have asked you. If you hadn't disappeared for a month.”

“Hay! I was saving the world. Tiger sends his regards.” James said, Tiger being the head of the Japanese intelligence service. Falkirk nodded, happily pillowing his head on his Alpha's firm chest listening the the heart beat beneath. After Falkirk asked how 007, having started out in Rio ended up in Tokyo, James gave a run down of how he tracked down the various routes of nuclear enrichment equipment reaching a group wanting to detonate a dirty bomb on an airliner and let the winds spread the contaminated material over much of the South East Pacific.

"Am I allowed to know who?” James said after he had finished talking, guiding his omega's head so it was under his chin. All the while watching Andrew shuffle in a side to side step around the coffee table. When Falkirk told him the target James said, “About time.”

Falkirk pushed back a bit. “I don't understand.” he said. “What has Urquhart done that is so
different from anyone else? Even Mycroft sees himself as the good guy. Urquhart has protected this nation in the best way he knew. And he has done nothing worse than any of us while doing it.”

James pulled Falkirk against him. “It's not that.” James admitted. “It's sexist, misogynistic, and all that stuff, but I'm your Alpha and I'm meant to protect you from people like him.” James said softly into the wild soft hair. “Not liked him since I looked into his cold dead eyes. They were a killers eyes.”

The silence, despite the little noises Andrew made hung heavy between the pair. “Is that why you liked Urquhart?” James mused. “Me, Alec, Selene, the bastard, Sherlock, even Hudson, M and Mycroft, have you been looking into the eyes of killers so long it's normal to you.” James said with a little guilt and heaviness gripping around his heart, at the implication.

“I am a killer.” Falkirk reminded but was sure James was thinking of someone else who would be growing up, looking into those mentioned eyes, that had born witness to a life ended by their possessor.

--

“Can't I stay here.” James whined snuggling deeper under the covers as Falkirk dressed.

“Your Handler, Double O Seven, has a right to know you are back.”

“Evil bastard!” came James' muffled voice came from beneath the pillow.

“For the sake of peace, I shall assume you are talking about Daniel.” Falkirk threw over his shoulder and headed up stairs to get Andrew. Ignoring the muffled, “You'd be half right.” from the bed.

Daniel when he found out dragged James into MI6 for the debriefing and mandatory post mission wind down. Cleared for his recovery and down time James was discharged from psyche to the relief of the terrorised personnel.

--

It was with a sense of wonder Falkirk looked down to the slumbering child on the eve of his second year of life. A year ago tonight, Falkirk was uncomfortable desperate to get the squirming thing inside of him out. Now that thing was a crawling menace desperate to get to his feet without support. Clothes bought for Andrew to grow into and started off swamping him, where now too small.

Leaving Andrew. Falkirk headed downstairs and into his room. James was leaning back against the head board reading a book. Stripping off and crawling under the quilt and into his Alpha's arms Falkirk relaxed against the warm chest basking in the scent and feel.

James' casual caresses to the back of Falkirk's neck, soon extended down his back to the round of the Omega's arse. “There's no point in being subtle when your scent changed a few minutes ago” Falkirk teased. Giving up the pretence James rolled on top of the Omega kissing, nuzzling and nipping him.

Sound asleep in the possessive arms of his Alpha. The dull aches of a thorough ravishing comforting in its own way. A shrill ringing started Falkirk awake. Unable to move until James made an annoyed growl and loosened his grip. Picking up his phone Falkirk answered before checking to see who it was. “Kiddo?” came a tired and possibly inebriated voice.
Lying back down Falkirk rested the phone on his ear (it had been some time since he received a drunk dial from Jack Wade). There came the obligatory remembrance of the time difference, followed by the apology. The 'how are you?' then 'James and the new one?'. Throughout it all there was something off about the old Alpha. “Is something wrong?” Falkirk finally asked.

A sigh answered Falkirk before the line went silent and another Jack took over the conversation. “Admiral Greer died a few hours ago.” Jack Ryan informed. Giving his condolences, Falkirk could hear Wade in the background ordering another bottle and a small cheer along with salutes to the memory of the Admiral.

When Wade's voice came over the line again, he informed Ryan was acting as interim director. “You will come for the funeral?” Wade then asked. Agreeing Falkirk continued to listen to the inebriated ramblings of the CIA’s current and ex employees and their anecdotes of Admiral Greer. James chuckling behind him every now and again as the stories would dictate.

When Falkirk got the date of Greer's funeral he almost laughed. He would be halfway across the Atlantic on his way back home. 'Some alibi.' Falkirk thought.

--

“A little suspicious,” James teased, pulling the large rectangular bag over his shoulder. “It's almost like you're trying to make a point.”

Falkirk just smiled and lifted Andrew from the floor and perched the boy on his hip. “I don't know what you're meaning.” Falkirk teased and led James out of the nursery.

Andrew making a grab for his Papa's glasses. Falkirk catching the small hands. James whispering, “Come on? A hint? Please!”

Falkirk glanced at his Alpha and stilled. James stiffened, knowing that look. “How many things do you still hide James? From Me, from yourself, from others.” Falkirk said softly.

James looked away and moved passed Falkirk. His hand was gently grasped and squeezed. His omega was smiling at him, a rather sad smile. “Fine he's entitled to his secrets.” James said. He was then given a kiss to his cheek.

“There he is!” Alec called as the parents set foot on the tiled foyer. Alec going over and Falkirk giving over his child with ease. Alec held Andrew, smiling wide and getting a little squeal of happiness from the boys as he spun and bounced.

Outside the front door, Daniel's Bentley had replaced Alec's bike. Falkirk picked up the car seat on the way out. Alec was still bouncing and talking to Andrew as he unlocked the car. James opened the boot and dropped in Andrew's bag.

“Come on. I need the passenger.” Falkirk teased. Alec gave over his godson and Andrew was put into his car seat, and strapped into the back seat of the big saloon. Falkirk kissed Andrew's brow and brushed the chubby cheek. James then took his turn to say his goodbye.

Standing with his back against his Alpha. Falkirk feeling the strong arms around his waist. A wave from Alec and they waved back, the parents watching the metallic blue car pull away.

Falkirk tried to move back inside but the strong arm held him prisoner. “We need to pack.” Falkirk reminded. He felt lips brush his neck and a deep rumbling sound of contentment from the Alpha. “How about a walk?” Falkirk sugested.
“Can I hold your hand?” James’ voice rumbled.

Falkirk interlaced his fingers with James' much thicker and more tanned. And tried to take a step but the Alpha's arm didn't let him go. Instead of walking hand in hand, Falkirk shifted James' hand to sit on his hip and they walked side by side. The two heading for the park across the road.

--

On the morning of the 3rd of April, when London was still lit by the yellow street lights. A time when the hard core nightclubbers were just about considering going home. Mycroft and C along with Lestrade of Scotland yard raided the homes and offices of Special Branch and its personnel. The attack dogs of the Prime Minister running about like headless chickens.

The Prime Minister's reaction was as expected. With abject fury he set his sights on Mycroft and C only for the wind to be knocked out buy the police arriving on Downing Street, to interview his wife in relation to insider trading.

It contrast it was a relief to feel the familiar dread, for Falkirk, at the idea of boarding the plane. Escaping the requirement to mediate between Urquhart and Mycroft. Sitting in the large First Class seat, Falkirk watched the live TV as Urquhart blasted the baseless accusations, both against Special Branch and his wife.

Thinking back the last meeting with the Prime Minister, before he gave the waning to Mycroft, Urquhart knew something was up. The old Alpha's calculating eyes refused to take on the softer edge they usually did in their meetings. The subtle playfulness the man had, also didn't emerge. It was not how Falkirk had wanted there last meeting to go but there was nothing he could do about it.

Shaking off his thoughts as James took Falkirk's arm, offering comfort and support. Selene a permanent presence at Falkirk's back. With the assistance of Jack Daniels and James Bond, Falkirk managed to cross the Atlantic without incident. Arriving in Washington, Falkirk met up with Jack Wade, the man looking so wrong in the black suit and tie, he should be in the loud Hawaiian shirts with a broad grin on his permanently sun reddened face.

The funeral was going to be the full three ring circus. Along with the president, the hierarchy of the American Military, other enforcement and intelligence agencies. Then there were the ones like Falkirk, the mix of allies and opponents. Leaning forward a bit, Falkirk looked to the full and sticking out stomach of General Pushkin of the Russians, who completely eclipsed Director Lin of the Peoples External Security Force. There where also the usual Eli David, of Mossad along with French, German, Japanese(James meeting Tiger again, quicker than he expected) and more than Falkirk could identify. Each one equal parts friend and foe, in a careful dance of respect, friendship and veiled hostility.

Moving from the church to Arlington National Cemetery as part of the massive procession. Falkirk wondered about the family he could barely see. Wondering about their needs and desires, which seemed to be second to the requirement for a pageant. Falkirk grasped James' hand, for the first time considering the future, what would he like, what would James like. One thing Falkirk decided right away, pack only. There was no way he wanted some of his counterparts at his funeral, and no politicians what so ever.

At the end of the ceremony Jack broke away to come over to Falkirk's side. “Can I get a lift, kiddo?” The rather round Alpha asked, slinging an arm across Falkirk's shoulders. Agreeing Falkirk led the way back to the line of indistinguishable black cars.
Wade pointed to one of the limos, “Union Jack!”

Falkirk held the door for Wade and followed the man inside the car. Wade moving to sit with his back to the driver, so James could sit beside Falkirk. Knocking on the glass divider, Wade gave the driver an address. After confirming with Falkirk the driver pulled away. “I hear he's in your sights?” Jack said as they passed Pushkin getting into his own car.

“I can neither confirm or deny that.” Falkirk responded. But the sharpness of his tone when discussing the FSB director was enough answer for the old Alpha.

The address Jack supplied turned out to be squat bar, with no windows and little more than a block of concrete with a broken neon sign. Black cars already lined the street outside of the building, the small lot at the side overflowing. Wade led the way into the darkened bar where a thrum of people gathered in memoriam to the larger than life figure. Jack Ryan was easy to spot, speaking to an old balding man who was drinking shots of clear liqueur.

“I hear you have taken to proper drinking.” Jack said handing Falkirk a bourbon before handing James a cocktail glass “Fancy drink for the lady” he teased. Attempting to offer Selene a drink, she refused Jack, ever M's vigilant bodyguard.

Detaching from Wade and Falkirk, James approached the new arrival, Felix lighter. When Jack was approached by someone in a naval uniform, Falkirk left the old Alpha and moved towards Ryan.

The acting Director of the CIA was currently being cornered by an old war horse going over the good old days. Falkirk sympathising with Ryan, having been cornered by past members of MI6 himself, with the almost obligatory, 'Wasn't like this in my day.' and Falkirk having to put on the same smile as Ryan was wearing and be appropriately enthusiastic.

Seeing Falkirk's approach, Ryan leaped at the opportunity to abandon his current companion. The taller and broader Alpha, guiding Falkirk back to the bar. The man's voice soft and a little rasping as he said, “Who though in that meeting years ago, we would end up head of our mutual organizations.” Ryan observed. Taking Falkirk's glass and placed it on the bar to have them refilled without prompt. “What next? The presidency?” Ryan teased.

“I'll leave politics to you, can't stand it myself. You need to ask permission to do anything! And no one is ever happy.” Falkirk shot back, making the other man laugh and Ryan teasing that a dictatorship might suite Falkirk's style of management. The two leaning against the bar and sipping their drinks.

The old man Ryan had been talking to earlier came over, clapping a hand on Falkirk and Ryan's shoulder and standing between the two men. In an odd Russian/Edinburgh lisping accent, the man with bald head and white beard, started to introduce himself. Forgetting his name half way through and asking Ryan what it was.

“Captain Ramius?” Falkirk offered.

“That's it, no it's not.” Ramius said remembering he had an alias.

Ryan looked exasperated at the old Russian defector and expert in Russian Military and political strategy. By way of telling Ryan he knew the graphic details of the incident Falkirk said “Penobscot River” the location where the CIA hid the Red October (the submarine Ramies defected in). Falkirk had been researching the incident around the Red October and had drawn a few conclusions of his own.
“Would you, could you have, shot down those fighters?” Ryan asked referring to an incident a while ago, when Britain and America were technically at war.

“Yes, In a heartbeat. Little can match the Trojan Horse.” Falkirk informed, referring to the RAF airliner disguised as a commercial airliner.

The discussion piqued the old captain's interest. The three stood in a line, their backs to the room as they talked. Propping up the bar. Drinks being refilled automatically and occasionally being interrupted, by someone offering a greeting. Between Ryan and Falkirk they related the incident to the old Russian captain. The three entering into a quite conversation in the very busy bar, over what nearly brought them to the brink of war. Falkirk giving the UK perspective, Ryan the American and the Ramius the Russian.

When the topic strayed to General Pushkin Falkirk and Ramius got into a heated debate. The old captain switching to Russian petulantly, saying, “The hostilities between the Americans and the English couldn't have been orchestrated by Pushkin. The man is a moron! Too bloody honourable too.”

Having spent years arguing with Alec. Falkirk was able to keep the argument up, if not quite fluently. “Honourable! War Criminal, even if he hasn't been convicted.”

“I hear your hate boy. Mark my words, revenge will only make you blind. Be sure that isn't what someone wants.” The old man said softly. Showing the teacher of strategy he once was. “There is no greater strategy than getting one enemy to kill the another while keeping yourself in the shadows.”

The three lapsed into silence. The room too was stating to quieten. Everyone was going or their drunk state had moved to the sombre part, remembering, reminiscing or talking quietly. “A man once told me a joke.” Ramius said. “Put two human in a room together and they will soon come up with a justification to kill each other. Why do you think we invented politics and religion.”

Falkirk gave a half hearted smile. Ryan said, “I don't find it funny.”

“If you don't find the madness of humanity funny, try crying.” Ramies mused.

“Who told you the joke?” Falkirk said. He wasn't looking directly at his companions, but was watching them in the mirror behind the bar.

“Your Father.” Falkirk didn't know, and he was now too buzzed to care how Ramius knew who his father was. “He was a good man.” Ramius said, and both Falkirk and Ryan knew he had jumped topic to Greer.

“I can't quite remember meeting him for the first time.” Falkirk admitted. Explaining, “I studied Admiral Greer so much, that I felt I knew him long before I actually met him. I do remember the impression of his voice in the first meeting though, I thought it was like a loud Darth Vader.”

Ryan also gave an impression of the man. Ramius, reminisced too and like Falkirk had studied the Admiral long before he actually met the man.

By the time Selene reminded Falkirk about the plane he was well and truly inebriated along with most of the upper echelons of the CIA and the others friends of Admiral Greer. With uncertain steps Falkirk approached the barely conscious form of Jack Wade. Nudging the drunk Alpha into some semblance of awareness. With slurred speech Falkirk conveyed that he had a plane to catch. Pulled into a hug “I love you, kiddo” Jack slurred back and let him go.
“You take care of him” Jack continued pointing an accusing finger at James then flopped back down to fall asleep on the bar.

The memorial to Greer was effective in distracting Falkirk from what was happening back in London. Spending most of the flight with his head resting in James' lap sleeping off the alcohol.

Arriving in London to the veritable shit storm following the assassination of the Prime Minister at the unavailing to the memorial of a late Prime Minister. Falkirk driven straight to the COBRA meeting, chaired by Gareth Mallory as acting Prime Minister. All Falkirk could focus on was his pounding head. Falkirk received more than one speculative looks from Mallory, C and Mycroft. But the high point of the meeting was the general lack of evidence.

Heading home Falkirk crawled into bed to sleep off his hangover. When he woke up and went down stairs Hudson had the time old cure ready (a tall glass with a Baroka with an aspirin in it and a bacon butty).

Arriving at MI6, the first thing was a briefing from Tanner on the assassination. Going through the reports, Morstan was truly a professional. There was no CCTV, the real ballistics were being suppressed, even Tanner didn't know it was a sniper and reported it as a 9mm round from Urquhart's bodyguard. Corder had been taken out by a sniper, who apparently spotted him aiming for the Prime Minister. The papers too had caught wind of the investigation focusing on Corder, and where firmly placing the blame on Urquhart's Special Branch bodyguard. Coupled with raids on Special Branch the day before the assassination, everything was being pinned on a rouge and corrupt elements within Special Branch. A nice easy baddy for the public to understand.

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Clearing a path through the reporters. Falkirk walked up to Urquhart's private residence. Not knowing the woman who answered the door, Falkirk gave his official designation and asked to speak with Elizabeth. Reluctantly the permed blond Alpha let him in. Finding Elizabeth sitting in the rather old fashioned lounge. Falkirk joined her, closing the door on the blond trying to follow him.

“It was a kindness.” Elizabeth said, as much to convince herself as Falkirk. Looking to her guest “Should you be here?” she hissed looking about suspiciously.

“The Prime.. Francis and I where friends, of a sort, it was well known and will be expected of me to come here. There will be no suspicion.” Falkirk informed before adding “The public have their villain and ultimately that is all that matters, the rest I can deal with.”

Making sure no one else was about Elizabeth admitted, “I told him. I told him, 'we' had sorted everything. I think he understood.”

“I though about telling Francis as well. I didn't. I thought he would take it as a challenge and would enjoy a chance to face me in open conflict. That would have ended badly for all.” Falkirk responded.

Giving a week smile “Deep down, Francis saw it was his time. And this way the reputation would surpass the man. He liked that idea. In the end he was quite regretful over your last meeting.” Elizabeth said.

With little else to discuss Elizabeth walked Falkirk to the door. Before pulling the door open Elizabeth looked to Falkirk. “I, would you be my escort for the funeral and I would appreciate it if you would deliver the eulogy?” Falkirk agreed to the request.
The bell ringing followed by banging on the door brought Falkirk to the entrance of the library. John barge passed Hudson. Sherlock for once was the calming presence on his agitated partner.

“Where is she?” John demanded.

“Living her new life.” Falkirk responded stepping back into the library waiting for John and Sherlock to follow.

“Close the door.” Falkirk told Sherlock as he passed the threshold. Pulling out a Dictaphone Falkirk let John listen to the recording of his meeting with Morstan.

“She is not an assassin! She d,did not kill the Prime Minister.” John defended in the face of the proof. John continued to protest Morstan's innocence as he moved about the room aimlessly.

“Sexual activity between Males is still a punishable offence while in the army.” Falkirk stated, taking John by surprise.

“I'm not gay!” John shot.

“You do seem to be over compensating while maintaining a lifestyle indicating repressed desires” Falkirk responded tartly.

Sherlock adding, “He dose have a point, John.”

John's face hardened, refusing to take in what was being discussed. Falkirk saying, “Have you considered talking to someone, John?”

“I do.”

“Someone better then.” Falkirk said. He knew Sherlock wouldn't let something like cultural expectations stop him, which meant the reluctance was on John's part. And Falkirk would put down hard money that the good doctor wasn't as straight as he proclaimed being. “Just, please don't leave it too late.”

John ripped the door open storming out. Sherlock giving Falkirk a glance and a shrug, almost a look of weary exasperation as if saying, 'Look at what I have to put up with.' With a flap of his long coat Sherlock vanished out of the door too.

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On the morning of the funeral Falkirk dressed in formal tails. Within the puffed formal cravat he secured a long diamond pin. Looking over his appearance, not traditional funeral attire but Urquhart always used any opportunity to dress up and in his memory, so would Falkirk.

When he arrived at Urquhart's house Elizabeth agreed with Falkirk's choice of attire. She reached for the very dark green cravat, brushing the puffed fabric and caressing the diamond pin. “Wait a moment” she said and climbed the stairs.

Falkirk stood in the foyer of the private house. The carpet was a floral pattern and very busy. Pale walls and net curtains. Rather old fashioned. Hearing the dull thump of shoes on the thick carpets he looked up the the woman in black skirt suit, her dark hair pulled up, with simple make up.

With a small sniff, Elizabeth reached out. Pulling the diamond pin from Falkirk's cravat. “You
should have this. It was always a favourite. I couldn't decide if Francis should wear this one, I eventually chose the Cairngorm he wore on our wedding.”

When she stood back, Falkirk looked into the mirror. There was now a peril, in a clawed mounting sitting in the centre of his cravat. “Thank you”

Weaving the Omega's arm around hers Elizabeth led him to the first car behind the hearse. Inside the Rolls Royce Elizabeth pulled out a thick stock paper folded in thirds. A red seal held the letter closed with an 'M' marked into the once soft wax. “I found this in Frances' desk.” Elizabeth informed.

Breaking the seal Falkirk unfolded the letter 'In a world so full of wonder, mystery and discovery may you never know boredom.' the letter ended in a flamboyant 'Francis' signature. The words so typical of the Alpha and many others in Falkirk's circle. He tucked the final words of the Prime Minister into his pocket and flattened his jacket back down.

In the great white marble building of St Paul's Cathedral. Taking the arm of the Omega Elizabeth led them down the aisle following the coffin. A few, Falkirk had seen at Greer's funeral about a week ago.

Even here and now, there were some in whispered conversation, making alliances and weighing enemies. All grabbing for their future. “Cowards, too scared to make a move until Francis' death.” Elizabeth spat looking to the amassed politicians they were passing.

“I thought he would appreciate the fear his mere reputation still commands.” Falkirk observed getting a sardonic smile for the point. It was clear she held the politicians in open contempt.

Taking their seats on the front pew. An overly loud whisper, floated from a few rows back. “When I'm PM. That boi's feet won't touch the floor on his way out.”

Without looking back, Elizabeth informed Falkirk the man was a rival of Mallory's for the leadership. “At what point do you think I would allow him to become Prime Minister.” Falkirk whispered in overly loud terms to Elizabeth. Letting his voice float back to the man.

Playing along Elizabeth asked how Falkirk was going to achieve his aim. “It's all a matter of leverage and how willing you are to beat them into line with it.” Falkirk said coldly before indicating an older politician. Another rival of Mallory's “Callum, paid off his last four Alpha male interns. Groper!” Falkirk informed. Falkirk managed a few more examples before the bishop called the service to order.

Subtly looking round, every politician around him ducked their head as Falkirk cast his eyes over them. Elizabeth seemed pleased that Falkirk could cause the submissive gesture in the surrounding Alphas. At the appointed time Falkirk stood and approached the podium. Looking over the substantial congregation Falkirk realised for the first time he had never given a speech to a crowd. “Francis Ewan Urquhart. Born 1936, the youngest son of the Earl of Bruichladdich. A noted author and Oxford Professor...” Falkirk continued to list the facts of Urquhart's life and career.

Seeing the bored acceptance on the faces of the congregation, Falkirk lay down his prepared notes. “Francis Urquhart detested listlessness and idleness, he held a unique scenes of honour and integrity that I hold true to myself as well. My friendship with Francis Urquhart was short, barely three years. It was tumultuous one between that of the cobra and mongoose, between the immovable object and unstoppable force. There was respect eventually, after I put the stick about” It was time to do as Urquhart would, he would make these rulers of this country afraid because if they had nothing to fear they would fall to corruption.
“The first time I met Francis Urquhart he failed to grasp one simple fact. What did I do to make his most loyal challenge his authority by obeying me over him” Glancing at Elizabeth instead of the expected fury she held open curiosity and perhaps some admiration. “Francis protected the country in his own way” Falkirk continued, subtly bringing up the HUD on his glasses and their inbuilt facial recognition system.

“He protected the post of Prime Minister from falling into the hands of the weak.” Falkirk stated. Looking to the Urquhart's potential successors Falkirk accused, “Pervert! Corrupt! Stupid! Naive, complacent and weak! Weak! Weak! Weak!” Falkirk made sure the person he was directing each word to saw he was talking to them specifically, making each politician flinch. Many more were now cowering down in hopes of avoiding Falkirk's roaming gaze.

“I say this! You might well think you are capable to follow in Francis Urquhart's footsteps, you might well think that. I couldn't possibly comment.”

Chapter End Notes

Okay. That's the house of cards story line done. But prior to posting I reworked some bits, the Archives Branch Falkirk was meant to stumble on more or less by accident after a holiday several chapters away. But I figured it needed to be brought in now where it was more relevant. So I need to see how things have been affected. So a couple of weeks to skim the upcoming chapters to check and fix continuity.

Thanks for reading and your patience. And I'm also working to have a 6 part fantasy story done. So that will be coming out soon too I hope and it'll be a quicker read than Seven Ages.
Chapter Summary

This arc focuses on a domestic situation. Because nature takes the plans of mice and men and laughs at them.

Chapter Notes

I'm back. Sorry for the delay. I've been reworking and rewriting things.

Due to some editing and continuity changes. Things have been a bit messed about a bit. And apart from a few points, this chapter is almost brand new. And unfortunately there is a bit of angst in this part.

Warning: Mentions of past abuse.

“You wished to see me?”

Falkirk had not even had time to change after Urquhart's funeral. Both he and Mycroft were still in the formal black. Falkirk the more traditional, in his tailed jacket, with Urquhart's pearl stud cravat-pin in the centre of the formal and deep green and puffed fabric around his neck.

Mycroft lifted his head. Pushing aside some papers. And leaned back in the heavy and upright carver chair he was sitting in.

Falkirk didn't like the aura of 'naught school boy' the encounter was begin to have. Mycroft behind the wide table of the alpha's private room in the Diogenes club and Falkirk standing in front of it.

Mycroft scanning his brother up and down. Saying, “Our plans are being met with resistance.”

“A power vacuum dose posses a particular brand of dangerous, opportunistic, chaos.” Falkirk mused and to regain some control lifted his left thigh and perched on the edge of table in front of Mycroft, looking down on his brother.

“I am arranging a dinner on Friday. I would appreciate it, if you were to come?” Mycroft purred.

Falkirk made a show of thinking. Then deliberately ignoring the request and said, “Well I was going to see Elizabeth. She's having a little trouble, you know? The accusations of insider trading, fraud.”

Mycroft gave a tight smile. “I'm sure her trouble will resolve itself.”

Falkirk mused, “Well she was talking about seeing friends in the south of France. So I might be
free on Friday. So long as her passport is returned.”

Mycroft nodded, agreeing to the quid-pro-quo. “I shall look forward to your attendance.” Mycroft said and slid a piece of paper across the table, “The guest list.”

Falkirk lifted the simple list, in Mycroft’s precise cursive script, recognising the top name easily. Showing the page back to Mycroft and pointing to the third name down, “Is he the one I called corrupt, weak or a pervert?”

“All of the above. You caught him three times in the eulogy.”

“And this one, he's the Islamophobic, anti-Semitic, racist...”

“Fascist, Yes.” Mycroft said with a weary sigh.

“You want to be the nice option. So that leaves me being the big bad wolf.” Falkirk summed up. And Mycroft gave a tight smile that didn’t reach his eyes and a single nod.

Falkirk stood and went to the door, pulling it open and slamming it behind him. He was stuck with his reputation, but Falkirk knew if he tried to be anything less, the alphas would walk all over him.

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Keading sauntered into the library. The American, casually informing Cody and Selene were spending time together at the park. Falkirk saying, “They might bump into James and Andrew.”

Keading continued talking about how Cody and Selene were bonding. Suddenly adding, “He called her mum the other day.”

Falkirk looked from the computer screen to the other omega. “Isn’t that what he calls you?”

Falkirk was met with Keading’s soft chocolate brown eyes and got a shake of the head. “I’m Mom, with an, ‘o’. Selene mum with a, ‘u’.” Keading clarified.

“How cute.” Falkirk said with a wide smile and the other omega nodded eagerly.

A rapid knock on the library door interrupted them, Hudson’s annoyance evident in the simple sound. The yellow blond man with stern and sagging face pushed the door open a bit more forcefully than usual, “A delivery, Sir. They insist on bring it in directly.”

Coming out of the library, Falkirk saw a man in expensive grey suit waiting at the door. Falkirk would recognise a lawyer a mile off, from the supercilious aura alone. And Falkirk just knew the man would have one of those privileged voices that would become a droning ’wa-wa-wa-wa-wa’ noise if you listened to it.

“I am, Sir Thomas.” Falkirk announced and the lawyer pulled out a clipboard, with a letter under the clip along with a document of several pages.

Falkirk ripped open the letter, reading Elizabeth Urquhart’s precise scrawl. Then looked at the document from the lawyer and an approved secure transit service. Each page on the clipboard was receipt of delivery, the type used to ensure a chain of evidence, starting from Elizabeth, with the movers and finally a space where Falkirk had to sign confirming over a dozen boxes arrived with
their seals intact. Noticing a low droning noise that was in fact the voice of the lawyer telling him what Falkirk could read for himself.

“Please, be quiet.” Falkirk said off handedly, “This could have been handled by my man.” Falkirk noticing Hudson smirk in vindicated triumph towards the lawyer.

“Bring them in.” Falkirk ordered.

Falkirk taking a place by the open front door, with the privileged twat of lawyer beside him. The passenger side of the blue van opened and a man in grey overalls, with stab vest and helmet went to the side of the armoured vehicle, like the type used for cash transfers. The deliveryman looked into a mirrored piece of glass above a barrel door. The cylinder spun around to expos a single box, which the deliveryman picked up and brought to Falkirk.

At the door, the deliveryman held the box for Falkirk's inspection. Falkirk looked over the cardboard box, its number and the red tape sealing it closed, and told the man to put it on the tiled floor of the foyer. Falkirk signed the receipt for every box, with the lawyer confirming he had witnessed Falkirk inspect and sign off each of the boxes.

Hudson closing the door behind the visitors. The three then looked down on the 15 cardboard boxes on the floor, in three neat rows of five.

“Well let's see what Elizabeth sent me.” Falkirk mused, getting a paperknife and scissors from the library.

Using the point of the knife, Falkirk pierced the tape that kept the lid on. Handing the knife to Keading, the other omega got to work opening the box beside Falkirk. Inside, the boxes were designed to transport suspension files from a cabinet, with runners so the files were still browsable and able to be pushed back and forth.

Falkirk parted one at random, the tab on the file 'Booza-Pitt, G'. Between the hard folded cardboard was a single piece of paper in a protective plastic envelope. Falkirk lifted it out and read the signed resignation. Frowning, wondering why there was no date, nor a reference to the job title Booza-Pitt was resigning from. And as far as Falkirk knew the Tim-nice-but-dim of a politician had never resigned from anything.

“Who's 'Hollis, I'?” Keading asked. Falkirk shook his head and gave a shrug.

“Education Secretary, 90-97.” Hudson announced.

Keading held up a page form the file, “He was arrested for exposing himself at a School. Climes he was 'Caught short' and some girls just happened to see him relieving himself at the back of the building.”

Hudson gave a perplexed frown. “I never heard about that. And Mrs Bridges likes a good scandal, and always reads those tabloids that like to publish them.”

Falkirk was getting the picture. This was Urquhart's archive, of every dirty little secret the party had. Moving to the the box Keading was at, Falkirk immediately spotted 'Holmes, M'. Curiosity, made Falkirk pull open the file and lift out the documents with a CD falling out. Flipping open a manilla file, the image burning into Falkirk's eyes.
“Fuck!” Falkirk screeched, closing he eyes and slamming the envelope closed. “NoNoNoNo.... Not again. Yuk! I need to scrub my eyeballs with a tooth brush.” Falkirk squealed.

A throat clearing caused Falkirk to stop his dancing about. Hudson nodded to the other omega and then quietly slipped towards the corridor leading to the kitchen stairs and away, knowing his presence wasn't needed or wanted.

Falkirk looked at the down turned head, Keading trying to hide behind the fall of his long black hair. “Keading?”

Keading just shrugged. Falkirk knelt beside the other omega. “Did I say something? Sorry. I didn't mean anything. I just don't like thinking of my brother's sex life, let alone seeing the proof of it.”

Falkirk was met with the dark eyes of the other omega. There was a moment of hardness to Keading's look.

“What did it feel like, seeing me covered in spunk, knowing I let your father fuck me?” Keading then flipped open the file showing the photos, Mycroft standing behind a young Alpha fucking into the smaller man against a dinning table.

Falkirk's stomach knotted. “I didn't think that way... I was worried how you would react with us showing up, and about sending you away with a strange Alpha. We needed to see my father for a reason, there was no time to do anything but what we had planned. And the moment Selene got you out I started the talk with my father. But I am happy for some things that came out of the time. I have a baby brother I love. And I have a friend, I hope?”

Falkirk felt the other omega lean against him and interlace their fingers. Keading whispering, “Sorry. Just when you started, I had an image of you dong it the moment I was out of the room. Making fun of me.”

Falkirk leaned his head against the other omega's. “Don't apologise? You are my friend and I love you for that alone, but you're also family through Cody and through Selene now too.”

“We're a pretty fucked up family.” Keading mused. Falkirk stood, agreeing with the sentiment as he escorted Keading back into the library.

Falkirk left Keading on the small settee, and went to the cupboard disguised as books and shelves, pulling out a nesting blanket. Sitting down, Falkirk and Keading lay against each other. Pulling the blanket around themselves.

“Falkirk?” Keading waited until the other omega acknowledged before hesitantly saying, “James, he's always careful of his words, with Andrew I mean. Sometimes he is just talking and suddenly stops.”

“Love?”

Keading pushed back so he could look at the other omega. The word almost like Falkirk had sworn. Keading nodded, the only word that fit when the Alpha stopped talking.

“At most.” Falkirk continued after a moment, not looking at the soft brown eyes still watching him. “At most, James will say, 'mine', but has never said the other four letters. Not to me or to Andrew. I think he feels it but the idea scares him.”
Keading tried, he could see it was painful and somehow knew the subject was forbidden but the question slipped out, “Why?”

Falkirk pulled the other omega against him. He so wanted to talk about this but never before was there anybody he could talk to. “I don't know, precisely. Less precisely there is a whole list of things that would taint the very word for James.”

Still with his head against the other omega's chest the two hugging under the blanket, Kneading didn't think Falkirk was going to continue. Falkirk had been silent for some time, when he did speak, it was with a hard warning that nothing was to be repeated, not even to Selene. Keading having to agree, before the other omega continued.

“James lost his parents, very young but old enough to remember them, they loved him and just vanished from James' point of view. He was palmed off on his aunt, a barely legal guardian who couldn't cope with a traumatised boy, but she loved him. Charmain told me so herself. From James' point of view Charmain dumped him at Skyfall for a while, then packed him off to School. When he was expelled, James attended Fetts College. During the term break, James grew close to a Ski and Mountaineering instructor, Hannes Oberhauser. Describing him as a second father to Charmain, she agreed to give temporary custody of James, to Oberhauser.”

Keading pushed away fully, the other omega's smell was growing a little rank, in a que of deep distress. And the green eyes, that were looking off in the distance were watery and unseeing.

“What happened?” Keading demanded, seeing the stress the secret was putting the omega under. Falkirk looked to him, and Keading wanted to cower, not liking the hopelessness in the expression.

Falkirk shrugged, “Only one person alive knows. James' movements at the time are unable to be established. As far as anyone knows, James simply vanished until he arrived back at Fetts for the start of the new term. He has refused to talk about the time, going so far as to issue an ultimatum, he was going to walk away from MI6 rather than tell them. And whenever he gets pissy about other people's secrets, all I or Mansfield had to do was hint at the fact James wants to keep his, and will drop the subject.”

“But.” Falkirk said, again looking away. “Oberhauser was easier to investigate. His body, what was left of it was found by MI6, years latter in the mountains of Austria. Analyses of the remains indicated the body being intact at the time of death, while the head was... It was suspected, something like a point blank shotgun blast took Oberhauser's head off. Suicide or foul play could not be determined. The investigation found Boys, alphas, dozens of them, lets describe Oberhauser's grooming as 'Inappropriate relationships'.”

“How old was James?”

Falkirk shrugged, “James was expelled from Eton at 14. I doubt he had reached 15 yet.”

Giving a humourless snort. “When James found me in the presence of a strange Alpha, Daniel, he hit the roof. But afterwards, and sometimes even now, James is scared of Daniel.”

“But Alec, he's an Alpha. In a relationship with another Alpha man. And I'd bet he's got a crush on James.”

Falkirk fixed the omega with his hollow eyes again. “Alec isn't physically bigger than James. In a
fight, James would have the edge over Alec. And deep down, James knows he is the more dominant of the two. James can't say that for Daniel.”

Falkirk pulled off his glasses to scrub his face. He hadn't meant to say all he did, but once he started, everything wanted to come out. The worst aspect for Falkirk, James knew that he had pieced the parts together. And Falkirk got his information from MI6's background checks, and M would never have let James join without being sure in its conclusions. And James still hadn't spoken a word about it himself.

“Not a word. Please! James would never forgive me. And...and for some things like deaths or betrayals, James only has one coping strategy, he would just walk away and never look back.” Falkirk said to the other omega and got a shaky nod in answer.

An arm came around him and Falkirk stood as Keading wanted. The other omega led him upstairs. It was the bathroom on the second floor, beside the nursery Keading took him to. “Shower. I'll get you fresh clothes. We'll say there was silverfish in the files.”

Falkirk nodded his thanks, not quite understanding the insect reference. Undressing, Falkirk started the shower, getting rid of the oppressive rank scent clinging to his skin. Starting as the door was flung open and Keading put down a large towel and a change of clothes. Keading vanishing as fast as he appeared, and Falkirk wasn't sure without his glasses and through the glass door, wondering if the colour of Keading's clothes had changed.

When Falkirk had showered and changed he came down the stairs, a strong noxious smell covered any hit of his previous distressed scent que. Giving a choke, the fumes catching his throat. Falkirk finally set foot on the ground floor. All the boxes had been opened, and the fumes were quite strong.

In the library, Falkirk found the other omega discharging the bright orange can of bug killer into the air. And Falkirk had been right, the omega had lost his previous brown chinos and now wore a pair of muted tartan trousers and a green v-neck of Falkirk's. “You're far more deceptive than I gave you credit for.” Falkirk mused.

Keading turned to him and gave a shrug. “Alone in a big city, you learn how not to look weak or needy.”

“Head, up! Back, straight! Eyes, forward! And you can fool the world.” Falkirk said and had to explain James' advice from a long time ago. Keading took Falkirk's arm, and gave a comforting nuzzl into his neck briefly. The two headed through the lounge and out the back, to let the lower floor of the house air.

When Selene and James arrived, with their respective children. The door was pulled open, and they saw the open boxes with the fumes catching their throats. Hudson announced with a cough, “Sir Thomas and Mr Corvin are on the back terrace.”

James just flicked his eyes to the boxes in question. Hudson answering, “I believe Mr Corvin, mentioned Silverfish.”

Selene started chuckling and headed through the lounge and out the back where she found the two omegas sipping, coffee for her own omega and tea for the other. Selene took in the clearly borrowed change of clothes her omega was in.
James asking if Falkirk had changed, handing over Andrew as he did so. Before Falkirk could answer, Selene accused her own omega, “Did you make Falkirk change?”

“NO!...Maybe....yes.” Keading said ducking his head.

Selene chuckled. Looking to Falkirk as she joined the two at the bistro table. “So were you treated to the full show?”

“Show?” Falkirk asked in confusion.

“You know. Screaming, hand waving and spinning on the spot.”

“Don't do that.” Keading defended with an adorable pout. Falkirk shook his head and assured nothing of the sort happened. Keading giving his alpha a triumphant smile and taunted, “See.”

“Oh, so brave.” Selene praised and pulled the omega close to plant a kiss on the blushing cheek. “So next time you see a spider you can squash it all on your own?” Keading gave a nod but clearly wasn't so sure of himself.

James tore his eyes from the soft smile of his omega, as Falkirk watched the other couple. An evil thought coming to him, watching something crawl along the railing of the terrace.

“So what about earwigs?” Keading's brown eyes snapped to James. The Alpha lifting his fingers, letting the omega see the small insect with pincers on its tail.

Keading launched back, backing up until he hit the wall of the house. Emitting a high whine and shaking his hands, muttering, “Kill it, kill it, kill it.”

Selene tuned her glare at the other Alpha before standing to put an arm around her omega.

Cody on the other hand was standing by James. Watching the small brown/reddish thing crawl over the large thick fingers. Keading giving a higher pitched whine, when James let the insect crawl from his hand to Cody's small one. Without the same experience, the earwig was able to crawl off Cody's hand and fall to the ground, the eager boy chasing after it.

“They eat Silverfish.” James informed. Watching Keading being slowly coaxed back to the table by the omega's big brave Alpha and James' own softly spoken omega.

“James. There are times you are a complete and utter twat.” Falkirk muttered, supplying Keading with a sweet tea for his nerves.

A tug on his trouser leg, brought James' attention to Cody again. “Look what I found.” The boy proudly informed, holding up his hand, showing a slug slowly making its way across his palm.

“You want to see what happens when you put salt on it?” James said with an unholy light in his crystal blue eyes. Getting an eager nod, James guided the boy away from the group and the one in particular who had frozen while looking at his son in terror.

Keading was just about regaining his composure. But his dark eyes kept flicking to the grassy area they were overlooking, and the man and his son. James lifting rocks and anything else, letting Cody look for the disgusting little creepy things.
“Look what I found.” an amused Scots voice called, Keading gave a shriek.

Daniel jumped at the sound, looking at the startled omega in surprise. A nervously grinning blond man peeking out from behind Daniel. “I'm not that scary.” Alec reassured. Selene still trying to calm her mate. Keading glancing up and giving a nod, assured no more creepy crawlies were being shown to him.

“No, tell my evil boss I'm back.” Alec teased. And came over to pluck Andrew from Falkirk's arms and saying all the things a person says when they hadn't seen a baby in a month or two.

“Well, Alec.” Falkirk purred. “If you want to buy my silence. And not tell your evil boss. You and the other, big strong alphas can take those boxes to the garage.”

After Alec agreed, and he and Daniel were about to go do the task, Falkirk waved him and Daniel back down. They could do it later. Just now they could all enjoy the sunny day.

With some encouragement from Falkirk, Alec knelt down, to see Andrew's newest tricks. Still with the small hand wrapped around Alec's finger, Andrew was able to stand and took several steps. Alec praising and nuzzling his godson in wonderment, making the little omega squeal and laugh in delight.

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Mycroft sat at the head of a long table. The 5 star restaurant was in one of the highest buildings in the city and the floor to ceiling windows offered a wonderful view. The only space left was at the foot of the table, where Mycroft was currently able to enjoy the night time cityscape. Along the table, about six each sides, technically friends, enemies and opponents in reality. But none so hostile that they would give up a free lunch, or dinner in this case. All had thrown their hat into the ring, to become Prime Minister. Some had a real shot. Others, their endorsement and the supports they had gained could be the deciding factor as they themselves were eliminated.

To Mycroft's immediate right was the greatest threat to the plans, Tom Makepeace. Makepeace had been very senior until a falling out with Urquhart, then the man was put to the back benches where he became a thorn to the Prime Minister while gathering support from the junior MPs. To Mycroft's left was the other threat, Claire Carlsen. She had been a middle of the road politician, making no great friends or enemies, she risked slipping up the middle as the heavy weights and more ambitious fought openly.

Mycroft watched them all order. The common or greedy, ordered the most expensive dishes even when they clearly didn't know what it was. Mycroft seeing the highest priced dishes on the menu, by its use of less expensive ingredients and not much skill needed to produce them, the restaurant was using to milk the fools who ordered them. Others looked to what was in the dishes, latching on to the extravagant ingredients, truffles, lobster, caviar, were in abundance.

The waiter, in the formal tails stopped by Mycroft's chair after the starters and mains had been ordered. “Sir, I believe there was a special order requested. Gravlax, with Caesar side and spelt bread?”

“Ah yes, our last has not arrived yet.” Mycroft purred and indicated the empty chair at the foot. “He shouldn't be long. And I'm sure the herb crusted lamb will suffice for his main.” The waiter nodded and took his leave.
Overhearing, “Mallory?” the wiry grey haired man, to Mycroft's right demanding in a gruff annoyed voice.

“No. But it is Mallory we are here to discuss.”

A poised woman with black hair, worn solder length and curving in at the ends, around her long neck. She snorted a derisory laugh, “Mallory. A waist. Sat on the fence and offended everyone. And like a good little pup, was rewarded by his master.”

There was the crux of Mallory's problem. Because of Falkirk, Mallory had been untouchable to Urquhart. Mallory had also pulled back from some of the organised attempts to oust the old PM. But Mallory had been the most publicly critical, so was popular outside the politicians. So was in turned hated by the party for that public popularity while most also considered him a coward, or worse one of Urquhart's. No, Garth Mallory was not liked by the party he needed to lead, in order to remain Prime Minister.

Mycroft cast his gaze around the table. Making his voice respectful almost deferential, “I, now I could and would work with any the party duly elects. But it is not just me. Others...”

“Is someone talking about me?” a soft and rather posh voice said very pleasantly. All recognised the voice of the young man who delivered the humiliating eulogy at the funeral.

Mycroft gave his brother a tight smile, not putting it past the omega to have waited to that very moment to arrive. Falkirk took his seat at the foot of the long table and casually lay the linen napkin across his lap.

“As I was saying. What the country needs, at a devastating time like this. Is stability. A leader who has a broad range of support. The public's, MI5's, The Met's, The Police federation's, The army...”

“I have spoken to the First Sea Lord.” Falkirk interrupted. “I believe I can speak for Admiral Roebuck, unofficially of course, and can convey his covert support for the generally preferred candidate.”


“Rabid little bitches too?” A crusty old man, the radical no hoper of the leadership race mused in a guffaw like blast. Vinyard was old right wing, verging on fascist, who advocated work camps for immigrants, National Service for the unemployed and all the other extreme measures that preceded very dark times in human history.

The water, faltered but caught himself at the old man's bluster. Falkirk ignored the man, thanking the omega waiter politely. Then concentrating on his dill cured salmon starter.

“Yes, the support of 'Rabid little bitches' too. I am trying to keep the peace in this time.” Mycroft said. The implication if Mycroft failed. Falkirk would lead the war.

Falkirk flicked up his eyes, most were not eating, knowing this was the good cop, bad cop routine. And they were the lambs to the slaughter. All Falkirk need to do was be here. And if any really put their foot down, Falkirk's job was to hobble them.

The woman to Falkirk's immediate right picked up her knife and fork. Clare Dower, a rather nasty woman who tried to go for Mansfield in the hearing before Silva escaped. She was tuning out those
still trying to argue they had what it took. Falkirk took the woman's gesture, and weakening alpha scent, as her rolling over.

“It has been some time, Ms Dower. I hear you are pushing for a review of prostitution laws? I myself have always favoured protecting those who work in such industries, rather than criminalising them.”

The woman's black eyes looked a little startled. The cutlery held still and poises, with the creamy sauce covered lobster jiggling on the end of her fork. “Wh, well yes I am. We are looking to shift the criminal change to the client not the seller.”

“I thought several charities opposed that. Criminalising the client will deter the average person. But the more dangerous clients will still go looking and the sellers will be pushed into more dangerous situations, to appease the fewer clients they do get.”

“You advocate legalisation?”

“And legislation, to stem abuses. Mandatory drug testing for a start, for isn't addiction the mechanism to coerce and control the most vulnerable. Taxation and duty, to cover increased policing and costs to the NHS.” Falkirk said. Then looked around the table, noticing a few watching him have a civilised debate.

Mycroft caught his eye and nodded, his thanks Falkirk assumed. Then Mycroft looked to his side and continued to appease the politicians still wanting to be Prime Minister, where Falkirk would just hobble them. While Falkirk moved on to discus the German mega brothels compared to the Amsterdam red light district with Clare Dower.

The mood was spoiled when the crusty of fascist refused to roll over. Mycroft looked away, in a symbolic gesture of turning a blind eye. Falkirk wiped his mouth and there was a collective holding of breaths from the people around the table. Pulling out his phone, Falkirk tapped away then replaced it. The table looked at Falkirk in confusion. “I'm not playing nice. Tomorrow's papers will be full of Vinyard's anti-Semitic, Islamophobic and racist rants.”

The old man with white hair growing out his ears glared. Falkirk caught his brother's eye again. “Did I tell you, Francis bequeathed me his 'Party Whip' archive. Every dirty secret from the past quarter centenary. All mine.”

The entire table looked down. While the crusty old, Vinyard stormed to his unsteady feet and hobbled out as fast as he could. Come tomorrow he would be in deep trouble.

Chapter End Notes

I needed to flesh out this chapter after I moved something out of it, so from a short scene foreshadowing Keading knowing about Urquhart's files and having a genuine phobia attack from the insects. I dropped the genuine insects and used the bug spray to disguised Falkirk's que after telling his friend the story. And the photo of Mycroft was inspired from London Spy, by the way.

Now, James' past was something I had considered from the beginning. I was never
going to acknowledge it directly. But I did hint at it in the previous instalments and will again later in the series. And I wasn't going to touch on James' problem with the L-word, until he got over his problem and said it, nearer the end of this part of the series.

James' past was based on the suspicious disappearance of Oberhauser as listed on the James Bond Wikia. Given what James said to Silva, I connected the two and thought of a vulnerable youth, betrayed by a father figure, further fuelling the alcohol, emotional and trust issues James showed in the movies. Not a nice back story. But I always felt something more was missing in James' back story.
"James?" Alec whispered in growing concern, watching his friend prepare his phone.

"It'll be fine, and it's good to expand his pallet, the books say so. And there's loads of videos, you saw." James responded a bit awkwardly, then looked to his son on the far side of the coffee table. "Come on, come to daddy."

Andrew looked up at the excited voice of his dad, and the alpha's wide smile. Shuffling side to side, gripping the table for balance. Practising, using his legs just like everyone else

When Andrew was close, James plucked the lemon from his glass of coke. Holding out the wedge, James made his voice a little higher, "Go on."

The oblivious child, with complete and unflinching faith in his Daddy coordinated his new body as best as a slightly over one year old could do. Grasping the edge of the table with one hand, he reached out with the other to grasp the yellow thing being held out to him.

"James?" Alec said again, watching the small chubby hand grasp the bitter fruit. The big blue eyes so innocent, with the boy's dark hair sticking up in all angles of cute little horns.

"It's fine. You saw the videos. It's a memory." James argued holding up his phone to capture the moment.

"If it's fine. Why isn't mother here?" Alec said, flicking his eyes to the door behind them. And what lay beyond that door, in the room right beside the lounge.

It took a bit more coordination before Andrew found his mouth and bit into the fruit, with his emerging teeth. The moment the taste got to the brain, and the developing brain realised that bitter was the worst thing in the world, Andrew scrunched up his face, letting out heart broken choking sob at how his daddy could give him such an awful thing.

James was chuckling softly, while trying to simultaneously comfort and film his son.

"James, I have a feeling."

The moment Alec said it, James felt it too. It was like knowing death had just looked at you. Or the feel of knowing there was a sniper out there, and you knew your head was in the cross hairs of the scope.

Slowly the two men looked behind them, letting out a collective sigh of relief, the cute dark haired omega standing there wasn't the one they had been dreading. Although, Keading's soft brown eyes were harder and the lean man was frowning. "Must you be so Alpha?" the American hissed.
"Yes." Both answered.

Coming round the couch, Keading plucked the still sniffling child from in front of James. Andrew whining and murmuring to the older omega, in heart broken suffering. Keading responding, in soft sympathetic tones, as if the baby was making perfect sense, "Yes, I know. How could a daddy be so mean? All you can do is trust, and what dose that thoughtless Alpha do, feed the most trusting person in the world something horrible."

Alec smiled, James' head ducking down further with each word Keading spoke to Andrew. The omega quite good at heart wrenching guilt trips.

"And as for, uncle Alec, your big, brave, godfather..." Keading said and it was Alec's turn to slump down in guilt.

"It's your bloody fault." Alec said from the side of his mouth.

"Could have stopped me." James shot back.

Keading continued to comfort the improving boy as he took Andrew out the room.

James slapped Alec's shoulder, "You're meant to stop me!"

Alec punched James' shoulder in respond and snapped, "What am I Jiminy Cricket!"

"THEY DID WHAT!"

Both men groaned and slumped down at Falkirk's screech. Alec punching James' arm again because it was all the bastard's fault. James punching back.

The two men jumped to their feet at the sound of the omega storming out of the library. Falkirk appeared, Keading a step behind and still holding Andrew. Falkirk's face holding not even a hint of affection, the brows knitted and the normally wide lips pursed in a hard little 'o'. The hard green eyes, behind the glinting lenses of the man's glasses showing absolute nothingness, no caring, no compassion. This was M standing before them, and M was livid.

James tried, but his eyes couldn't quite meet his Omega's. Alec wasn't even trying, he was at a parade stance, looking straight ahead, with his hands clasped at the small of his back and legs shoulder width apart.

"Who?" Falkirk's voice little more than an ice cold whisper.

Not a proud moment, James shoved Alec's shoulder making the other man take a step forward.

"You complete, Bastard!" Alec shouted, then pointed an accusing finger at James while looking at the little omega, in desperation. "It was him. He did it. To his own son."

"You stood by. Cheered me on." James defended, if he was going down he was taking everyone with him.

"Lies! Watch the video! I was against it!" Alec argued.
Falkirk raised an eyebrow. Letting out a snort. Losing his angry demeanour. “My god! Is that all it takes to break two Double Os?” Q teased with a snort.

James let out a breath, seeing Falkirk wasn't really angry, and was in fact smiling. “Oh that's good.” James said. “Not even Mansfield could be that annoyed on cue.”

Falkirk walked up to his Alpha plucking the phone from the couch as he did so. James winding his arms around the omega pressing his back to him. Falkirk found the latest video, and hit play. James watching the screen over his Omega's shoulder.

“I'm going to hold this over you, forever and ever.” Falkirk teased. James nodded, Falkirk only aware of the gesture because of James' chin resting on his shoulder and the movement shaking him. Falkirk's eyes flicked up, and darted about in a panic, no Alec and no Keading in the room. “No?”

“That little bastard!” Alec cried, voice coming from the open doorway. Retuning, brandishing one of Falkirk's photo albums. Holding up the book with a large picture of a very unhappy Andrew, scrunching his face up. “These little bastards did it before us.” Alec said to James, and indicating Falkirk's co-conspirator who still held Andrew.

“Traitor.” Falkirk accused the Omega standing at the door. Keading just smiled sweetly.

“You want to see the video when Luke and me did it to Cody? He glared at us, with his cheeks all pulled in and the cutest little pout.” Keading said with a wide smile.

“Yes.” the others demanded.

--

Through Mycroft's gentle manipulations. Falkirk's looming threat, or in one or two cases the actual need for him to be his cold hearted worst. The leadership of the governing party was whittled down to Mallory and a no-hoper stooge who had been offered a cushy lordship to lose.

Falkirk stood in front of the wall mounted TV, between Keading one side and Daniel the other. The screen showing Mallory in front of the gloss back door emblazoned with the white '10', the seat of government.

“Is he alright?” Keading asked, and he wasn't talking about the tall Alpha with short swept back hair giving the speech. But the omega in the back ground of the picture, with the tight curly hair and strange eyes that could go from blue to brown depending how the light hit them. And more importantly, the perfect picture of a smile Darren wore, that was so perfect it was clearly fake.

“You want me to sweep your office for bombs?” Daniel teased.

“Oh Darren couldn't get anything in.” Falkirk mused, he had been expecting his PA to be a little displeased, never having liked the the politicians that surrounded Mallory. But the Omega was definitely giving off an aura of suppressed 'deranged fanatic' under the constant flash of bulbs.

“He wouldn't need to sneak something in.” Daniel said. “He showed me something that would do the job, with just what was in the Q branch break room. Made a nice little bang on the weapons range.”
Sharing a glance with Keading. Falkirk mused, “You don't fancy going out for a drink? Let Darren escape for a while.”

“As long as I get something fruity, alcoholic and comes with an umbrella.”

Falkirk pulled out his phone. Tapping out a message, Falkirk sent it. It was a moment before Darren pulled out his phone, the one he had to answer at any time no matter where. The Stepford wife smile, broke.

Falkirk's phone buzzed with the response. It taking Falkirk a moment to realise there was a lag between the image on the TV and what was happening. Only now did the Darren on the TV appear to be tapping out his response and putting away his phone.

“Hay, that looks fun.” Daniel teased. “Send him a dirty joke, see if we can get him to laugh.”

“Hurry, a joke?” Falkirk demanded, poised and ready with his phone.

Falkirk tapping in the words as Keading said, “What's 6” long, 2” wide and drives woman wild? A $100 bill.”

“Damn!” Falkirk spat, the message coming back, that Darren was inside. And only now did the TV show Mallory end his speech and disappear inside the door, taking Darren's hand as he did so.

With the fun over, Falkirk slipped his phone back in the pocket. A yawn broke Daniel's chuckle. “Bloody... Alec.” Daniel groused, with another yawn breaking his words.

“Alec keeping you up?” Falkirk teased.

“He's a bit restless,”

Falkirk chuckled. James, Alec and along with 009 who had finished his mission but had dropped off the radar were all kicking back. A lull. There was a big up coming mission that Alec as the more fluent Russian speaker was slated for, and a few situations MI6 were keeping their eye on but for the moment there was nothing.

The three stepped outside, onto the terrace running along the width of the house. With a small bistro table that the three sat around. On the patch of grass, they looked down to the others in play. Alec on his knees shuffling backwards, holding Andrew's hands letting the boy practice his walking.

James was further back, squatting slightly on the balls of his feet, and shifting his weight from left to right foot and back again. Selene and Cody tussling over a ball. Cody getting the ball from his stepmother and shooting it, James deliberately missing allowing the football to bouncing off the wall behind him in a goal.

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A buzz from his pocket and Falkirk pulled out his phone. Smiling at the the message. Sending a quick order to Tanner, Falkirk stood and came out of his office. “Fancy a lunch out?” Falkirk asked the wild haired omega.

“Sure.” the Irish voice drawled.
The two omegas were joined by Selene, and a man who had been reluctantly invited to use her office. Darren nudged Falkirk, “Can't I have one of ours?”

Falkirk glanced at the special branch bodyguard, there for the bound omega of the Prime Minister. A carrot shaped man of broad shoulders and narrow waist and legs, the sad brown eyes carried a somehow attentive and oblivious expression. Falkirk had vetted the man himself, because he wouldn't let just anyone guard his PA and Friend or allow a potential threat into E Branch. But could still sympathise with Darren, he was part of MI6 and if he needed a bodyguard, wanted an MI6 one not Special Branch.

“Fine. Give me a few days.” Falkirk whispered and the Irish omega beamed a smile.

The four, came out of the building by the main entrance. Falkirk and Darren setting a casual pace as they crossed the bridge over the Thames. The two bodyguards several paces behind.

Falkirk spotted the covert MI6 team Tanner had arranged, so Selene could relax too for the lunch hour. They entered the cafe, seeing the group. Andrew sitting on Alec's muscled thigh happily chewing a long bread stick. James and Keading sitting together talking quietly.

Darren, Falkirk and Selene took their place, sending the special branch bodyguard to wait at the counter. The group only awaiting the arrival of the big Scots Alpha.

“So.” Selene purred looking at Darren, with a predatory gaze. “Did you enjoy your night out?”

Darren gave a big innocent smile, “’t was grand.” Making his accent thicker.

Selene flicked her eyes from her own omega, to Falkirk and back to Darren. Falkirk had taken his back up bodyguard and she knew nothing. The three had been tight lipped. Mostly just to torment the Alphas in their life.

“They told me.” Daniel teased and sat down beside Alec. Brushing Andrew's cheek and neck in a greeting as he did so.

“So?” Selene prompted the Alpha.

“Oh, I'll never tell. I just want to lord it over you.” Daniel teased the woman who sulked and sent a glare at her giggling omega.

“You're evil.” Alec teased the big alpha beside him.

James complained petulantly. “Oh now you see it. I've been calling him that for years.”

Falkirk sent an evil smirk to his alpha, taunting, “I have noticed you haven't done anything problematic. Since Daniel became your handler.”

“I've never done anything, 'problematic'. “ James defended. Alec was the first to break into giggles, followed by Falkirk. Even Keading was caught up in the laughter, even when he didn't know about the things James had gotten up to.

--
Falkirk's car pulled to a halt just inside the high black railings. Opening his door, Selene keeping a distance behind as Falkirk made his way up the famous street. One or two of the permanent photographers took a photo, in case it transpired something important happened and they wanted the moment M entered Number 10.

The black door was pulled open and Falkirk stepped into the residence of the Prime Minister. The light thump of heels on carpet made Falkirk look to the woman coming down the stairs, dressed in short grey skirt suit, still with the wiry hair. And still the two of them could only manage professional politeness. “Ms Moneypenny.”

“M.” Mallory's chief of staff greeted in return. “This way.” she said and held her hand out indicating the stairs she had just climbed down.

Falkirk suppressed the retort, he fully knew the way to the Prime Minister's office and had been a regular guest.

Up the stairs and first on the left. Falkirk entered the square room, the top of Mallory's head not a good angle, it showed the extent of the receding hair. Mallory looked up and Falkirk was able to see the watery eyes of the Alpha.

“Cognac?” Mallory said, standing and indicating the chair opposite.

It was only polite, even if he didn't care for a the drink, so Falkirk accepted the seat and the snifter, with the amber liquid. “Congratulations, Prime Minister.”

Mallory thanked him and sat, swirling his own snifter before taking a sip. “I met Kelly.” Mallory said very neutrally.

Mallory talked about clearing out Special Branch, and guarding the Prime Minister and his mate being Special Branch's jurisdiction. Falkirk was just waiting.

“The thing is...”

Falkirk musing, “Kelly Bailey is fully capable of protecting Darren.”

“I'm sure she is. It's just...”

“She earned a George Cross, no small accomplishment to gain the second highest award for bravery.”

“There's no doubt about that...”

“Former SAS, a host of covert operations.”

“I am...”

“Experienced bodyguard. When Senator Casey's helicopter went down over Kandahar province. It was Kelly's team who were the first on the scene. Dragging a 70 year old politician, ex four star General, sixty miles, across Taliban and Al-Qaeda held territory. Without loosing a single person.”
Falkirk saw the man gulp. Falkirk knew how to pick people and he was gifted in finding the woman to be Darren's bodyguard.

“When we met.” Mallory paused, looking rather surprised he had got that out. “When I met Kelly, I appraised her.”

“You looked her up and down. Took in the peroxide blond hair scraped back into a ponytail. The ill fitting trouser suit...”

Mallory took a centring breath. “Yes I did! She said and I quote, 'Wa' u loo'ing at, knob? No' inta blokes, so turn those eyes right the fuck round and fuck the right off.’ ”

Falkirk smiled, there it was, Mallory's problem. Falkirk had found a living embodiment of a harpy. “Darren likes her, admires her, understands her. And if you want rid of Kelly, you will be the one who needs to put their foot down. But I will side with Darren and his free choice in his bodyguard.”

Mallory took the last sip of his cognac. “I'm stuck with her.” he said, with the same resignation of a doomed man.

Coming out of the office and the residence itself. Selene saddled up beside Falkirk, “So?” she purred.

Falkirk shrugged and gave an evil smile. “You do know, you're going to have to share your office with Kelly.”

“She's more mellow, when not in a crowd.” Selene mused.

When they arrived at Falkirk's, Cody was back from school. James and Keading were playing football with the boy on the long narrow patch of grass below the terrace.

Falkirk sat at the small table. Watching the other blond man with a firm and comfortable hold of his godson, Andrew sitting on a broad thigh. With his left hand Alec moved the soft plastic spoon from the bowl of puréed vegetables, to the small mouth. Falkirk giving a small chuckle, Andrew drooling and leaving a trail down the sides of his mouth, the same orangey colour as the mush Alec was feeding him.

When the small bowel was finished Alec carefully wiped the chubby cheeks and gave a kiss to one before handing the boy over to his papa.

“Better go. Promised Daniel a night at the Royal Philharmonic.” Alec said to Falkirk. He then called a bye to the rest. Falkirk saw the man out. On the front step, Alec pressed his lips to Andrew's cheek again, making the boy squirm and smile.

“Have a good time.” Falkirk called with a wave.

“Not bloody likely. White tie, stuffy music, but it'll be worth it.” Alec called, mounting his bike and pulling on the helmet.

Looking to the blue eyes of the small face. “Is it just me, or is uncle Alec a little off?” Andrew just blinked slowly and let out a yawn. Falkirk nodded and headed up stairs to to see to his son's bath.
“M! Emergency.” Tanner announced, bursting into Falkirk’s office. The Beta tapped the glass wall onto the rest of E Branch, using the display to bring up the raw intelligence.

There were photos displayed. One round dark haired Russian, with a beard, was talking to a bigger round Russian without a beard. The current head of the KGB now named FSB, the bearded Pushkin. The ‘Legitimate’ business man, Ex-KGB when it was the KGB, Zukovsky.

The two men were in a cluster of warehouses of a grey and rundown place. Tanner flicking through photos, and stopping on one. The two men standing over a long wooden crate. In the next picture, the side were being pried open. And in the next picture a missile was in open view.

“Brimstones!” Tanner announced, indicating the sleek grey piece of metal. The missile not even sold to the UK’s allies, let alone anyone else. They were the ace in the hole of the RAF. “From this evidence. The FSB are selling eight of them.”

“The FSB are the sellers?”

Tanner confirmed and Falkirk leaned back in his chair. It meant the Russians were not trying to copy the technology, they wanted someone to use the missiles and implicate the UK. If a hospital, or UN facility were targeted it would leave the UK open to accusations of War Crimes, supplying terrorists, any number of possibilities.

“Zukovsky and Alec are old friends. I can think of no one better to go ask the ex-KGB agent what is going on.”

“Right away, M.” Tanner snapped and pulled open the door to organise the mission.

Falkirk lifted the phone on his desk. Getting Darren to contact Alec, through the official channels of M bringing in Double O Six for a mission.

Tanner compiled the mission brief giving it to Falkirk to sign off. Walking into the conference room. R a clean cut alpha of blond hair and baby blue eyes was setting up a laptop. Falkirk nodded to the man and greeted R by his name, Peter. Tanner was at the far end of the room, at the display, ready to give the briefing, everything was moving so fast even Falkirk himself hadn't heard the latest.

The scent hit Falkirk, the que of a lingering heat. He didn't think the other Alpha would notice, and betas never picked up on any scent ques.

Alec sitting down and greeting him with a cocky smile and a purring, “M.”

Falkirk cooled his expression and focused on Tanner, who called them to order. Tanner took Alec
through the briefing while R brought up the AV as required.

R then went through the assigned equipment with the traditional opener, “Now pay attention Double O Six. Walther PP...”

“Nothing bigger? Because size dose matter.” Alec teased sending the Alpha a flirtatious smirk.

Forging on, R told Alec about the car waiting for the operative in Russia. Finishing, “Your tickets, Double O Six. And do try to return all your equipment on one piece, not just one piece of equipment.”

With everything arranged, Falkirk dismissed them. Calling, “Double O Six, wait for me in my office.”

Catching Tanner’s sleeve, Falkirk allowed R to leave before whispering, “Bring Double O Seven up to speed. Don't tell Daniel, or anyone else you're preparing James. I'll switch the travel arrangements myself.”

The round faced beta gave a rather unsure nod but acknowledged M's orders and went to comply.

Walking through E branch Falkirk stopped at his PA's desk and to Falkirk's dread Darren was looking at Alec through the glass wall with a confused frown.

“I need you to do something, quickly and quietly.” Falkirk informed. Darren a stood, able to figure out what for himself.

Entering his office Falkirk closed the door, moving to go behind his desk. Plucking the glass of bourbon from Alec’s fingers on the way passed.

Alec looked accusingly at his suddenly empty hand, most helped themselves when they got to a certain stage, he had even helped himself in the presence of the Wicked Witch. As long as he wasn't a insubordinate arse he should get away with it. So looked at the omega with a strange and curious frown.

Falkirk placed the glass down in front of him. Looking at the amber liquid he knew he was about to end the career of his oldest friend and pack mate.

“What is it? You look like you know I'm about to die.” Alec said only half teasing, the Omega's attitude was putting him on edge.

“I think you may be pregnant.” Falkirk informed before taking a breath and continuing, “Even Darren noticed the scent change.”

Falkirk's desk jumped as Alec kicked it, the glass tipping over and Falkirk forced to catch the computer screen before it fell to the floor.

Apologising Alec looked to the empty desk outside Falkirk's office. “Where is he!” Alec demanded pointing to the empty desk.

“Getting a test.” Falkirk told him and Alec started pacing around.

Falkirk saw the outer office. They knew the signs of a volatile Alpha in M's office. Selene appeared. Falkirk caught her eye and shook his head. She nodded, but stayed close and always with a visual sight of him.
Alec paced from the internal wall, where he glared at everyone, to the curving glass window at the far end. Passing back and forth in front of Falkirk's desk. Falkirk himself using the time to switch Alec's tickets to James' details.

Seeing the Irish Omega returning Alec punched the wall. Falkirk stood and went to the door, taking the brown bag from Darren. Bellowing, “GET BACK TO WORK!” Falkirk glared at his staff until they complied.

Closing the door. Before Alec could snatch the bag away Falkirk pulled it back. “No silly buggers.” Falkirk warned. Getting a growl in response Falkirk held out the bag and Alec took it and entered Falkirk's private wash room.

Emerging Alec placed the plastic sick on Falkirk's desk. The screen displaying, 'Pregnant' and '1-2' indicating pregnancy and time frame. Alec sat quietly as Falkirk started making phone calls. Firstly to the Chief medical officer. Declassifying Alec's records and asking for hard copy highlighting anything relevant to his 'indeterminate sex'. Alec growling when Falkirk mentioned the word for the first time.

Next came an emergency appointment at the same Harley Street clinic Falkirk had attended. Finally Falkirk called Tanner telling him Alec was off the active operative roster and James was up for the next mission.

Falkirk wanted to ask a myriad of questions but he thought Alec was holding on to his composure by a thread. The slightest further upset and he would default to his usual coping mechanisms and for an operative that usually meant substance abuse, violence or sex, usually a combination of all of the above.

It was well over an hour before a glassy eyed Alec spoke a quiet whisper, “Bugger!”

Catching his eye, Darren held up a folder for Falkirk to see. Nodding in acknowledgement Falkirk continued to sit in silence with Alec until he quietly prompted it was time for his appointment. Alec stood and led the way out of E branch. Falkirk grabbed the medical records on the way passed.

Selene was confused by the sudden outing, calling, “M?”

“Need to know.” Falkirk said, to keep her from asking any more questions.

Leaving Selene with the car, a good distance down the street from their destination. Alec and Falkirk entered the private medical practice. By now Alec was getting agitated again, acting like a caged wolf. Pacing the waiting room. Upsetting an Alpha male with too much spray tan clashing horribly with his long jet black hair and almost glowing teeth, and a small blond Omega male at his side.

Grasping Alec's hand, “Your scaring the other patients.” Falkirk said getting a vicious growl for his trouble.

“You shouldn't do that.” the Alpha said standing, he had half a head on Alec and had rippling muscles. The poser Alpha didn't know how out classed he was.

“Yes Alec, you shouldn't growl at the poor delicate Omega in his fragile state.” Falkirk teased. The macabre, self deprecating humour always seemed to connect with Alec. Alec let out a sigh and leaned against the wall, beside Falkirk and pulling him close to cuddle.

“Mr Trevelyan?” an Omega male in white coat called.
Giving a low rumbling growl in acknowledgement they followed the doctor. With Falkirk being held to Alec's side. In the rather nice office, the small red haired doctor addressed Falkirk.

Clearing his throat Falkirk indicated Alec. “I am not the one who's pregnant.” he informed and pulled out Alec's file.

The Doctor flipped through the pages. The MI6 doctor had marked the relevant sections. The doctor was a bit bashful as he asked Alec to step behind the curtain blocking the bed from view. The Doctor confirmed Alec was pregnant and conducted an examination. Falkirk just hearing the occasional growl and squeak from the doctor.

Coming out from behind the curtain, the doctor took his place behind the desk. When Alec was again in his rather nice dark blue two piece suit with yellow tie in place, the Doctor summed up Alec's age for a first child, Indeterminate sex, a muscle structure more common to an Alpha physiology. The eagerness grew in the Doctor at such a unique case until Falkirk interrupted him and with cold seriousness “I expect, in perpetuity, absolute confidence.”

With the prospect of an authored paper out the window the doctor carried on with a deflated tone. Scheduling further tests as the doctor suspected if Alec could carry a child to term a natural birth would be highly unlikely, and potentially dangerous for both mother and pup.

“What about,” Alec paused and glanced at Falkirk but pressed on, “You know...getting rid of it?”

“Termination?” the doctor clarified.

Alec nodded, just feeling the weight of the eyes on him, feeling uncomfortable. But when he glanced at Falkirk, the omega was steadfastly looking at a picture of a flower on the wall. The doctor answered that question and any others Alec could come up with.

With a rather stiff goodbye they exited the office, then the clinic. Falkirk still thinking about the big question Alec had asked, knowing it was the only way Alec could continue as Double O Six.

In the car. Instead of returning to MI6. Falkirk instructed the driver to take them to his house. Falkirk saw Selene looking at her phone. Then he was met with her dark sapphire eyes. “Keading sent me a link. Is Darren pregnant?” She asked holding up a picture of Darren at a Boots, and the omega picking up a box from the shelf clearly marked 'Pregnancy Tests'.

“No.” Falkirk answered automatically.

Alec flipped the switch to raise the divider between them and the front seats of the car. “Bugger off!”

Before she disappeared from view. Selene's excited eyes fixed in Falkirk, “Andrew's getting a brother! Or sis...” the word being cut off by the partition.

Alec scrubbed his face. He then sighed and slumped against Falkirk, putting an arm around the omega for good measure.

Selene followed Falkirk and Alec into the house. The French door leading onto the garden where open with Keading and Andrew outside. Alec flopped down onto the couch and Falkirk joined him. Selene continued out into the garden giving the pair some space.

Leaning his head back Alec threw his arm over his eyes and groaned. Slowly Falkirk closed the distance and leaned his head against Alec's neck and wound an arm around him. Automatically Alec started stroking Falkirk's back and neck.
“I can't, you know,” Alec stressed.

Falkirk hummed in acknowledgement not sure what Alec was talking about and hoping a non-committal answer would get him to elaborate.

“When the form teacher announced the Omegas had to attend special health classes the evil old witch read off the names, just so she could say mine. I had to kick the crap out of every Alpha and Beta in the school. When I skipped the class for boxing the form teacher pitched up and the sports master frog marched me to the health class.

I joined James in being expelled after I fucked every one of those Omega. They all thought I wouldn't be like the other Alphas, and I proved I was exactly like them. I had each one multiple times, in very way possible. The entire 5th and 6th year of omegas were broken in on my dick. I had a whole harem by he time I was found out.”

Falkirk knew the story. It was in Alec's permanent file. Falkirk had known Alec's indeterminate status since he hacked MI6 at age thirteen.

“Dose James know?” Falkirk asked.

Shaking his head. “We fooled about at Eton. Never directly with each other. After he got expelled we didn't see each other again until Britannia.” Alec informed.

“Do you have heats? You smelt normal a couple of days ago, but this morning it hit me like brick wall.” Falkirk asked pushing back so he could look his friend in the eye.

“Apparently. But not the mind altering, hormone fuelled desire to be fucked. And they were never regular. At most it was just a period of being more easily tuned on, but no different to a long mission away then coming back and feeling horny. It's more like when I was a teenager and getting random erections. Other Alphas never noticed, nor omegas.”

“Bonding?” Falkirk asked. As the can of worms was open he may as well get all his questions out.

“Not really. But there is something. I always gravitated towards James. When he was declared KIA I told Daniel in case there was a bond to break. And I have noticed I do, yearn, when I'm away for too long, especially with Daniel.”

“Is that why you never moved back in?” Falkirk asked getting a nod and a stroke of his back in answer. “You are always welcome, even here, I picked out a room for you. The one I thought a person could climb out of, along the drain pipe.” Falkirk insisted. The arm around him tightened slightly before relaxing again into the soothing caresses.

“I should tell Daniel.” Alec said after some time.

Falkirk had to stop himself from snapping at his pack mate and friend. “He deserves to know.” Falkirk said as calmly as he could.

“You really couldn't make that sound any less like a fuck you.” Alec teased

Pulling out his phone Alec sent a text to Daniel. Falkirk could see he had arranged for Daniel to come here. Falkirk texted James to come home as well, after Alec insisted.

A knock at the open doors alerted them to Andrew's need for a new nappy. Keading knowing something was happening, and hesitant to approach but Andrew his more important concern. Passing through the lounge Selene hiding her continued confusion followed her omega in. Keading sent Alec a subtle glance just as he reached the door.
Selene smacked into the edge of the door. Keading mumbled something, continued on and upstairs. Alec may as well have sprouted another head for the look Selene was sending him.

“Ha-bloody-ha. You're an alpha. With a terrible sense of humour.” she said, rubbing her head where a red spot had formed in a perfect outline of the door.

Waiting for Keading to return before answering any more question. When the two other omegas appeared, Alec held his hands up for his godson. Nestling between godfather and Papa, Andrew was openly curious about Alec's changed scent pressing, his face into the crook of his neck.

“I am of indeterminate sex, with characteristics of both Alpha and Omega.” Alec informed the pair on the opposite couch. Quietly Keading asked the same questions Falkirk had about heats and bonding. Selene's eyes bouncing from Alec, to her own omega who wasn't showing any hint of doubt about the revelation.

Slowly Keading approached, sitting on Alec's other side. Leaning forward Keading waited until Alec lifted his head before closing the distance to scent him. “You still smell like an Alpha, but a pregnant one.” Keading observed resting his weight against Alec as well.

“You're not pulling my leg.” Selene realised. Slumping back, again looking at Alec as if she had never met him before. Her eyes fixed on the man's stomach, the stomach Andrew was leaning against. “Pregnant. Alec's pregnant. Alec Trevelyan's pregnant. Alec Trevelyan is pregnant.” she whispered silently to herself, affirming the concept that didn't quite want to stick in her brain.

With Falkirk under his left arm, Keading under his right and Andrew in his lap Alec was having trouble keeping his thought on track being bombarded with the cocktail of Omega pheromones especially when his touches caused Falkirk and Keading to bliss out. Andrew experiencing the affect for the first time gave a soft desperate mewling as he rubbed against Alec in contentment, his eyes almost black with the blown pupils. Only Alec noticed the flash and click before he succumbed the the pheromones too. Luckily there was just enough room for Selene to slip in beside her bond mate.

“Here I am, preparing to risk life and limb for king and country and you lot are piling.” James teased. The group barely responded.

“I'm pregnant.” Alec sang out before returning to rub his cheek against the top of Falkirk's head.

“WHAT!” Daniel snapped from behind James.

Pulling his head from Falkirk and fixing his unfocused gaze on his now actual, pregnant, inevitable pup to prove it, mate. “I, am, pregnant.” Alec enunciated his voice slightly off due to the pheromones hanging round the group.

“I can smell it.” Keading mumbled, with waving head bobbing to look around to the other Alphas.

”Me too.” Falkirk said waving a hand in the air.

Chapter End Notes

Well. I remember when I first hinted at something up with Alec and noticed I got a
several comments rather quickly. I thought about ignoring them as I had been doing, but curiosity made me risk reading a comment about spelling and grammar to see what had got people worked up (it was after that I started reading and responding). I enjoyed the short debate that had had built up. Well they were almost right. Given what can happen in nature I wondered about those born between the Alpha/Beta/Omega. Originally this was to be the first revelation with Alec and then after the holiday chapter Falkirk was to find the archive and realise he didn't know everything. The holiday chapter remains but the original Archives chapter has gone.
Passing of 006 Arc: Alec runs away.

Chapter Notes

As always thanks to all those who read leave comments or kudos.

In the days following the revelation of Alec's pregnancy, James departed on the mission that had been slated for Alec. Alec went for a battery of tests and assessments, it appeared a difficult pregnancy awaited him but could carry a child. Daniel was still dazed by the news while Alec was kindly described as grumpy. Selene was still half expecting someone to call 'April fools!'

Looking over the reports covering his desk, Falkirk was considering what he could do with Alec. Usually when an Operative got pregnant, unless they had a termination it meant an end to their active assignments. But after Alec's question to the doctor, the subject had never been raised again. And Falkirk saw the glint of veiled pride every time Alec told someone.

From the medial reports it was going to be two years before Alec would be anywhere near mission fit and Falkirk couldn't tie up a valuable Double O designation for that long. It was a cruel aspect but the threats of the world wouldn't make allowances and nor could MI6. Reluctantly Falkirk called Alec in as Double O Six to speak with him as M.

When Alec arrived, Falkirk saw the man perch on Darren's desk. Alec gave a nod to something Darren said and the Omega launched up, flinging his arms around the blond's neck. Alec putting his arms around the lean waist and pulling the bouncing brunet closer.

Falkirk just sat back and watched. Unwilling to use the intercom to interrupt, like he usually did. When the two separated, all of E-Branch were watching in open curiosity. One or two of the omegas on staff probably picking up on Alec's scent and now the display. The news would be quickly entering the gossip chain now.

When Alec entered, he carried a single piece of paper. Handing the letter to M he sat down. “Dear God! Nine months. I've not been dry that long since I was....” Alec ended in a mumble, of his true first drinking age.

Reading over the resignation Falkirk mused, “Longer, more likely. Longer still of you are able to, and do feed the baby.” Alec grumbling something else in response. Placing the resignation down before fixing Alec with a calculating gaze.

“Stop that! You look like the old witch.” Alec hissed.

“You can't remain a Double O but I was hoping you could do something for me?” Falkirk said in an overly pleasant way that sent chills up Alec's spine.

“Officially you will be attached to internal affairs. Unofficially find out who the leak is, and who their contact is.” Falkirk stated dropping a folder in front of Alec. When curiosity forced Alec to look Falkirk balled up his resignation and dumped it in the bin to be incinerated.
“I will permit you to be armed, because you would be anyway, even against regulation. But when the leak is identified, it's Stuart Thomas who has the kill order.” Falkirk ordered.

“You're giving that pretty boi my number!” Alec teased with a smirk.

“Get out.” Falkirk shot, suppressing his smile.

Just as the door was about to close behind Alec he called, “Pretty Boi will never be as good as me.” The door banged and Alec waved as he passed Falkirk's internal window, having gotten the final word over M.

“Well Mr Thomas, I hope you like your new nick name. Alec's always tend to stick.” Falkirk mused to the empty room.

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Two days after Alec's departure, and four since he had been in the very same chair. Sitting in front of Falkirk's desk with his head resting on it, Daniel. The Alpha grumbled at length. His grandmother had arrived the yesterday demanding to see the Omega.

Sitting up “I didn't think she could get down here so bloody fast. I only told her the night before last. She must have gotten to Glasgow? Caught a plane? Train?” Daniel mused before giving an exasperated “She doesn’t have a passport, an airline shouldn't allow her on.”

“I blame you. You let Alec bolt!” Daniel accused.

“She scented the pregnancy the moment she walked through the door, hasn't realised it's Alec though” Daniel continued, sitting up and fixing Falkirk with his gaze “She's been asking about Double O Nine.”

Falkirk snorted, thinking of the rather masculine omega, who by visual could pass for an Alpha until you got close enough to smell the light heady Omega that clung to him. Apparently Alec had convinced Daniel to tell his grandmother about the pregnancy the same day as he was leaving for Rio, then disappeared to the other side of the world leaving Daniel to deal with the fall out.

“You have time to prepare her before Alec's return. You can explain indeterminate sex, it's rare but not unheard of.” Falkirk stated. He had not really looked up from his computer screen since Daniel sat down.

“I am just lacking the proof of that little miracle.” Daniel shot.

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The next day Daniel returned to Falkirk's office to inform, “She cleared out Hamley's, Mothercare and god knows where else and she doesn’t believe it's Alec. She thinks it's some modern medical... witchcraft!”

On the third day. Falkirk's office door slammed open. Falkirk jumped and was concerned about the outward aggressive and dominating aura that preceded Daniel. Falkirk was beginning to doubt himself, like James this didn't look like a fight he could even engage in.

Daniel slammed his hands down on the desk and Falkirk ducked his head and bared his neck.
“How long is Alec was going to be? I, needed, physical, PROOF!” The Alpha's roar rattled the windows.

Screwing up his courage, Falkirk squeaked, “I don't know.”

The Alpha turned and ripped the door open, “If I break Doreen's neck or that of her chicken necked mother. I'm going to blame you as they cart me off to the asylum.” Daniel shot and walked out.

In the absence of the Alpha Falkirk slummed. Darren came in, asking after Falkirk. Shaking his head, “Daniel is always so controlled. I think he is getting to the point of breaking.” Falkirk said in concern.

Despite Daniel's familiarity with family and pack his personality was a facade, he only ever liked small groups at most. His grandmother was like some of the ones who where kept out of Daniel's way in Q branch. The moment people started getting to close, hovering or demanding to much interaction Daniel had to rely on an iron will not to lash out in the worst way of an Alpha's nature. Annie and Underwood had been instrumental acting as a buffer between Daniel and the sometimes needy employees of Q branch.

When Falkirk entered the house at the end of the day, Hudson was holding a tray with a small envelope. As expected there was an invitation to Mary's get-together, with a note requesting a meeting tomorrow.

Informing Hudson they where having guests. Falkirk looked to Keading and Selene asking if they would like to join them. Writing a formal invitation Falkirk instructed Hudson to deliver it tomorrow.

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Coming home on Thursday Hudson had gone all out. Silverware polished to such a level that they gave off flares when they caught the light. Crystal glasses casting rainbows onto the brilliant white table cloth. All laid out to millimetre precision.

“Exemplary!” Falkirk stated making the old Alpha puff in pride.

Falkirk watched Andrew and Cody to allow Keading and Selene to changed for dinner. Handing Andrew over to Keading and Selene. Falkirk went upstairs to change himself. Coming down in his white tie just in time to welcome his guests as they came through the door. Taking Mary's arm Falkirk escorted her through to the lounge.

At the end of the meal Falkirk retired to the lounge taking Keading and Mary with him. Daniel remaining with Selene at the table. Falkirk seeing the Alpha male closing his eyes and slumping down in his seat before closing the doors. Turing from the sliding doors that separated the lounge from the dinning room, Falkirk looked to Mary.

“Alec is pregnant.”

“He is an Alpha.” the old woman insisted.

It was Keading who answered her,“I could smell it.”

With Falkirk adding, “Both my PA and myself scented the pregnancy as well. And I have seen the
medical reports.”

The little old Omega's eyebrow raised but her mouth still hand an unimpressed downward curve to it. 'Perhaps Alec did need to be here to convince her.' Falkirk thought. Keading and Falkirk gave there assurances and even explained some of the things Alec had told them.

Mary knowing they wouldn't lie to her but she knew Alec as an Alpha and couldn't see him as an Omega and couldn't wrap her mind around him being with child. “Alec is an Alpha.” she insisted for what felt like the hundredth time.

“Of indeterminate sex.” Falkirk corrected, “He has traits of both Alpha and Omega. That's why his scent wasn't so oppressive. And why he could pick up better on an Alpha's ques.”

“Let us leave the discussion for now.” Falkirk said seeing the look on Mary's face. She was not open to taking this on faith. “Let's have a drink. And I will get Alec back. He has a bollocking coming for the can of worms he opened.”

Falkirk lifted the decanter from the sideboard, and pouring them a stiff drink. Keading taking a sip of the bourbon and pulling a face, very much like Andrew when he tasted lemon for the first time.

The Omega declaring the drink, “Yucky!” and went to get something more to his taste. Mary sipping her whisky and Falkirk his bourbon.

After Mary and Daniel had departed Falkirk made a beeline for the library. Picking up the phone Falkirk called Alec. Getting the latest from the ex-operative he had found the leak and dispatched Thomas to seal it.

“Good. I want you back immediately!” Falkirk ordered changing Alec's travel arrangements personally. As Alec protested, Falkirk threatened, “If you are not on that plane. I am coming to get you. Your plane leaves in four hours, move it!”

Standing at the arrival gate Falkirk waited for Alec. Seeing the unhappy looking blond, in rumpled suite emerging from the doors. Falkirk approached wrapping an arm around Alec's waist. “Have fun scaring the suits?” Falkirk asked.

“Didn't get to shoot anyone.” Alec complained.

“James reported in. You're going to Russia next, to speak with your old friend Zukovsky.” Falkirk informed as they moved through the airport to Falkirk's car.

“It was very mean of you to abandon Daniel.” Falkirk admonished.

Growling “I know.” Alec responded.

“I just couldn't deal with her. Not until Mary got over the whole excitement of 'the family line is going to continue' thing. At least on the family line she likes. She literally said, now the family title had been returned, she just needed an heir so she could die happy.”

Sympathizing, James had expressed similar fears about being bound, family and pack everything was still overwhelming to a loner. But that was no excuse. “So you ran away, like the little boi you
claim not to be.” Falkirk taunted and got a soft growl.

Arriving at Daniel's house. Alec pulled out his key and let them in. There was already a buzz about the place. Amongst the mix of scents, Falkirk picked up on a que, and by the way Alec's head jerked in the direction of the stairs he too picked it up.

A thin alpha woman with long brittle looking neck, exited the lounge. “Who are you?” came the sharp and harsh upper class Scots accent from the pinch faced woman, giving Alec, Falkirk and Selene a once over with her hooked nose in the air.

Falkirk let Alec growl threateningly. Alec continued to growl as he took a step forward, forcing the woman to back up against the wall.

“My word! It's true!” Mary interrupted coming up from the kitchen. “Doreen! Go do... something!” Mary snapped to her Grand Daughter and Daniel's half sister. The brittle necked woman stalked to the kitchen door and disappeared down.

Taking Alec's arm, Mary led him into the room Daniel's sister had come out of. Falkirk following the pair into the deep lounge that stretched from the front of the house to the back. Mary instructing the woman sitting with a long drink, Daniel's non biological Mother, to go help her daughter in the kitchen. The grey haired woman looked down her nose at Falkirk on the way passed.

Leaving Alec and Mary alone Falkirk headed up stairs following something rather unsettling, Daniel's distressed scent.

The scent trail led to a barren room on the third floor. The moment Falkirk pushed open the door, Classical music was almost deafening. Falkirk found the Alpha sitting cross legged. In blue almost black three piece suit, minus the jacket and with a blood red shirt, Daniel looked almost serene with his eyes closed in meditation. Coming to sit cross legged, opposite, Falkirk waited until the Alpha noticed him.

It wasn't long before the Alpha's nose twitched and cracked open his brown eyes. Giving Falkirk a humourless smile Daniel pressed stop on the remote and the silence was almost as deafening as the the noise.

“I apologise. I did not quite understand the stress Mary puts you under.” Falkirk said getting a nod in return.

Following Daniel as he got up and led him to another bedroom. Flinging the door open Daniel allowed Falkirk to look inside. There where boxes and clothing, enough to open his own baby shop.

“It could send you to Russia with Alec.” Falkirk offered. “Or a holiday, a real one.”

Seeing the Alpha mulling it over Falkirk added, “How about the eight of us? Don't you have a private, secure island.” Daniel gave a nod in answer.

Going down stairs Falkirk could see Daniel muttering a mantra as he took each step.

“Alec's facing the music.” Falkirk informed nodding towards the lounge. Taking a deep breath Daniel turned the handle and entered the indicated door.
Selene emerged from the door leading to the kitchen, knuckles cracking as she made tight fists. "Keading is not coming to face, them." she spat indicating the door down to the kitchen.

Nodding "Would you ask him to keep Andrew?" Falkirk responded sympathetically.

When Selene stepped out the front door to make the call she returned with another tall Alpha, a little leaner than his older brother, clean shaven but just as tall, Douglas.

“So what's the big news?” the harassed Alpha asked Falkirk, not bothering with a greeting and dumping a suitcase down.

“Not my place to say.” Falkirk responded. When the slightly leaner version of Daniel asked where everyone was Falkirk indicated the lounge “Mary, Daniel and Alec.”

Indicating the door to the kitchen stairs “Doreen and...”

Interrupting Falkirk, “Mother!” Douglas spat as if it was a swear word.

Sitting on the step beside Falkirk. “Doctor Carol went off line, the active memory was the key. When the hardware rebooted a new and unremarkable intelligence developed.” Douglas informed.

Knowing it was just a brief conversation with an Artificial Intelligence on a computer, but Falkirk felt a loss for the strange AI he had spoken to. Falkirk even felt it right to give his condolences and Douglas thanked him. They continued to discuss the passing interest Falkirk had in AI until the lounge door opened.

Douglas greeted his grandmother with an ease that Daniel could only emulate. Taking her arm Douglas guided the little round omega down stairs. Daniel looked a bit better than Falkirk expected. Alec brushing shoulders with his mate. Daniel called them, Falkirk and Selene joining the procession down to the kitchen.

Daniel and Mary served while Douglas demanded to know why he had been called from America, echoing Doreen and her mother on why their attendance was required.

“I wished to see the family.” Mary answered.

Looking down her nose at Selene “And our esteemed guests?” Daniel's mother demanded, with a sneer.

Fixing her daughter in law with an innocent vulnerable look. “Sir Thomas was gracious enough to open his home to me for Christmas.” she said pointedly, imposing the guilt only a Grand Mother can, on the two other grand children and daughter in law.

Throughout the meal, Falkirk realised Mary, Daniel and Alec had come to an agreement of some sort. Falkirk thought the pregnancy was not going to be mentioned, but Daniel did announc he was going to be a father. Douglas looked confused while Doreen gave a snide congratulations.

“Legitimate?” Daniel's Mother demanded.

“Yes legitimate and the title would pass to Douglas before...” Daniel's growling response was interrupted by Mary calling his name sharply before he could insult his mother further.
“How did you wrangle the title?” Doreen accused. Normally marriage trumps a bonding and if an Alpha married, even when no children were produced, any children of a bound omega were automatically disinherited. Not so subtly the subject was completely ignored.

As soon as they politely could, Falkirk thanked Mary for a lovely meal. Just before he exited the house Falkirk insisted Mary come for afternoon tea over the weekend. Graciously accepting, Mary waved Falkirk’s car off.

“You should have left Alec in Rio.” Selene said looking into the back of the car, feeling sympathy for the ex-Operative.

“He stirred that hornets nest and left Daniel to deal with it. I promised a holiday, you, Keading and Cody will come, won't you?” Falkirk asked.

When Selene started to politely refuse. “You don't want an all expenses paid trip to a private, Mediterranean, Island? Please, for me.” Falkirk said, ending in a sweet pleading smile. The Alpha gave in to the omega's puppy dog eyes.

When they arrived at Falkirk's house Keading was wrapped in a blanket watching a scary movie.

“Is Cody asleep?” Falkirk asked. Getting a nod Falkirk invited Selene and Keading to stay. Selene slipping in beside her Omega, pulling the blanket around them. Falkirk giving them a soft smile before heading up stairs to change.

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Alec was in Russia meeting a long established contact, Zukovsky, the buyer to British Top Secret missiles being sold by the FSB. Falkirk was bit concerned, when Alec and James met up, it usually meant drinking, illegal bare knuckle boxing. Not to mention the general danger of an active investigation.

Shaking off the thought. Falkirk turned his attention to another wayward Double O who had resurfaced weeks after his mission had ended. The hard copy of Double O Nine's report in front of him.

When the Irish omega announced the Double O omega's arrival. Falkirk looked up as the blond haired man entered. Maloney wearing an easy going smile and bespoke light grey suit.

The moment he sat Maloney asked, “There's a rumour going around. Is Double O Six, pregnant?”

“Double O Six is not pregnant.” Falkirk informed waiting from Maloney to relax at the news before adding. “However.... Alec Trevelyan has decided to give up being Double O Six.”

“So it's true?” Maloney asked eagerly, getting a nod in response. Maloney cried exuberantly, “I'm not the first up the duff!”

“Double O Nine.” Falkirk snapped as only a chastising mother could.

“Oh, Get out. It's not worth it.” Falkirk snapped with a half smile and shake of the head at the other Omega's boisterous attitude and put Double O Nine's report in his out tray, there was nothing worth a proper bollocoing anyway.
“Brush up on your Russian, Double O Nine. There's an up coming mission, Alec was slated for it. James is now first choice, you're second, depending on scheduling. So be ready.”

“M.” the Double O acknowledged and took his leave.

Unexpectedly, a few hours after one Omega left his office. Another was sauntering through E-Branch. Where 009 was a broad shoulders man pushing 6' 1”, with a non omega physique very smilier to James', perhaps a little less stocky looking. Stuart Thomas was traditional Omega, petite, with floppy blond hair, sharp face with the lean physique of a ballet dancer.

Pressing the intercom on his phone, before the man reached Darren's desk.“Send him in!”

Falkirk smiled cruelly, thrilled at seeing the omega freeze when their eyes met. “Mister, Thomas! Sit!”

The omega jumped into the chair, surprised by the move as if his body was doing something without his consent.

“One dose not just appear, Mister Thomas. What happens if there are loose ends, and you are here when you are still needed in Rio de Janeiro?”

“Sorry, Sir!”

“M! We are not a military. I am M. Yes, M! No, M! Three, bags, full, M!”

It was a small and almost petty point, but it was the start of the supper royal bollocking the omega endured. From the bollocking for not following procedure and just pitching up on the door step(the only genuine flaw Falkirk had with the man's conduct). He then moved on to the mission, making the omega squirm while Falkirk checked the details then confronting Thomas on what occurred during the mission.

Having learned from the best, by the time Falkirk had finished tearing apart the Operative's conduct, Thomas was fearing for is life, freedom and future.

“Dismissed! Double, O, Six.”

Realising how he had been addressed. Thomas darted out of his office with barley concealed excitement. Going to the door, calling, “Yes, M. Thank you, M.”
Passing of 006: Holiday

Chapter Notes

Thanks for reading. All the Kudos and comments.

The start of this chapter turned a bit more into 'Sex and the City' than I intended. Only ever caught a single episode but it was enough to scar me.

The Carrington Villa in this chapter was from the game 'Perfect Dark' and difficult to describe, and will be making an appearance again later. I found a few images (not that good) along with a few of James' yacht, which I put on my tumblr if you want to see. http://fanficfanblog.tumblr.com a clickable link should be available at the bottom.

“I don't have anything” Falkirk grumbled looking through the closet while the recently returned James played with Andrew on the bed. Falkirk had plenty of clothing for the British climate but nothing for the Mediterranean island.

“Go shopping.” James said before wrestling his son to the mattress, lifting Andrew's shirt and pressing his lips the the stomach and blowing a raspberry. Along with the wet sound James was making, Andrew was giving a high squeal punctuated with a rapid woodpecker type laugh.

Ignoring the two on the bed. Falkirk was still looking through his wardrobe. Grumbling under his breath, about his hatred for shopping, before admitting he needed to go. Biting the bullet, Falkirk pulled out his phone, calling Darren and Keading to arrange a shopping date. Since Mallory's appointment as Prime Minister, Darren had a whole new set of duties adding stress, not helped by the stories of his past conduct and occasional old photo of the omega belting an Alpha who went too far fuelling tabloid headlines.

With the arrangements made, Falkirk tossed his phone to the plush chair by the window. Leaping onto the bed with a bounce, Falkirk pressed to his alpha. Joining the wrestling match, Falkirk got his alpha onto his back.

With a big omega pinning his right arm and pressing up under his jaw. And a little omega sitting on his chest James submitting the duel nuzzling, letting the two Omegas have their fun pressing and rubbing against him.

Falkirk enjoyed the scent bath, where he just rubbed all over his Alpha. Andrew copying his papa, squirming and rolling all over his daddy, getting the nice strong smell all over him.

When the two omegas stilled. All three a rumpled mess, on a mess of a once neatly made bed. James holding his resting Omegas against him.

“So?” Falkirk prompted.

“So?” James answered innocently.

“Come off it. I know how to read a report. I know you and Alec are hiding something.”
James squeezed his Omega tighter a moment. Whispering into the nest of wild curls under his chin. “M was told everything he needed to know. Anything else, you'll need to ask Alec.”

Falkirk resigned himself to knowing things had been glossed over in James and Alec's time in Russia. At least the missiles went bang, safely far away from anything or anyone important.

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Having the spouse of the Prime minister and the head of MI6 shopping was a spectacle. Selene and Darren's MI6 bodyguard were the most inconspicuous of the security. The group of Alpha males from Special Branch protecting Darren, the MET's protection detail still insisting they protect the mate of the Prime Minister, stood out like sore thumbs.

As they were all fairly young, and Keading in particular had decided the shop they went to. Falkirk feeling a little out of place, in a shop with perfect model like shop assistance, and how Keading looked every bit as good as the assistants and even Darren was able to look good against them.

Browsing the racks. Keading held up a light shirt up to Falkirk.

“Move it grand pa” a snidely Alpha teen spat pushing passed the group, not helping Falkirk's discomfort.

Kelly, Darren's MI6 bodyguard caught the Alpha teenager's ear, forcing his head down and in her grating nasal voice, “You wana hiding, ya little gobshite?”

Yanking on the Alpha's ear Kelly set him towards a special branch guard. The Alpha's friends, unsympathetic to their friend's plight laughed at his humiliation. Swiftly the teenagers where escorted out in favour of the group planing to spend money.

Moving on Falkirk picked up the biggest pair of swimming shorts the shop had, with the brand written down the left leg. Darren pulled them out of Falkirk's grasp.

“No, my grand da' wouldn't even ware them”

Holding up a tiniest pair of shorts, they would make a narrow stripe across the crotch and hips. “These would work” Darren said.

“No!” Falkirk said adamantly.

Ignoring Falkirk, Keading plucked the trunks out of Darren's grasp, “What do you think, the day glow green, or the hot pink?” he said, spanning the fabric across his hips and turning to Selene.

She smiled and shrugged, “Both.”

“How about cabin boy chic.” Darren said holding up a pair of white mid thigh, narrow legged shorts.

At the insistence of the other two Omegas Falkirk tried on the shorts. Parading. Keading insisted Falkirk try on the size smaller, adding, “Go commando. The underwear lines don't work.”

Taking the size smaller back into the changing room. Falkirk slipped off his underwear too, and
changed. The shorts were tighter, Falkirk could feel them cling around the curve of his arse. Turning to look at the back in the mirror, Falkirk could even see the crease in the white fabric, following the cleft of his arse and they did show of the swell of his buttocks perfectly. Stepping out, Darren gave a wolf whistle Keading saying, “Much better.”

Keading went into the changing room next. Coming out, in the wide and short trunks. Falkirk bit his lip, the hot pick Lycra encased the other omega perfectly, making a pert little bulge at the front and a clinging to the ample swell of the omega's perfect arse. And Kneading made sure to parade in front of the predatory gaze of his Alpha, Selene licking her dry lips.

“I'm not sure.” Keading teased, pursing his lips in thought. Lifting his shirt to look at the affect of his naked tummy, the trunks and his long legs in the mirror.

“I am.” came Selene's husky voice.

With Falkirk and Keading both gaining a new holiday wardrobe. The three Omegas turned as one, all wearing matching dangerous smiles and set their sights on Selene. The colour drained from her face and Selene gave an obvious gulp.

“No.” she demanded, but her omega had one hand and her boss the other. Dragging her to the appropriate shop, across the road.

As soon as they were in the shop, Selene was left in the middle and the three omegas separated. Her dark blue eyes jumped from one omega to the others as they called from across the floor to each other and held up items.

Then the three omegas were closing in like predators. The Irish Omega stalking up to her from the front, the raven head of her omega in an adjacent aisle looking for a way to get to her, and her boss coming up from behind.

She was handed a mound of clothing. “I'm going to kill you three” Selene threatened as she was ushered into the changing room, and firmly closing the door behind.

“Come on, let us see?” Darren called into the row changing rooms.

“NO!”

“I'm going in.” Keading announced.

Falkirk and Darren tried to see when the door was reluctantly opened and Keading slipped in. Selene didn't parade as Falkirk had, much to the Omegas disappointment.

Ending up in a cocktail bar Selene stood by the door still annoyed at being roped into the shopping trip.

The three omegas took the stools around the small high table. A small plate of olives and cheeses was in front of them, along with the brightly coloured cocktails.

“What's she like?” Darren whispered, nodding in the direction of Selene. Like Falkirk Darren had never known the female form. And Darren wasn't shy about asking someone with practical knowledge. “How dose she, you know... knot?” Darren continued until Falkirk kicked him.
“We have only done it normally, she hasn’t tried to tie us.” Keading informed.

Before Darren could ask Falkirk snatched the straw form Darren’s drink and the umbrella from Keading’s, plucking the cherry off with his teeth.

“Alpha woman have a barb” Falkirk informed sliding the cocktail stick part of the paper umbrella into the straw. “When inserted, it ties the Alpha to her partner and secretes sperm at the base of the urethra to cause impregnation.” Falkirk informed getting a disgusted sneer from Darren.

Falkirk shooting back, “What’s so palatable about having an eight inch cock repeatedly shoved up your arse followed by a balloon swelling when he cums?”

“But it feels sooo, good.” Darren purred, then frowned and held his hands over foot apart. “Eight inches? James didn't look eight inches to me, more like ten.”

Falkirk demanded to know when Darren had seen James and was gently reminded of the interrupted heat cycle.

Keading, holding his hands a foot apart. “If you think that's ten inches no wonder you've totalled two cars” Keading shot starting an argument into Darren's driving skills. Falkirk insisting Darren was exaggerating about James throughout.

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The flight to Turkey was as stressful as ever for Falkirk. Andrew had been separated for his benefit during the flight and sat with Daniel and Alec. Cody played up a bit too, the last time going on a plane was also filled with stressful and scary memories, of being ripped from his home with an injured Papa.

Finally on terra firma Falkirk was able to relax. Carrying Andrew on his hip through the airport the group was met by the approved drivers. Arriving at the harbour James indicated a yacht Falkirk knew his mate owned but had never seen. James never really talked about the disastrous end to the Le Chiffre mission.

James and Alec inspected the sleek wooden vessel while Keading and Falkirk kept careful control over their children. Daniel and Selene inspected the provisions below deck. Soon under engine power the yacht pulled out of harbour and onto the sea. James issued instructions and delighted in ordering his long time rival about, Daniel accepted the instructions in good humour.

With the aid of a coolbox between James' legs he let the exited young alpha steer. With Cody occupied at the helm. Selene and Keading were lazing on the deck, near the bow while they could get some peace.

The gentile rocking along with the fresh air, warm sun and lapping of waves against the hull was doing wonders on Falkirk's stress level. Closing his eyes Falkirk leaned back against the bench, in the sunken area around the wheel. After the excitement of the day Andrew had dozed off and was sleeping in the cabin below deck.

“This is how man should travel.” Falkirk mused to no one in particular.

For being the largest person aboard Daniel’s light footfall where barely audible as he moved beside James. Curiously Falkirk cracked an eye as the two men remained silent. They where looking at a
point on the fading Turkish coast.

“You can just see that cove from the Island. The irony did not escape me.” Daniel said quietly to the man beside him.

“If you had bolted for the island we would have passed in the night.” James said, before something made him turn and see their audience, Falkirk watching them from where he lounged along the bench.

“It's the village I washed up on...after Eve.” James informed rubbing the scar on his abdomen unconsciously. As Falkirk stood, Daniel backed away. Coming up to James the Alpha wrapped an arm around Falkirk pulling them close.

Looking, Falkirk barely able to make out there was even a village from this distance and getting more indistinct by the moment. They stood until the village disappeared into the landscape and then the landscape became indistinct. Reluctantly Falkirk pulled away when an unhappy mewling came from the small hatch leading below deck.

Retuning with a happier, changed and fed baby Falkirk could see an island coming into view. Gradually and steadily the island got bigger as the yacht approached.

Alec sticking his head out of the hatch called, “A warning over the radio.”

Daniel climbed down the ladder into the galley, forward was the living area and the main cabin at the bow. To the right was a built in desk with the charts, radar and radio. Daniel lifted the small microphone with the spring lead attaching it to the radio, in the bulkhead.

“Danielle! That you?”

“Bonjour, Daniel. Welcome back, I await your arrival.” a French woman's voice called.

James organised the lowering of the sail and switching to the engine before he then relinquished the wheel to Daniel who knew the area. Approaching a cove between two high rocky cliffs. A harbour wall looking like it went right across the width of the cove. Not until they were close could you see the harbour wall on the left stopped about three quarters of the way across. The wall on the right disappeared behind the left wall. Steering into the short passageway between the over lapping harbour walls, the yacht entered the sheltered harbour.

Daniel steering towards the wooden dock that stretched out from the villa. The Villa itself was more like a compound, built right along the width of the cove, made of several sprawling and overlapping levels. Done in pale colours with terracotta roofs. A tall wind turbine sticking up and spinning gently.

The moment the yacht pulled up to the dock. Daniel jumped off. Greeting the woman, in very short shorts and sturdy hiking boots and tight vest. Daniel then introduced Danielle Rousseau, the senior Carrington Institute researcher who ran the island.

Falkirk offered his hand to the woman first, followed by the others, he then accompanied the two. At the end of the dock, where there was a low single story part of the villa, Daniel flung the double doors open and called for everyone to enter through that door.

The three then bypassed the door and walked along the path between the sea wall and the building.
until it opened up into a court yard, with the wind turbine, an external set of stairs led to an upper level of the villa, and at the opposite side the start of the small stretch of beach that ran along one side of the cove to the harbour wall.

Up the stairs they entered directly onto a kitchen. Falkirk's eyes darting about in curiosity. The balcony kitchen and seating area looked down onto the lower level of the villa where the others were staking out rooms on the floor below. A corridor that connected to the kitchen, with windows looking onto a small cloistered garden. Daniel mentioning the main bedroom, study and library were at the end of the hall, but he opened a door on the right onto another external stair case.

Falkirk stopped just at the top. This was the highest level of the Villa, with the two levels below, and he knew there was a bunker network underneath.

“Your grand father built quite a place.” Falkirk mused.

“Great for hide 'n seek. I know every nook and cranny of Seagate Castle, but here I always thought there was something I had overlooked.” Daniel added, with a wistful smile.

The deep French voice of the woman purred, “Multiple points of entry and escape, multiple routes to every part of the villa, with blind spots and the defences. It's like your grandfather was prepared to defend himself from something dangerous.”

Daniel and Falkirk looked at the woman. Both able to figure the villa was a place of final stand too. Daniel adding, “The bunker pre-dates the atomic bomb, but I'm sure it could survive a hit from one.”

With the brief conversation over, the three entered the top level, a huge and formal L shaped living room, with a massive dinning table that was dwarfed in the area. There were three sets of doors, the ones they had just come in, to the far end was a doors out side. Beside the doors at the far end, an internal set of stairs that Daniel said would lead back to the kitchen by a more winding internal route.

The large set of double doors, Daniel descried as the front door opened onto a courtyard. Men were mounting quad bikes and pulling out of the courtyard, heading into the dense jungle of the island. Daniel gave the woman a hug and watched her mount a bike and disappear through the gap in the perimeter wall. Daniel flipped open a control box on the wall and punched in a code into the panel causing a thick solid wedge of metal to rise up from the ground to close the gap in the wall.

“Couldn't she stay for a while?” Falkirk asked.

Daniel shook his head. “They probably came yesterday to prepare the villa. It's a hard three hour trek, or five by quad bike to Pearl Station.”

Falkirk nodded in understanding. Looking at his wrist watch, at five hours it would be getting dark by the time the others got back to the research station on the opposite side of the island.

With Daniel, Selene and James unloading the yacht. Alec had been given the lighter loads. Falkirk lead the way as he and Keading explored the villa pacing out the territory. Andrew secure in Falkirk's arms while Cody kept up as best he could.

On the middle floor, with the kitchen, Falkirk followed corridors around the cloistered garden, looking into a library, a study, and poking his head in the main bedroom where Alec and Daniel's
bag had been dumped on the large bed.

“No windows?” Keading said. He was right apart form the communal rooms, like on the hall with the kitchen balcony and guest rooms coming off it, or windows around the cloistered garden or the lounge upstairs.

Falkirk nodded. “I don't think Daniel's grandfather wanted surprises if he ever needed to hide here. I suppose intending to be the the resistance to the Nazi invaders made him a little paranoid.”

In the topmost level, the L shaped living area. Falkirk poked his head out the door, that hadn't been described as the front. From his elevated position he could see across a large courtyard, to a high pale wall. A gap in the wall allowed access the the observatory high up on the cliff and he could see a ring the wall made around a helipad.

Knowing there was plenty of time Falkirk went back inside and retraced his steps. Despite Daniel giving him a master code Falkirk didn't take Keading into the subterranean bunker, but did explore the lowest level of the villa where the locked door to the bunker was located. It was somewhere Falkirk planned on going with Daniel beside him, just a little worried what might be hidden down there.

Beside the entrance to the bunker, Falkirk and Keading found a room directly under the dock, which Falkirk already loved. The low ceilings giving it a cosy feel rather than claustrophobic. The sea lapping at the floor to ceiling windows with the dock stretching out above them blocking the light. Keading confirmed Falkirk's suspicions.

“This is a nesting site.”

Cody seemed fascinated pressing his nose and hands against the window as the water rose and fell against it. “Fishs!” he shouted, looking to his Mom and pointing to the window excitedly.

“Fishes” Keading corrected automatically. Coming over Falkirk and Keading waited and when a wave hit they did get a clear view underneath the water, including the fishes. Praising the young Alpha for his observation they let him watch until Selene could be heard shouting for them.

Arriving in the kitchen James was sitting on the couch drinking a beer, shirt open. Alec pressed a cold can to his face, as with most male omegas he no longer liked to be shirtless while pregnant. Daniel appeared, having changed into loose cotton trousers and loose billowing shirt. Selene appeared as well in a bikini top and sarong, making Keading blush.

Issuing a wolf whistle James received a growl from the woman. Falkirk slapped the Alpha's thigh for good measure. “She's the one posturing” James defended.

“So, is that why you've been hitting the gym and dieting?” Falkirk shot to his mate.

“I'm just living healthily.” James challenged.

Growling Alec pushed himself up. Grumbling, “I'm going to change”

Alec returning, in long spandex type shorts clinging to his thighs and a loose shirt hanging partly open. Falkirk glanced at the man's belly, there was a definite softening over what should be a defined six pack, Alec's chest was covered but still looked broad and solid and more typical to Alphas.
With Selene hinting she wanted to hit the beach. James, Falkirk and Keading got their children and headed down to their rooms on the floor blow.

In a perfectly square bedroom, without windows, Falkirk looking spitefully as James pulled on the skimpy light blue pair of swimming shorts. The Alpha looking toned and perfect, Falkirk felt the old doubts about his own appearance resurfacing. Watching as James then pulled on a loose weave shirt and headed out.

Stripping off Falkirk refused to look in the mirror. His stomach(not fat) still had a slight sag with fading stretch marks. Pulling on a loose shirt and the cabin boy shorts. Getting Andrew into his swimming nappy and wide floppy hat to protect him from the sun. Falkirk followed his mate out

On the beach, joining Daniel underneath a parasol. Falkirk placed Andrew on the sand between his legs. James and Alec were halfway across the harbour while Selene and Keading had Cody swimming a short distance between them.

Glaring at Keading who looked great in his skimpy shorts, all lean and rounded arse (perfect male omega). His naturally darker skin tone bore no livid pink marks from carrying a child. Just a four pointed scar on his back to the right of his spine, but like James it added something rather than take away from the beauty.

Seeing the fun Andrew broke away for the water the moment Falkirk let go. Pulling him back causing a whine, Falkirk placed the plastic bucket and spade in front of the boy. Andrew took the spade from his papa and sent it flying as far as he could, then squirmed and fought to break the hold on him.

“Not taking him in?” Daniel asked casually as he looked over the top of his sun glasses and put his book down.

Falkirk knew the Alpha was disguising the fact he wore prescription glasses by using the tinted lenses. Shrugging. “Perhaps in a minute.” Falkirk tried to deflect.

“Is that why you were glaring at Keading's pert little behind?”

Falkirk admitted his problem with his body and acknowledging it was silly to be concerned but unable to dismiss it.

“No one is perfect.” Daniel reassured.

“May I present exhibit A, B, C and D.” Falkirk shot back indicating Keading, Selene, James and Alec.

“They're not perfect either.” Daniel said. It took Falkirk a moment to see Daniel was talking about their scars. James and Alec had a multitude. Keading a single bad one from Moran and Selene even had a few. But Falkirk didn't see the scars like that. To Falkirk it was their bodies, fit and healthy, not having to sit at a desk most of the day then sit at a desk at home and read before going to sleep. They got to go out, go to gyms.

Knowing what Falkirk was really getting at. “Together?” Daniel offered standing. Popping the couple of button holding his shirt together Daniel stood, like Falkirk himself, Daniel was a little soft round the middle and sagged a little around the chest. Like the others there were scars. A
scattering of old deep wounds that had faded over time with some big and deep ones on the Alpha's back, like pockmark of shrapnel wounds.

Falkirk removing his shirt and doing the same for Andrew. Applying another coat of waterproof sunblock to the child. “dataDyne?” Falkirk asked while rubbing the lotion on to his son's skin skin.

Frowning. “You don't know?” Daniel asked. Getting a shake of the head in answer Daniel continued, “Assassination attempt just after I joined MI6.”

“Oh! Mossad. I didn't realise it was that close.” Falkirk said. Daniel just nodded.

In the shallows Falkirk and Daniel lowered themselves into the gently lapping water. Andrew thrashed when he couldn't feel the bottom and clung on to Daniel's arm while Falkirk encouraged his son to move towards him. Slowly Andrew got more comfortable in the water, feeling safe enough to not cling to Daniel's arm, but only so long as he could feel the adult's touch.

Daniel's wearied breath was all the waning Falkirk got just before an arm wrapped round his middle and was dragged below the surface. Resurfacing Falkirk spluttered and hissed as he splashing James in retaliation.

Seeing his Daddy holding his hands out to him, Andrew splashed and kicked towards his alpha. Moving through the strange new stuff, that he hadn't quite realised was the same stuff he was bathed in. Half way between the two Alphas James took over supporting Andrew from Daniel.

Breaking away from the family, Daniel crossed the distance to Alec with long powerfully strokes. James took over Daniel's duties in the swimming lesson until Andrew started to lag. Taking Andrew into his arms James walked up the beach, muscles glistening and rippling in the sun as he emerged.

“Poser!” Falkirk shot.

A wolf whistle sounded, James glared at the source, Daniel treading water beside Alec.

“I thought you wanted to attract attention?” Falkirk whispered coming up beside James.

“Not his.” James spat. Fixing his predatory gaze on Falkirk “And it's called posturing not posing.” James purred and wound his strong arm around his mate's narrow waist and sealing their lips in a searing kiss.

Falkirk the least experienced with the sun and concerned about Andrew was the first to abandon the beach. Daniel, the man who worked underground most of the time followed him into the house. With the Mediterranean sun reaching its peak, eventually everyone found their way inside.

Alec pulled out a beer from the fridge pressing the cool glass to his neck. A clearing throat, it took Alec a moment to understand what Falkirk was getting at. Realising Falkirk was looking at the bottle Alec growled at the bottle and switched it for a can of coke. "I do have some self control." Alec shot to the mother hen of an omega.

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From the beach stretching down one side of the cove, the harbour dropped and was very deep on the cliff wall of the other side. It allowed the yacht to moor inside easily. But, as Falkirk's stomach
knotted it allowed for what the more daring were going to do.

Standing on the dock, looking out to sea, the beach was on Falkirk's left, and on the right high up on the cliff was the observatory. All that could be seen from where Falkirk stood, with Alec, Andrew and Cody was an alcove cut out of the rock face.

Then a large man appeared at the alcove. Bare chested, the size and beard covered face identifying Daniel. The Alpha launched off and out. In a graceful downward curve he fell, the Alpha hit the water with a small splash.

When the dark head broke the surface. Alec let out a piercing whistle of excitement and support.

'One down, three to go.' Falkirk thought.

Daniel cleared the landing zone, remaining in the water. Falkirk looked to the alcove and saw a small and lithe person, in bright pink and skimpy trunks. Keading crouched and lunged forward, spinning and somersaulting in mid air, entering the water with a tiny plop and barely a splash. Falkirk clapped, until he saw how Daniel was moving across the water and panic welled. Even Alec tensed. And Selene and James were looking over the edge of the Alcove.

It was hard to see, but Daniel's deep laugh bounced off the walls. Keading's annoyed voice followed the laughter.

"NOT! FUNNY!"

Alec started chuckling. Falkirk was a little confused. Alec then called loud and clear.

"Teacher teacher, I do declare. I see Keading's underwear. OVER THERE!"

Falkirk looked to where Alec was pointing and saw the pink fabric floating a good dozen or so meters away from the Omega and Alpha in the water. There was more laughter, from Falkirk, Alec and the two alphas high up on the cliff. Daniel closed in to the lost trunks and flung them through the air to the embarrassed omega. The omega sinking a moment as he put them back on. Resurfacing, Keading whipped his head to fling the sodden hair off his eyes. Alec then went to the edge of the dock, helping the omega out of the water to join them in watching the last two.

Selene was next. She stood a moment, in the dark bikini. Then she too jumped but rolled a bit far and entered the water with the biggest splash so far. Keading clapping and bouncing in excitement.

Falkirk's stomach knotted. James taking his place and lunged out, holding a pose with his arms out and back arched. He then moved to a dive position but like Selene he over rotated and was rather ungraceful as he hit the water with legs kicking frantically. Falkirk froze, everyone else laughed. Then the head of short blond hair broke the surface, the crystal blue eyes glaring and Falkirk could finally laugh too.

James pulled himself up onto the dock, with tanned muscles rippling and glistening with the sun and water. Falkirk was swept up in the strong arms of his wet Alpha. Lips brushed Falkirk's ear. "Sure I can't convince you to try?"

Over the past few days, James had taught him to dive, from the dock at first. Then from the sea wall, nearly two meters high. But the the end of a higher wall used to block the breeze onto a court yard, was as high as Falkirk had managed at about four meters. The twenty-five meters of the
alcove was not even something Falkirk was going to consider.

But looking at his Alpha's hopeful expression Falkirk offered, “I will go to the pool, to practice and when we come back, I'll try.” Falkirk said, for his Alpha's benefit.

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One week into the holiday James and Alec boarded the boat to go do a shopping trip for fresh goods. In the subterranean bunker, a huge network of man made caves and caverns. Inside the deepest cavern, there were two glass greenhouse like structures. The one Falkirk was in held the control room for the villa's defences.

The technology was a rather strange mix of fifties like, but state of the art. Heavy metal consoles, in dull military green with large screens. Some stations with ominous labels like 'Defence turrets' and 'Missile Control'

On the sloping screen Falkirk watched in fascination as the tracking system showed the progress of James' yacht via radar and cameras. Other near by craft were shown, a fishing boat was flashed up and given a threat score quite low.

A ping sounded as another fishing boat appeared and tagged with and amber score of '45%'. Navigating the awkward computer system Falkirk found two historical records. The boat had appeared for the first time two days ago. Using the island's cameras Falkirk zoomed in and saw a flare from concealed lenses from inside the open porthole.

Daniel appeared apparently the quiet ping had sounded throughout the house. Daniel inspected the feed as well.

“They're in sniper range. Issue a verbal warning?” Daniel said and nodded to the radio. Falkirk agreeing. “Give me five minutes to get to the observatory and five to prepare.” Daniel said running out of the glasshouse. Across the room of long life food stocked shelves, he pulled open a large heavy door, like an old fashioned bank safe, and emerged with a long sniper strapped to his back.

The tall Alpha vanished out the thick main and only door into the bunker. Keading and Selene joined Falkirk in the bunker's control room when they arrived.

At the ten minute mark Falkirk lifted the microphone “Island Almyra to TD5-523” Falkirk called quoting the number printed on the side of the long blue and white wooden boat, with a bridge at the stern.

Falkirk could see the olive skinned man in flat cap with thick arms coved in coarse dark hair, the captain gesturing to the radio and shouted to the below decks, indicating they heard. A pale man in loose white shirt appeared, shook his head and disappeared from view again. Falkirk sighed, recognising the regional FSB director.

“How's your Russian.” Falkirk said holding the microphone to Selene. “If you do not depart you will be hulled below the water line.”

Selene translated Falkirk's warning. There was more communications on board, the captain shouting to below decks.

Taking back the microphone, knowing Daniel was monitoring the communication. “If the tourist
reappears you are authorised to shoot.” Falkirk ordered. This time the captain looked to the island fearfully and pushed the throttle. When the tourist reappeared looking angry the wood exploded behind his head. Instinctively the man in white looked towards the island and source of the warning shot.

“Goodbye! Colonel Mishkin.” Falkirk ordered into the microphone.

Falkirk paced the library, an hour had gone by. The library, a rather large room with a square table in the centre. In his hands was his phone. Falkirk pacing, he needed to make the call and needed to have a tone of annoyance, anger and a little threat. Not the sheer emotionless, coldness and utter disregard he truly felt towards the man. Falkirk remembered every frustration Addison, Maloney, Alec, Sherlock and Mycroft had caused him and used it, quickly dialling the number.

“General Pushkin! I do not appreciate my holiday being interrupted.” Falkirk snapped with the overt anger he wanted to portray. Tearing his counterpart apart for over an hour. Criticising the incompetence of the operation chief for South East Europe and Mishkin's ham fisted attempts to disrupt his holiday. Finally issuing a warning “The next time you disrupt my holiday, you will need to dredge the sea floor for your men. GOODBYE!”

The moment the call ended Falkirk lost the anger. His hate for Pushkin was a cold thing, not fiery.

Falkirk came out of the library and headed to the kitchen where Cody was happily wearing most of his water melon. Andrew was drinking from a tippy cup. While Selene and Keading were making sandwiches.

Coming up the internal stairs, Daniel just seeming to emerge from the end of the counters, stealing a sandwich from Selene's plate as he did so. “James and Alec are on the way back” he informed sitting beside Falkirk.

True to Daniel's prediction James' yacht pulled into the harbour a few hours later. With James back Daniel rearmed the security system to monitor anything approaching the island. Falkirk reassured him the FSB weren't stupid enough to pull the same trick twice.

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Grasping his mate's hand, James smiled. The main gate lowered and the two headed out. The reason Daniel insisted they bring long trousers and sturdy footwear clear. There was a trail leading from the villa compound but to call it a dirt road would be a flattery.

James pulled the omega close, after the Russians, his omega had been quiet. James for his part was willing to teach them a lesson too, now. M had truly started to relax and it had been destroyed in a moment.

“Where are we going?” Falkirk demanded.

Again James had dark thoughts, he was sure Falkirk would have been willing to experience the surprise in good time, but now needed to be his micromanaging, control freakish worst.

“Trust in your Alpha.” James said softly.

Falkirk thought, James had a rucksack with a pick-nick inside. And they were trekking, curving to the left, they should be heading back to the coast, further up the island from the villa.
“Stop thinking.” James teased. “Enjoy the trees, the flowers, the insects that would send Keading into a frantic mess.”

Despite himself Falkirk snorted out a laugh. Then saw the thing James was talking about. Freezing, his gaze locked on the trees with a strange white mist of massive cobwebs spanning them. In that moment Keading's phobia didn't feel so irrationally.

A tug and James pulled Falkirk into moving again. The jungle thinned and they emerged on a tiny shadow covered beach. It was an inlet, very narrow and long. Falkirk was taking in the high rocky walls, the wedge of perfect blue sea a little darker due to the shadow and the refreshing and constant breeze being funnelled. It was perfect for Falkirk, without the strong sun or heat.

Falkirk looked to his Alpha. James had been waiting for them to make eye contact again to drop the thick cotton shorts, standing there completely nude and unashamed. “Come on. Alpha's order, live a little.” James teased with a brilliant smile.

Indicating the open sea and the sky above, “What about...”

“Oh please. You'll be like every other celebrity, caught skinny dipping.” James teased. Then looked up to the wedge of sky, “Although I don't think a satellite image will be that clear.”

Falkirk couldn't deny the man anything, especially with those eyes sparkling and the beautiful smile aimed at him. Falkirk pulled the laces from his boots, watching James spread out a blanket on the sand and weigh it down.

By the time he was nude, James was reclining with two flutes of sparkling champagne. Falkirk joined his mate and the two lay looking at each other. Grasping the glass, Falkirk felt how cold it was.

James plucked a strawberry from a small container. A treat he had brought back the other day. Leaning forward Falkirk used his lips to pluck the fruit from the other man's fingers. James stealing a kiss before Falkirk could pull back.

Falkirk rolled onto his back, watching the cloudless blue of the sky framed by the yellowish rock. Feeling the thick fingers of his alpha running through his hair. Lips pressed to his neck and Falkirk let out a contented sigh. Winding his arm around James' neck, Falkirk pulled the Alpha to his lips. A rough hand reached across Falkirk and ran down his side, James' arm then bumped against his straining erection.

They pulled apart, Falkirk still tasting his alpha along with the lingering strawberries and champagne. And he was caught by the hungry gaze of the Alpha.

“My beautiful omega.” James purred and brushed the omega's floppy hair off his face.

Falkirk felt the butterflies in his stomach. He may doubt his appearance but looking in James' hungry eyes, almost nose to nose, there wasn't a doubt James believed what he was saying. “Your omega.”

Their mouths clashed and tongues fought and explored. Falkirk felt the Alpha's weight press on him. Falkirk gasped as they separated, the alpha's hands leaving trials of burning fire over his skin. James moved onto his neck, and Falkirk screamed almost cumming without being touched as his
Alpha’s teeth left a livid mark.

Giving a broken moan, “More!”

James let go, licking over the flesh he had marred. He moved between the omega's legs, and Falkirk crossed his ankles behind James’ back. Sitting back on his haunches, looking down on the omega spreading out before him. Breathing deep, the pheromones and the body under him having built the alpha up to a thrumming high.

Falkirk's back arched, his hands scrambling and digging into the sand. The stretch of his body, accepting his Alpha's desire. Every thrust into him fuelling Falkirk's deep gasps as his body tingled and tightened. With James moving on top of him, Falkirk felt his dick being brushed and it only took a few more brushes before he came hard.

Coming too, after his sudden nap, feeling his Alpha's weight on top of him. The familiar feel of the cock anchored sealing him and releasing its cum. The cramps squeezing James and milking the Alpha. Falkirk wound his limp arms around James' neck and pressed his lips to the man's rough cheek. Getting a contended groan in response.

When they separated, James held out his hand and the two walked into the surf where they swam and bathed.

Packing up in the late afternoon. James insisted on carrying everything. Falkirk relinquished everything to the man wanting to be the chivalrous Alpha. Hand in hand the two looked back at the secluded beach, shared a kiss and headed back.

--

The growing temperature forced Falkirk inside second, third technically. Leaving James and Daniel teaching Cody how to dive from the pier. Like James and Falkirk the day before, Keading and Selene had gone off into the island on their own.

Falkirk went in search of his son and his godfather. Falkirk passed trough the kitchen, passed the library and study. As he was closer to the uppermost level, Falkirk went up before going to the lower level. But he didn't need to, looking to the lounge part there was Alec.

The pregnant man was lying on a couch, with Andrew resting on Alec's chest both looking like they were asleep.

“Shh.”

Falkirk smiled at a very much awake man. One of Alec's hands was resting on Andrew’s back absently his fingers stroked the boy. It was a protective maternal image.

Coming to sit on the floor. Falkirk noticed Alec's shirt was open, giving him and Andrew skin to skin contact. Resting his hand on Alec's shoulder, feeling the warm skin.

“Could I speak to you?” Alec mused, quietly adding, “as M.”

When Falkirk agreed. Alec sighed and opened his eyes, looking down on the dark head of hair on his chest. “I’d like to start my maternity leave.”
“You can.” Falkirk said, but had a hankering of something more and said, “As your boss I can't ask this. But as your friend, can I ask why? Is it to do with what you and James glossed over in your report?”

Alec sighed and hugged Andrew to him in a defensive gesture.

“You were all controlled then happy for me. Keading too. Darren, when I told him was all excited and bouncy. Double O Nine, god I didn't think that Maloney could act so omega, he was popping more than Darren. Daniel was in a daze for ages, then I found him stuffing a book under a cushion, baby names. He's worried for for us but so excited, he keeps calm for me. The others tended be like Selene at first, thinking I was joking but Addison(005) congratulated me along with Masood(004) and Evens(008) when I had to resign my commission as a Double O. James, we had a baby shower in a St Petersburg, a strip bar, where he drank all my drinks for me. He admitted to suspecting something since shortly after your bonding, he noticed you didn't have an Adam's apple then noticed neither did I. Everyone was happy or shocked then happy, it felt so nice. But…”

Falkirk glanced at the man, still with a protective hold around Andrew. Falkirk lay a hand on top of Alec's. Alec admitting, “I did leave something out of my report. Zukovsky, one of the dancers in his club scented I was pregnant and told him.”

Falkirk cringed, thinking of a gangster knowing how vulnerable Alec could be in the dangerous situation.

“From the first meeting, Zukovsky had this pet of an Alpha, Mr Bullion. I beat the little creep the first time I met him and he never dared looked my way again. That day, when Zukovsky congratulated me. Mr Bullion looked at me again, like he had won, and gave me a once over like I was a piece of meat. I hit him so hard I broke his golden teeth.”

Falkirk laughed, he couldn't help it. “I'm sorry, I'm sorry. But belting an Alpha is not an omega response.”

“No I suppose it's not. But he got to me.”

“And you broke his teeth.”

“Golden teeth, that's Mr Bullion's hallmark.”

Falkirk smiled and Alec shared the smile with him. Deep down Falkirk had seen the same reaction any omega had, even when male an Omega wanted to be mother, even the non traditional Omegas like 009 and it would appear even the ones who weren't fully omega. So Falkirk affirmed, “You're going to be a great Papa. Maternal, like you're doing now.” Falkirk squeezed the protective hand on Andrew for emphasis.

“I remember my papa, or was he my dad, dong this. I don't know which one was which.”

“Because they were both omega men?”

Alec nodded. “I remember one, a bit, he was always rushing around and grumpy. The one I think of as my Papa I remember better. I liked holding his black hair.” Alec grasped a lock of Falkirk's hair for emphasis. “I think I was sick. I remember being held against my Papa's chest, skin to skin and thinking he was so cold and being scared and holding onto the strand of long black hair. You'll be godfather?”
The sudden question took Falkirk by surprise. But shouldn't have been unexpected after Alec had been contemplating his dead parents, past and given their friendship. “I'd love to. But I thought it would have been Daniel to ask me.”

Alec gave Falkirk a smile. “For the sake of pack harmony. Daniel is asking James.”

With Alec in a talkative mood, Falkirk asked, “So how did it start, you and Daniel?”

“It was when you were working with Daniel. He just glanced at me and I felt attractive... beautiful.” Alec answered with a bit of a blush. “That was after I had seen the state he left James in after a fair fight. It helped that he was bigger than me, nice, treated you well, flirted before knowing I was...indetermin...you know.”

Falkirk giggled. At what should be a classic description of what an Omega looks for in a mate. Going up on his knees, so he could nuzzle the man. “Oh, you're just squishy on the inside, aren't you?”

Alec gave a playful growl and hooked his arm around the omega and held him close. “Only on the inside.” Alec's voice rumbled.

--

Everyone was lazing in the kitchen, on the chairs or couches. A sudden tightening of James' arm brought Falkirk's attention to the table. Andrew was at the edge, lifting one foot and putting it down. Falkirk felt the growing anticipation from his mate. But Andrew turned and continued to walk along the side of the table he was using for support.

Then Andrew turned back around and started walking, holding onto the table. And when he reached the corner he kept going straight. It was just a few steppes before falling but he managed them all on his own without support.

There was a moment of stunned silence. Andrew crawled back and pulled himself up. Again he decided on a run up but managed a few more steppes before his balance gave out and landed in a heap.

James launched up and was at his son's side. Helping him up, and trying to get a few steps from a standing start. All the time, with the praise of his Alpha Andrew was grinning and squealing his happiness.

--

Two weeks had felt like noting. Falkirk watched as Daniel set the timer to fully rearm the villa's defences. All in all it had been a good trip the only downside it was far to hot to build a nest with Keading. They had spent time in the room under the dock as the next best thing.

“Perhaps somewhere cool next time.” Falkirk mused as he followed Daniel through the house. The doors locking behind them as they went. “Perhaps I could convince Sherlock and the rest to come” Falkirk continued. Daniel made a non committal noise as he pulled the final door closed.

Catching Daniel's loose sleeve Falkirk looked him up and down. This was the first time Falkirk had seen him with a tan and he looked odd. “You look...” Falkirk trailed off unable to adequately
frame his question.

Knowing what he was getting at. “There may or may not have been a scandal a few generations
back, with a local.” he said indicating the open sea and the Turkish mainland that was out of view.

“A little caramel in the cream?” Falkirk teased.

Turning they looked to the waiting yacht and James called for them to hurry up.

Sitting on the recessed bench with Andrew in his lap Falkirk watched the island getting smaller as
they moved towards the Turkish port.

“Can't we just go straight to London?” Falkirk asked James at the wheel.

With a charming smile “Theoretically” James shot before looking to the others up front “They'll
have to swim though”

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Arriving in London it was nice not to be his usual pasty self. James, Alec and Keading had
developed glorious tans while Selene had just gone less pasty like Falkirk himself. Daniel on the
other hand gone a deep mahogany and if he didn't carry government accreditation would likely be
the subject of a random search.

Stepping out in to the drizzle and humidity of the London summer. Falkirk's car waiting with his
usual driver. Having enjoyed the holiday he now enjoying coming home. The door swung open
under Hudson's hand as it did every time before. “Welcome home, Sir” Hudson greeted.

Seeing the tea pot sitting in the lounge just waiting to be poured. “You're wonderful” Falkirk called
to Hudson.
Selene knocked on Falkirk's door. Pushing the door open, she said, "I have someone special on the line"

Picking up the transferred call. An adolescent voice came over, it had never broken in the traditional sense it was just slowly getting deeper. "I'm sorry for bothering you but..."

Recognising the voice of the teenager. Falkirk reassured it was alright. The teenager with MI6 designation G was clearly upset as he babbled.

"I tried asking for you and they put me through to... I don't know. They wouldn't let me speak to you. They didn't believe me when I said who I was."

Interrupting again. "You did well contacting Selene. Now tell me what is wrong?"

Listening as Cadet Windom laid out his problem, a group of recruits where picking on him and G went for the ringleader. It seemed a minor issue to Falkirk. If he washed out a recruit, every time a fight broke out there would be no one in he building. Falkirk reassured, "You will get a slap on the wrist, a bollocking, and told not to do it again."

"Lieutenant Horatio doesn't like me and wants me out. I'm doing better than I have ever done before, I really am." G pleaded, before going silent. Quietly hissing, "I have to go."

Falkirk pulled the receiver form his ear, the buzzing turned to a mechanical voice advising him to hang up. Putting the phone down with a frown. Falkirk thought, eventually his caution made him look to Selene.

"Find out about Lieutenant Horatio and what is going on." Acknowledging Selene went to fulfil his instruction.

Arriving home Falkirk could hear laughing coming from the lounge. Going through to the room. Keading was holding onto Andrew with the toddler gently placing a hand on Alec's huge belly. Falkirk regretting going for Omega Girl in the betting pool, sure whatever was inside was taking after its fathers.

Like Andrew, Cody was placing a small hand on the large stomach, fascinated at the movement inside.

Sliding in behind Cody and placing his hand over his brother's. Falkirk felt a rumbling movement as well. Falkirk asked after Alec as he felt the very active baby inside move. It had been months since the holiday and he had seen Alec. And it wasn't just down to the amount of time off Alec had
to take. Falkirk was sure Alec's pride made him not want to show the strain he was under, despite the offers Falkirk and Keading had made to help.

"Well if you're back Daniel won't be far behind." Alec said, bracing on the back of the couch to push himself up.

Falkirk had never been overly gracefully and sometimes outright clumsy. Keading also had his moments as did Maloney. Andrew often bounced off wall, especially when he was crawling but he was a bit better as he toddled about but when he went too quickly had been known to bounce into things like doors, walls, people. The trait common to Omega Males in particular had never really affected Alec until now. Knowing it was insensitive and nasty but Falkirk found it funny as hell to watch the usually sure footed man loose his equilibrium. But even pregnant Alec was still more graceful and aware of his surrounding than Falkirk ever was.

Despite Falkirk not having a hope in hell of supporting Alec if he fell, Falkirk still offered a steadying hand.

Alec wound an arm across Falkirk's shoulders, with the other hand grasping the rail as they went down the steps from the front door.

"Should you be driving?" Falkirk asked looking at the round belly, as Alec approached the Saloon.

"Bugger off!" Alec snapped.

A strange man in black suit stepped out from the servants entrance and passed Falkirk to approach the brand new silver Bentley too. Alec quietly growled at the man, his lips moving in what Falkirk was sure was Russian swearing.

Falkirk recognising a bodyguard and chauffeur, called to Alec, "I take it someone agrees with me." getting a growl from Alec too who then got in beside the driver/bodyguard.

After waving Alec off, Selene, Keading and Cody got into Falkirk's car and pulled away. Falkirk waited on the pavement to wave them off too.

Reading a report as he ate his meal the door bell rang. Hudson appeared before Falkirk made it out of the dining room. Mycroft passed Hudson and greeted his brother.

"Would you care for desert?" Falkirk asked knowing Mrs Bridges made enough to feed an army.

When Mycroft accepted the offer Falkirk nodded to Hudson to serve the next course. Retuning to the dining room Falkirk flipped closed the report in case Mycroft saw something he shouldn't.

Andrew called "Ha" from his play pen set up in the lounge to the new arrival.

Mycroft still looked to Andrew like he would explode any second. Giving the child a forced smile and nod Mycroft sat beside Falkirk. Hudson laid Mycroft's place and cleared Falkirk's main meal. Mycroft kept his conversation casual until after desert.

Falkirk unlatched the playpen and grabbed Andrew before he could make a break for freedom. Andrew grumbled and whined as Falkirk carried him upstairs. Mycroft followed Falkirk into the nursery and froze as he was handed his nephew.
In the stiff unsure grip and fixed with a frightened look Andrew quickly became uncomfortable and let out a wail of distress. Quickly Falkirk swapped Andrew for the pyjamas and towel.

Going into the bathroom Falkirk rolled up his sleeves and started filling the bath. Adding the mild bubbles Falkirk then prepared Andrew. Mycroft watched transfixed as Andrew was stripped, nappy removed and after checking the temperature placed in the water. A spray of water erupted as Andrew splashed and grab the bubbles, experience making him know they weren't edible. When Falkirk looked up, Mycroft had a soft smile with a look of sad desire.

Realising he was being watched Mycroft made his features neutral and fixed his eyes on Falkirk.

"The King is in trouble. He is not well liked and he is about to be thrown out." Mycroft informed.

"You can't protect him?" Falkirk asked casually. Andrew complaining loudly, as his hair was washed and the water was poured over his head to rinse off the bubbles, spitting and hissing as some of the suds got in his mouth.

"For the Navy your contacts are better than mine" Mycroft answered.

"How did you find out?" Falkirk asked pouring water over Andrew's head carefully, rinsing off the rest of the bubbles. Andrew wriggling and squirming to avoid the water.

Taking a heavy breath Mycroft admitted, "A Captain Collins was rather inebriated and indiscrete of the King's conduct. His bias in the matter was also evident. I am pulling in favours, to stop the press printing it."

Taking Andrew out Falkirk dried him off and handed him to Mycroft. This time Falkirk showed his brother how to hold the child securely. Falkirk put on the nappy and talked Mycroft through the process of dressing a squirming child.

"I'll make a proper uncle out of you yet" Falkirk threatened with a smile.

Now he had him Mycroft was obviously reluctant to let go of his nephew. Guiding Mycroft into the nursery and the large chair. Falkirk mixed up the formula and tested the temperature. Sitting on the chair's arm and brushed Andrew's hair Falkirk handed the bottle to Mycroft. Andrew was practically asleep by the time he finished the bottle and Mycroft burped him.

With a soft smile Falkirk watched his brother reluctantly place his son in the crib. Picking up the receiver for the baby monitor. Falkirk waited for Mycroft to precede him down the stairs. Closing the safety gates behind him.

"Don't worry about the King. He phoned me this morning and no one messes with one of mine" Falkirk said adamantly.

"When did he become one of yours?" Mycroft demanded suspiciously.

"Not long. Francis was concerned he didn't have the metal for military service. So I arranged for him to toughen up." Falkirk said leading Mycroft into the library to give the highlights from the King's time training with MI6.
Standing and watching the training room. Falkirk knew who he was looking for and what he looked like. The problem everyone was virtually indistinguishable. The blue tracksuits identifying those training. The instructors in red. And Falkirk himself in a bespoke three piece suit cut in a seventies style with his ever present pocket watch James had gifted him.

Selene hand come to him a few hours earlier telling him there was an operative being trained who had served with G's officer.

Marching into the exact centre of the room. Falkirk fixed a glare on the first instructor to make eye contact. When the instructor fell silent Falkirk fixed his eyes on the next. Catching on all the instructors stopped barking orders eventually those training also stopped and when he had the rooms full attention M called out.

"Lieutenant Archie Kennedy?"

With bravado, the man in question approached Falkirk. Ignoring him Falkirk walked out of the room making Kennedy run to catch up. As the room returned to activity Falkirk could already hear the rumours starting up. It never hurt to give the people something to talk about. Adding to his legend

Coming to a sudden halt. Falkirk rounded on Kennedy. Ordering, "Lieutenant Horatio and Commodore Pellew. You served with both of them. I want a full and frank appraisal."

The Beta was sweating and panting from his training but held himself ramrod straight. His sharp blue eyes took in Falkirk before he spoke.

"Horatio, despite the name is self made and has a chip on his shoulder the size of Ark Royal. Really doesn't like the privileged or upper classes. Pellew lost his son and developed a soft spot Horatio." Kennedy informed. Kennedy gave a more in depth assessment of both the Commodore and the Lieutenant before falling silent.

As grateful as Falkirk was for the information. He was concerned with how easily Kennedy conveyed it. Something must have shown in his face or demeanour as Kennedy added, "They are not my friends, nor did they earn more than a basic level of respect, sir. M!"

Giving the operative a weighing look before dismissing him Falkirk returned to E branch deciding to give him the benefit of the doubt. Back in his office Falkirk placed a note in Kennedy's file. Kennedy, would get a chance to prove himself. At some point Kennedy would be approached for some casual information and his career would hinge on his reaction, in a loyalty test.

In between the day to day running of MI6 Falkirk pulled together everything he would need. Calling G's other referee he agreed to come on the condition Falkirk pick him up from his club.

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Unlike the Diogenes Club. Roebuck's didn't recognise him and Selene had to strong arm the doorman as Falkirk breezed past, refusing to sign in or be signed in when all that was needed was an MI6 accreditation. A part of him liked seeing a sign marked private and just walking passed it.

Finding Roebuck sitting in a high wing back chair. As he came up to Roebuck a footman dared to approach. "Excuse me, I must ask you and your companion to leave. The police have been called" the Beta male demanded.
"My boy, you are addressing Vice Admiral Sir Thomas McLair" came a grizzled voice from an equally grizzled, old Alpha who looked round from the chair opposite Roebuck's. It took Falkirk a moment to recognise Admiral Hargreaves.

As the footman apologised and backed away Falkirk corrected, "Admiral is a ceremonial title"

"So are you going to tell me where we're going?" Roebuck barked interrupting the two Ms. "He gets me to do things without telling me what"

Taking the free chair Falkirk looked at the friend of M and her husband. "You supplied a reference for His Majesty King George the Seventh's application to the Britannia Royal Naval Collage."

After a few horsey chokes Roebuck got over his shock and Falkirk told him about the stitch up the King was receiving.

"Bloody unsporting." Hargreaves grumbled.

"So you're going to march in and give a disciplinary committee a joint bollocking?" Roebuck summed up.

With the manic gleam only an Omega or mother could truly master. "G has surpassed my every expectation and I will not let a bunch of bullies tear him down."

Hargreaves returned, "So Mother is going to fight his battles for him."

"In this case, YES!" Falkirk answered adamantly in a tone brokering no argument.

Patting his knees "We had better be going" Falkirk declared. Roebuck pushed himself up along with Falkirk.

"I suppose I could spare a few hours." Hargreaves said struggling to his own feet before adding "I relish the opportunity to have a chat." he said giving Falkirk a calculating look.

In his car, Falkirk with his back to the way they were going and the two old Alphas on the back seat. Hargreaves said, "My old man, would you kindly put your fingers in your ears?"

"Oh, of course. Right away" Roebuck retuned making no move, but to look out the window.

Clearing his thought Falkirk indicated the narrow seat between the two men. Roebuck taking the hint swung it up. "I would offer to pour but I seem to be at a disadvantage" Falkirk said.

Taking a sniff of the decanter. "You truly are your master's apprentice" Roebuck observed. "Bourbon?" he then offered the other Alpha.

"No Brandy?" Hargreaves complained in disbelief.

"I TOLD YOU. HE IS, HIS MASTER'S APPRENTICE." Roebuck reiterated more loudly. It was quite fun to watch the two old men bicker like an old married couple.

Accepting the offered glass from Roebuck. "Acceptable" Hargreaves said taking a sip. Remembering he wanted to speak to Falkirk. "Butler... I mean, a good man. If he hadn't gone off the reservation he would have had Mansfield's job when I retired."
After some idle comets Hargreaves mentioned General Pushkin. Calling an end to the line of questions Falkirk declared harshly enough for the ex-director of MI6 to understand, without stating it was out of his control, "General Pushkin has made his decision and will reap his just rewards."

"Defiantly his master's apprentice" Roebuck repeated off handedly.

The third time Roebuck had said the exact same phrases and Falkirk was becoming suspicious. More small talk and Hargreaves paused and Roebuck glared at the other Alpha, the phrases on the tip of his tongue. 'A warning' Falkirk thought.

"The trustees have noticed you made changes to the Archives." Hargreaves said and Falkirk's mood darkened further while his face went dangerously neutral. “He said you have been looking into the past and like others have started to leave a diary of your time.”

Pushkin, now the diary, Falkirk whispered. "I will have to speak with Mr Sixsmith, to see what the esteemed Archivist has been repeating. I will not hesitate to seal that room, with the trustees and records entombed for all time.”

Before Hargreaves could react angrily. Roebuck looked to the other Alpha, "I told you, his master's apprentice. And I believe Victoria warned you too."

Then Roebuck tried to reassure M, that this was the oversight every M had to deal with. "The Archivist reported you had initially threatened the archive as most Ms have. That you have spent more time down there than any M before and you had started a diary. He has not discussed anything else and you do have friends as trusties."

Hargreaves forced a pleasant smile as he moved on to other topics including the building that did not exist in Hargreaves' time as M. Falkirk casually asked about the infamous third 007 with Hargreaves glossing over the embarrassment and hallucinations of the addict.

Arriving at the Naval academy. The retired First Sea Lord, Admiral and M had no trouble getting passed security. With a little assistance they found the room where the king was having his hearing.

The guide knocked and entered. They could hear someone bellowing at the intrusion and then fall silent. Entering, the guide was placing some chairs out for the guests. G, in formal dress uniform and standing ramrod straight gave Falkirk such a look of relief as to be heart breaking. A throat clearing from the dark haired man sitting in the middle of the table made G jump and straighten up again.

Walking up to Commodore Pellew, the one sitting between two other uniformed officers. Falkirk placed a bundle of papers in front of him. "I expect this hearing to be just." Falkirk warned and joined the two other Admirals.

Pellew flicked through Horatio's emails and messages supplied by Falkirk, for a few minutes. They were to and from unknown addresses, then he came to one identifiable as a muckraking rag. "These are serious allegations." Pellew stated looking to Falkirk.

"Sir!" Roebuck said giving the rebuking correction.

"Sir" Pellew added. Lt. Horatio, a long and lean man with sharp narrow nose, accepted the
documents Pellew handed him and seemed surprised to see his personal email and phone records. There was a moment of anger from the Lieutenant, Falkirk calmly reminding all leaks and stories concerning the king were investigated as a matter of national security.

Roebuck explained proceedings to Falkirk as they observed. Horatio, glanced at Falkirk while confining his argument to the facts, intelligent enough to leave his biased opinion out of proceedings.

"Dose G get a chance of rebuttal or justify his conduct?" Falkirk whispered to Roebuck.

Nodding Roebuck said, "The panel will ask questions based on evidence presented"

Seeing things not going well for the King as he was out manoeuvred but fought valiantly. Because he did technically start a fight in which an instructor and two recruits were hospitalised. A part of Falkirk was actually quite proud, G had learned a lot from Selene, Alec and James.

"Why is it when His Majesty, is given a test, with no leeway in interpretation he is the most highly scored recruit. But anything that requires an instructor's opinion, he is uniformly given the lowest appraisals?" Falkirk interrupting. Addressing his question to the Commodore. Wearing a look of open curiosity Falkirk waited for the man to respond.

"It is not normal for there to be an audience. And I request observers refrain from disrupting proceedings." Pellew stated looking back to the king.

"Admiral Sir Thomas, is the most overt of your observation, but far from the only." Hargreaves warned the commodore.

"Prior to today, I have been approached several time as well. I didn't think I actually knew anything about the King though. But only today did I learned, I was his reference." Roebuck said with a smile.

This was not going well. "Well?" Pellew demanded of his protégé.

"While physically adept Recruit Windom has shown little aptitude and is highly confrontational." Lt. Horatio explained.

"He is an Alpha what do you expect?" Falkirk said in scathing dismissal. "I have to slap down every Alpha I meet. Just today I had to slap down my illustrious predecessor. Twice!" Falkirk stated indicating the Admiral on his far left.

As Lt. Horatio continued to justify his opinion he lost the respect of the two retired admirals. Most of what Horatio was arguing would be considered the general attitude expected of Alphas, males in particular. Like Falkirk had expected it was just the behaviour a CO had to deal with and temper in those under their command.

"It sounds very much like you are the one who is unable to maintain discipline." with that Roebuck's benefit of the doubt was gone.

Pellew called a halt and ordered the other panel members along with Lt. Horatio and the king out. "What is going on?" Pellew demanded.

Falkirk stood and approached the wide table at the front of the room. "My associates are not
wrong. You are being watched. More people than you know are concerned about what is going on." Falkirk informed coming to stand directly across the table from the Commodore. "The bullying of the king was expected. Not a coordinated attack from his Officers, instructors and the encouragement of the other recruits to bully the King with impunity. Are you even aware Lt. Horatio wrote up an instructor, a Chief Petty Officer O'Brien, who gave the king a positive assessment?"

As Pellew argued that two cadets and an instructor where hospitalised in the fight allowing his demeanour to become confrontational.

Fixing Pellew with a glare Falkirk could see the Alpha give a subtle scenting of the air and obviously familiar with an enraged Omega. "The situation became so dire G was given no other reasonable course of action but to defend himself, physically, three on one. Again have you even asked yourself why three recruits and one instructor were in a laundry room at 3am?"

Recognising a defending Omega Pellew pushed back. "I can not allow..." Pellew started before Falkirk interrupted "He deserves a reprimand not an end to his career along with Lt. Horatio. How many good recruits have you already lost because he took a disliking to them, eight that I know of." Falkirk demanded. Pellew flicked his eyes from Falkirk then the two still seated Admirals and nodded.

Calling everyone back in Pellew dismissed the panel giving recruit Windom a written warning. As everyone filed out Pellew called Lt. Horatio back.

In the hall G approached Falkirk with a smile on his lips and a sparkle in his eye. "Don't think you're going to get an easy ride" Falkirk warned. G stretched his head forward slightly. Falkirk made the young Alpha wait a moment before tilting his head up exposing his neck and allowing G to close the distance.

The nuzzle was punctuated with a short lick as G stepped back. Unable to meet Falkirk's eye "Thank you for coming" he said with affectation and embarrassment.

"Keep up the good work" Falkirk said patting him on the shoulder.

"I should be going" G said hesitantly.

"Off you go then" Falkirk said giving him a smile and a nudge.

Taking a few steps before looking back to Falkirk "Will you come to my turning out" G asked hopefully.

"I have already said I'm coming. Now go." Falkirk said waving him off.

Turning back to his two companions Hargreaves looked impressed while Roebuck seemed unsurprised by the display. Falkirk wiped his neck of the saliva from the old submissive gesture of thanks or sorrow. As Falkirk approached the men, the door beside them bust open and Lt Horatio bust out and charged down the corridor.

"Bloody impudence" Hargreaves grumbled.

"Sirs" Pellew said coming out of the room as well, nodding to the three waiting men in turn.
"I trust I will not be getting any more phone calls or visits?" Falkirk said getting a "Hear, Hear."
from Roebuck.

"No Sir, Sirs" Pellew responded to Falkirk and Roebuck in turn.

"Well back to the club." Hargreaves said heading back in the direction of the car.

"Well at least he shows wisdom in his mentors" Roebuck said softly to Falkirk, referring to the
king. Teasing, "I don't suppose you could wrangle a peerage?"

"I'll see what I can do" Falkirk shot back.

Back at the club Hargreaves wouldn't accept Falkirk's refusal much to Roebuck's amusement.
Entering the club Hargreaves signed Falkirk in as a guest and was shown to a lounge area. In
comfortable leather chair Falkirk sipped the bourbon. Luckily Falkirk didn't have any meeting
scheduled for today as it looked like the entire day was going to be wasted.

Hargreaves called over another Alpha. A tall thin man with dark hair and a thin moustache was
introduced by name and rank and as the head of the members committee. Hargreaves saying to
him, "Vice-Admiral Sir Thomas McLair would make an exemplary member." Before Falkirk could
object Roebuck seconded his support for Falkirk joining.

The thin man looked to Falkirk 'He's an Omega' or similar comment on the tip of his tongue.
Unable to see a way out he said, "I will have to ensure there is no violation of the charter but I will
see what I can do." and made his excuses to flee.

"What was that little string your father got me to pull, on your behalf? AWOL?" Roebuck
prompted the man about to leave. The thin man gave a nasty little smile and walked away. "Not
even a quarter of the man his father was, god rest his soul."

More time passed in idle talk and sipping their drinks. Until Hargreaves bellowed, "Rhett, MY
BOY!"

Falkirk automatically looked in the direction to see his deputy. Realising if Butler was here it
meant it was later than Falkirk thought. After spending another half hour Falkirk called a footman
over. Instructing the footman to call for his car. Falkirk brokered no protest from the increasingly
inebriated Admirals. Butler, to Falkirk's gratitude ran interference allowing him to escape.

In the car, Falkirk called to the woman beside the driver. "You can stay if you want?" Falkirk
offered Selene knowing Cody might already be asleep.

As Falkirk expected Keading had put both Andrew and Cody to bed by the time they arrived. The
found the American Omega staring transfixed as a blond bimbo screamed and ran about on the
screen, while absently eating a melting bowl of ice cream. Selene slipped in behind her mate while
Falkirk went down into the kitchen.

Hudson was having a cup of tea as he watched the news. Falkirk reassured he could see to himself
and made a plate of sandwiches for himself and Selene. Finding a bag of crisps as well Falkirk
placed everything on a tray and took it up stairs.

--
After spending his Saturday over seeing Double O Two and his mission destroying an encampment it was nice to wake up to James' advances. A problem came while the Omega was tied to his Alpha, the pleasant aftermath of their coupling interrupted by a wailing from the baby monitor. Uncomfortably Falkirk pushed out the intruding knot with some discomfort and ran to the bathroom to clean up. James complained about being abandoned.

Changing the sodden nappy, Falkirk fixed a bottle. As Andrew happily suckled a pair of arm wrapped round Falkirk's waist from the back. A nuzzle and a nip punctuated the erection grinding into Falkirk's arse.

"I want you, next heat!" James growled into his Omega's ear. All Falkirk could do was mewl and press back against his Alpha in response.

Over breakfast Falkirk thought about James' demand. Not since Andrew had been conceived had they spent a heat together. Beginning to make plans 'Send Andrew to Keading', 'Give Hudson and Bridges a paid and mandatory holiday' Falkirk listed mentally. The only possible problem, his cycles where common knowledge amongst certain circles and someone could try to take advantage of his vulnerable state.

It took Falkirk couple of weeks but everything was arranged. A Chechnian cell had suddenly found a supplier and the FSB where running in circles. A fix for several viruses kept some 'Allied' agencies from doing something creative. A swift warning to Mallory would keep the ministers in line most called him Urquhart's boy but only safely behind closed doors and out of Falkirk's earshot.

--

The time for Falkirk to start taking his suppressants came and went as all snacks in E branch became a valid target for the bulking Omega. Darren, ever vigilant had started stocking a ready supply.

"Gareth has mentioned children" Darren said casually.

"Mallory, what about you?"

The curly haired omega gave a shrug. "It's not like I don't want them, and Garth would make a great Da. But.."

"But?" "Her, she would use it as an excuse. I hate her."

Falkirk leaned back in his chair. Looking at the man standing just inside his office door. "You won't face your mother in law alone. I'm here. I'm sure Addison too would be willing to help."

"But Gareth's a mammy's boy at heart. When it comes to her, I've got bigger knot." Darren spat.

"I'm trying to tell you to use a champion, for Mallory and his mother. I know it's old and sexist but I can't face James, or Daniel but when I have a problem with one I can go to the other to sort it. And I'll do it, I can hobble Mallory easily and I'm sure Mother Dearest won't have a hope either."

Darren smiled. When it came to others, he could break their nose and fight but when it came to his
own Alpha he couldn't. “I'll think about it. Thanks you.” Darren said and slipped out.

--

"So have you planned anything nice?” Falkirk asked as he handed Hudson the bonus for his unscheduled vacation.

"A few friends and I are going to France. Mrs Bridges I believe is going to visit her sister." Hudson answered.

The sombre tone in which Hudson delivered the repose indicating that it was not a vacation but a debt to the fallen.

"I hope you achieve your goal and I will give Mrs Bridges my best wishes personally" Falkirk responded.

--

James was preparing the house for the heat and had banished Falkirk. Andrew was getting used to staying with Selene and Keading. Deciding to visit Alec Falkirk found himself on Daniel's doorstep. Letting himself in Falkirk found Alec swearing at his distended stomach.

"I want this fucking parasite out!” Alec growled at Falkirk as he entered the lounge. A groaning growl sounded before Alec pushed himself up. "I need the bog for the thousandth fucking time today."

When Alec returned Falkirk rested his head on his shoulder. "You're huge" Falkirk observed spanning his fingers over the stomach. The surgery had been preliminary scheduled for four weeks.

"I'm going to explode" Alec whined into Falkirk's hair as he nuzzled the top of his head. Then asked if Falkirk was about to go into heat. It was nice for both to sit back and relax with eachother.

"Mary has offered to come and help when the baby arrives" Alec said, not sure if it was a good or bad thing.

"Keading was a god send when Andrew first came home." Falkirk responded.

The moment was broken by Falkirk's phone. When Falkirk swiped the screen to answer, James roared loud enough to be heard by both without the speaker phone. "Where are you?"

When Falkirk told him "You were meant to be in the library" James shot back.

"I'll be home in twenty minutes" Falkirk offered. Letting James do his over possessive routine, Alec waved goodbye as Falkirk headed for the door.

Arriving at his front door it took a moment for Falkirk to remember Hudson wasn't there to open it. Swinging the door open Falkirk came face to face with James. The separation and lack of reinforcement of there bond had taken it's toll on the Alpha. Slamming the door Falkirk dropped his head and approached his Alpha, nuzzling his neck.

Instead of Andrew coming back James decided to take Falkirk out. At one point the opulent surroundings would have intimidated Falkirk, now it all seemed like pointlessness. The food on the
other had was exquisite, even the Caviar Falkirk had never quite developed a taste for but James adored.

James watched fascinated at the amount of food Falkirk was able to put away. He had heard from some of the instructors that the an Omega could breezed passed some of the endurance exercises due to their ability to go for periods of high exertion without sustenance.

Getting the driver to drop them off. James tucked Falkirk under his arm. Walking through the park the chill in the air indicating the change of season. There was a comfortable silence as they matched pace on the path home. Coming out of the gate they where on the end of their street. The tall narrow houses stretched into the distance. Without Hudson their house was in darkness.

The next day Falkirk could defiantly feel the approaching heat. His skin was sensitive and warm, his light clothing were itchy and restrictive.

Keading brought Andrew for a few hours he was ecstatic to see his Daddy but the change in his Papa's scent unnerved him. Keading reassured Cody had the same reaction on his first few heats.

Waving Andrew off. Falkirk decided to go for a bath to ease some of the heat in his skin. Coming out of the bath Falkirk dragged an unprotesting James into bed and lying skin to skin exchanged reaffirming caresses. Falling asleep was the last time Falkirk had a lucid thought before a hormone fuelled roller coaster left him sore, bruised and exhausted a week later.
Like an armed trap Daniel stood outside Alec's room. Standing beside his friend there was nothing Falkirk could say and saying the wrong thing could set the tense Alpha off. James was inside speaking to his oldest friend before Alec went in for surgery. If all went well in a couple of hours there would be a new pack member, if not Falkirk couldn't contemplate the thought further. Daniel started as Falkirk leaned against him and rested his head against the Alpha's shoulder.

The relationship between Alec and Daniel was never an overt one. Usually a softening of the eyes or a brief brush of knuckles was the most public display of affection Falkirk had ever seen. But at times like this, with the Alpha's body almost thrumming with energy that had no safe outlet, it showed how deep Daniel's emotions ran.

James came out and Daniel went back in for a moment before Alec was wheeled out. Falkirk giving a brush to Alec's hand as the trolley squeaked passed. A knot of worry formed as the trolley turned a conner and the squeak slowly vanished into the other noises of the hospital.

In a private waiting room. Falkirk felt like he was offering to make tea every few moments, the basic amenities sitting on the table a lifeline of distraction to him. James was in the corner looking out the window, with arms tightly crossed. James' posture screamed, that he needed a cigarette but refused to leave because he would not leave his omega and Falkirk wouldn't leave Daniel who had gone through a range of motion. The big Alpha having started off trying to meditate, then read the paper before giving up any attempt at being calm and pacing from, well pacing wasn't the right word, he could cross the room in almost one stride.

It was a couple hours before a nurse came in and called for Mr Trevelyan. Ignoring the misunderstanding Daniel sprang towards the short dumpy alpha to follow her. James and Falkirk tagging along, no force able to stop them.

“Everything went fine.” the nurse said, the Irish accent the most distinctive thing about her. Taking them into a room with several incubators it wasn't a surprise she lead them to the biggest baby in the room. “Takes after Daddy.” she said looking Daniel up and down as she removed the baby from the incubator.

Placing the precious bundle in Daniel's arms. “A not so wee boy.” she informed.

Daniel scenting the unnamed child. “Alpha” he said looking to James and Falkirk.

Approaching, Falkirk pulled back the blanket to see an almost bald baby, what little hair the baby had, had made one of those wispy spikes sticking up from the top of a large round head. The Baby's full round cheeks moved as the boy made sucking motion with his little pink lips. He was also fast asleep.
“Definitely yours. A right wee stoatir!” Falkirk observed.

James tried to see from his vantage point a bit further back, concerned his presence as an Alpha could set off the other Alpha, but none were on the edge they had been moments ago. Only once Daniel passed over his son to Falkirk did James approach. Winding his arm around Falkirk, James leaned over the other man's shoulder to see his best friend's son.

After the introduction to the new pack member, they where taken to Alec who was still out cold from the general anaesthetic.

“He should be waking up in the next hour or so.” the nurse informed.

The three stood around the single bed in the middle of the room. Falkirk thinking, not even after his worst mission did Alec ever look so wiped out. He clasped James' hand in support. Falkirk flicked his eyes to Daniel across the the bed from them, he had gone back to his deep quite worry.

Another nurse broke the oppressive silence by opening the door. He brought the baby in and placed him in the cot. “The doctor says there is no reason to keep him in the incubator.” he informed.

Daniel started jumping between the baby and Alec until James took up position beside his old friend letting Daniel focus on one concern and stand over the cot.

With baby and mate in one room, Daniel began to calm, able to see and watch over both. Falkirk dared leave one Alpha's side to approach the other, standing looking over the cot. “Have you got a name?” Falkirk asked.

“For Alpha male. Alec wanted something Russian, Grigori was his latest favourite but also liked Ivan. I was always fascinated by Roman mythology, Jupiter, Neptune.... I was wanting Julian.” Daniel answered. A horse voice pulled everyone's attention to the occupant of the bed.

“Yulian, final offer” Alec said blinking open heavy eyes. Daniel was at his side in a single stride. “You forgot the parasite.” Alec complained with a weak smile. Daniel spun away from Alec’s bedside and took a stride to the cot.

Distracting himself from the sight of Daniel acting like a headless chicken. Falkirk weighed the name on his tongue, “Yulian Trevelyan Carrington.”

James whispered in Falkirk's ear, “That's a bloody mouthful, he better learn to fight with a name like that. Fast.”

Visions coming to Falkirk's mind of the two alpha males pitching up at parents nights, sports days. A wired cartoon coming to mind of some alpha dad mounting off, and Alec getting into a fist fight and the newly named Yulian in typical alpha fashion shouting encouragements of, 'Hit him Mum.'

“Why!” Falkirk said, shaking his head to get rid of his imagined images. “My Mummy's bigger than any of your daddies, and my daddy's even bigger than my mummy.”

“Heard that.” Alec shot, voice getting a little stronger. With Daniel's help Alec was holding Yulian without aggravating his wounds.

Pressing to James, the Alpha's arms coming round Falkirk. They looked on the big Alpha perching
on the bed, supporting his child because his mate was still too weak to hold the baby on his own.

Both of the men on the bed, looking down on the small creature bundled in soft wool. Both wearing matching mesmerised looks of awe.

Q turned his head to press his lips to James' chin. Remembering what it was like when he saw Andrew for the first time. The overwhelming, loving, fearful joy. That they were responsible for a brand new life that they had created.

--

Waiting at the arrival gate the door kept sliding open and closed and Mary still had not come through. If it took much longer Falkirk planned to declare a terrorist suspect was entering and barge through. A small gaggle of Omega girls came through speaking so fast as to be incomprehensible. Approaching, Falkirk politely asked if they had seen an old Omega most likely in a tartan shawl and hat.

“Aye, Miss Marple.” came a harsh Scots accent before the speaker realised she had said something insulting and slapped a hand over her mouth.

”She got the boggy.” another said. The last explained the boggy(buggy) was the golf cart that ferried invalid passengers about.

Thanking them Falkirk headed for the information desk. The barely civil Beta woman seemed annoyed Falkirk had pulled her from the important job of staring blankly into space to do something. After an attempt that could barely described as half arsed she gave an insincere apology and said round the gum she chewed like a piece of cud, “Tried phonein’?"

Pulling out his phone, “Not what you know, it's who you know” Falkirk muttered. The recipient answered with a clipped, “DCI Lyne!”

“M, MI6.” Falkirk responded before asking for a favour from Stansted's head of antiterrorism.

A few minutes later Falkirk heard the radio of the information desk bleep and a code number followed by Mary's name and description being transmitted. A few moments later the woman at the information desk jumped and acknowledged the transmission for her, Falkirk able to hear that Mary had been found for himself.

The frosted glass doors opened finally, allowing the two armed policemen escorting Mary between them out of the airport's arrival section. The little omega chastising the younger officer.

“Back straight! Head up! And take your hands out from there.” she admonished. The young officer stood straighter, pulled his hand out from behind his stab-vest. The Older officer was holding in his laughter.

“Much better.” Mary praised and the younger officer gave a rather unsure smile.

Thanking the officers. Falkirk took Mary's bag from the older policeman and her arm. Glaring at Selene's amused smirk Falkirk casually asked about the flight. Apparently the driver who was to see her through the airport was 'overworked' and at Mary's insistence had gone to his next pick up and left a nearly 80 year old woman to wander an airport.
Outside of the automatic doors, Falkirk stilled a moment. With the arrogance of his profession and in clear violation of regulations a parking warded fixed a yellow envelope on the window of Falkirk's official car. The police escort and the chauffeur looked on bemused by his actions. The driver ripped off the ticket and threw away the unenforcible wast of time.

Falkirk saw Mary into Daniel's house. Ensuring she was comfortable with a cup of tea.

“Daniel should be back this afternoon.” he informed before saying his goodbyes and went to start his day at the office.

--

James headed into E branch carrying a several gift bags. Entering Falkirk's office. “Found this on my desk, think it's for Alec.” James said placing the bags on the guest chair.

As James was here and the only Double O not currently on assignment Falkirk handed him an 'Eyes Only' report. Coming round his desk to poke about the colourful bags as he did so.

“Sand, sand and more sand.” James complained.

“Nigeria, Nigear and Libya all the wonderful spots.” Falkirk said while reading labels from Evens(008), Maloney(009), Addison(005), Suzi Kew(001), Masood(004) and the 00 Branch Secretary Mrs Ponsonby. But what the wrapped gifts were, inside the bags was a complete mystery.

Getting the members of a terrorist cell coming by way of the asylum trail was the bread and butter of MI6. Falkirk informing, “Your primary target is Kamal. It's believed he has been given an order to arrange and attack on the tube network. You will intercept him before he even touches European, let alone UK soil. I'm sorry to say, you leave tonight, before Kamal and his friends vanish into the mass of asylum seekers.”

James gave a hum of acknowledgement, reading the details for himself.

“James, have you ever wanted to join the Hind Club?”

“Hardly. Why?”

“Roebuck got me an invitation. If you ever wanted to join, I would decline.” Falkirk answered.

Coming over James leaned close to Falkirk's ear. “Wild horses couldn't drag me into that den of old fossils.” he whispered.

Looking up Darren was openly staring at there familiar display of affection while the rest of E branch was sending them subtle glances. Rounding on James. “You're banned from this office. OUT!” Falkirk ordered without hostility as he pointed towards the door.

Going to the door James pulled it open and snapped a perfect salute and in a resonating voice said “Sir, Yes Sir. Sir!” and walked out.

“It's M and one dose not salute when not wearing a hat.” Falkirk called after his Alpha but the man made no indication he had heard.
Arriving at Daniel's house after work Falkirk waited for Mary. Holding the car door for her Falkirk closed it as she pulled in her legs. Circling round the back Falkirk got in the other door to sit beside the Omega.

“You want to say something?” Mary stated giving Falkirk a knowing glance.

Nodding “Alec isn't an Omega, he had a tough time. I am sure I don't know half of what he has been through and James knows even less.” Falkirk said quietly.

“I don't quite follow.”

Taking a breath not knowing how to be more diplomatic. “We should appreciate the miracle we have been given and not allow desire to court tragedy.” Falkirk said.

Grasping Falkirk’s knee drawing his full attention Mary gave him a weighing look. “Was Alec's condition that dire?”

“Alec took a considerable amount of time off as did Daniel. In the later stages I only saw Alec once. We did what they would accept but Alec is as much an Alpha as Daniel and he hates to show weakness, even to us.” Falkirk informed. Mary nodded and looked out the window.

Arriving at the hospital. They found another visitor in Alec's room. Asking the stereotypical questions and showing the appropriate level of enthusiastic interest Sherlock kept up the unusually casual conversation.

“What a nice boy.” Mary observed suspiciously, of Sherlock's atypical, normal, behaviour. She then approached the cot and squeaked and started cooing over the new arrival. “OH! He's just like his dad. He was a right lump too, when he was born, and when he grew up.”

Coming up to Falkirk, Daniel whispered, “Do you think he's a pod person?” As he indicated Sherlock by Alec's bedside.

Ignoring the speculation on his brother's oddity, or normality for someone else. Falkirk asked about John and got a shake of the head, indicating the doctor had not come with the detective.

Grabbing his brother's arm Falkirk made an excuse about getting coffee and pulled him from the room.

“You're going to give me into trouble.” Sherlock accused when they were in the hall.

“When a pattern of behaviour changes,” Falkirk started.

“A pattern often changes. Only when there is no obvious motivation is it suspicious.” Sherlock interrupted.

“So what is the motivation for your change?” Falkirk asked and got a dismissive shrug in response.

Recognising the challenge Falkirk marshalled is powers of deduction. As Mycroft was better at deduction than Sherlock, Sherlock was better than Falkirk. “To provoke Me? Daniel? Alec?” Falkirk guessed exasperated.
Getting a dismissive look, just a sigh and flick of the head. “Just tell me.” Falkirk almost whined. A slight softening of Sherlock’s features gave Falkirk a clue.


Not remembering due to his first heat with James but knowing about the time Alec spent detoxing Sherlock. Falkirk realised, “You’ve never relapse since Alec made you go cold turkey.”

Sherlock looked away. “He was the only one to see me through. Mycroft, Mummy, Daddy they just dumped me somewhere. Always the best but out of sight, out of mind.”

Falkirk hugged his brother briefly, pulling back before the alpha could get uncomfortable with the closeness. In his own strange way, Sherlock was loyal, rather devoted and cared a lot.

Returning to the room. “Did you know he was an Omega?” Falkirk asked.

Sherlock absently corrected, “Indeterminate sex. I deduced he was in love with James but not that he was an Alpha with traits of Omega.”

“James did.” Falkirk teased lifting his head and tapping the front of his throat where Beta and Alpha males had an Adams apple.

Entering the room Sherlock hissed quietly at his own stupidity, seeing the obvious missing Adam's apple on Alec's throat. The noise made Alec lift heavy eyes to the returned siblings before closing them again. Mary held the baby while Daniel slumped further and further down in the chair having dozed off.

Placing Yulian in his cot Mary gave her great grandson a proud smile before looking to the slumbering parents. With all quiet the three visitors slipped out.

Falkirk offering a lift to Sherlock. With a flail of coat and an upturning of his collar the detective rounded the corner and disappeared.

Falkirk's car stopped outside his house. Where Mary joined Falkirk, Selene, Keading and Cody for dinner. Selene promising to see Mary safely home after dinner. Stepping back into the house after waving off his guest, Falkirk swung the door shut.

With Andrew sitting in his lap. Falkirk recited a poem from memory as he watched the departure schedule on his tablet. Ignoring his Papa's voice, the little fingers reaching for the much more interesting screen and whining when his papa kept it out of reach.

When James' plane departed Falkirk placed the device down. Standing, Falkirk carried Andrew to his cot and with a brief nuzzle and kiss laid him down for the night.

“Bi!”

Falkirk looked to his son who had stood up. The boy rubbing his eyes, trying to fight the sleep trying to claim him. “Bye-bye!” Falkirk responded.
Picking up the phone Falkirk listened to Underwood, the office manager of Q branch as she called for help. Darren burst into his office informing, Hal (Head of the Hackers) was on one line while Rodgers (Chief Mechanic) was on another. Two department heads, and Q's Chief of Staff calling M was not a good thing and Rodgers was experienced enough to not be too reactionary. By the way Tanner was charging towards his office he could guess his message.

“Johnston, trouble brewing in Q branch” Tanner informed meeting Falkirk as he stepped out of the office. The Armoury Chief and ex Double O should be able to read a situation well enough to not over estimate as well.

Arriving in the long, wide, underground corridor of Q branch Falkirk walked past the doors leading to the individual divisions that made up Q Branch, heading for administration at the very end. The faux wooden doors slid open automatically onto the large and wide two story room. R and a group of division heads had surrounded a desk in the middle and where shouting, growling and hissing at each other.

“Well thought Q actually maintained order?” Johnston said quietly coming up beside Falkirk. Rodgers and Hal where also hanging back from the circling Alphas. Underwood was on the far side of the group shielding a few Omegas from the aggressive display. Everyone else had backed away to the edges of the room. Stepping closer, slowly one by one starting with R they began to notice M and overtly calm their demeanour. Peter an old friend from Cyber Division now R, bowed his head submissively towards Falkirk. Potts the head of fabrication and only Beta in the group snorted at the Alpha's conduct and held Falkirk in an impudent glare. Dr. Cordell, a chemist and the head of the non biological labs had never liked Falkirk and liked him even less since becoming M. Dr. Hwang head of the Biological labs was a man that didn't hate Falkirk but tried to ignore him.

“All division heads, Q's office.” Falkirk ordered walking passed them.

Ascending the spiral staircase to the balcony that contained the row of private offices, Falkirk walked into Daniel's. The desk and chair always looked comfortable for the big Alpha but on Falkirk they where of super villain proportions. M sat on the large red leather chair as if it was a throne, his hands resting on the dark wooden arm rests and crossing his long thin legs. Indicating those involved in the argument should stand in a line in front of Daniel's desk Falkirk let the other division heads stand behind them. Starting with Potts on the far right Falkirk calmly asked for his version of events. Preventing anyone from interrupting Falkirk listened to each in turn. The only one who did not defend their actions was R, “Our conduct was inappropriate and I failed to maintain professional charge.”

“I have heard more sense from children arguing over the rules of an imagery game.” Falkirk admonished. Hwang attempted to interrupt again. “Silence!” Falkirk ordered. It had been a few years since he was Q and interacted with these people regularly and his tone and demeanour had become harder in that time.

“You may all consider yourselves on final notice for gross misconduct. You will all apologise, to the entire branch for your conduct. Now go wait down stairs.” Falkirk ordered.

Calling R to wait the handsome blond Alpha immediately asked, “Do you wish my resignation?”
Shaking his head. “No. You are the best programmer we have.” Falkirk said adamantly before asking how Peter was coping with the absence of Q.

“Q is the big bad wolf, I was the approachable one. Now they think I am a push over.” R admitted.

“They are on their last warning, fire one.” Falkirk said getting a deer in the headlight look from the other man. "It's harsh and uncaring but when it comes down to it. No one is irreplaceable. And some need reminding of that fact.”

Falkirk waited in Q branch to hear R and the others involved in the public spat apologise.

As everyone got back to work. Falkirk decided to hang around for a bit, to make sure the spat was truly over. Pulling up a chair beside his old PA. Annie, more round faced with the same long wavy hair. She gave her old colleague and boss a smile. Falkirk noticed her changed scent and fuller figure.”Why didn't you tell me?” he said with a pleased smile.

“Oh I didn't want to bother you.” Annie said with a bashful simile, unsure of the new dynamic with the omega that was now M.

“I'm surprised Darren didn't tell me. He and Ewan are the biggest gossips in the building.” Falkirk said.

“Ewan doesn’t work here.” Annie hesitantly informed. Getting into the gossip Falkirk leaned in demanding more. “He quit after he and Peter went public. They're expecting their first too.” Annie said.

It was strange to think of everyone moving on without him knowing about it. Falkirk pulled a notepad from Annie's desk and made a note for Ewan and Annie, he would need a belated bonding gift for Ewan and baby warming gift for both Ewan and Annie. Moving on Falkirk asked about Underwood.

“I think she has become an official spinster” Annie whispered as the hawk eyed Omega in question prowled the room, still with the 50s style wing-tip glasses over her watery blue eyes.

Having a brief discussion with Underwood Falkirk thanked her for her vigilance and ordered her to report daily to Tanner on the events in Q Branch while Q was on paternity leave.

--

“I was bloody joking!” Roebuck grumbled as Falkirk sat down across from him. The opulent surroundings of the Hind Club was quite homely despite the mass of indistinct scents of Alpha males.

Getting comfortable in the low chair, preferring something more upright. “I don't quite follow?” Falkirk responded.

As a footman approached Roebuck barked,“Bourbon, straight, learn it.” then turned his attention to Falkirk, “The honours list my boy”

“Ah, Mallory owes me more favours than he is willing to count. It's nice to let him think I'm calling in a few.” Falkirk answered.
Thanking the footman when he returned with a tumbler on a silver tray. Falkirk listened to the half hearted grumbling of the retired Admiral. Despite his protestations Roebuck didn't mention refusing the Lordship. And if he became a lord, it meant he could go to the Palace of Westminster for a change of scenery, when bored of the club.

Roebuck then brought up a point, Falkirk's official portrait for the club wall. All the halls were decorated with pictures of the members in their dress uniform. Q had a ceremonial rank, but preferred not to use it as he had never earned it.

“You see him?” Roebuck said and nodded to a fairly young member, compared to the other members, while Falkirk was positively a baby in comparison to the members around them. When Falkirk nodded Roebuck said.

“Captain Michaels, never commanded anything more than a desk. The only orders he gave was at the bar. The only men to serve him were Thai ladyboys. There is nothing ceremonial about commanding MI6, you are the second M I have known and I know what it means to be M. Your orders are not ceremonial, they have an impact that reaches all around the world. The men who serve you, respect and admire their Commanding Officer and they well die if you order it, because they believe in you.”

“But I have never served in the Royal Navy.” Falkirk tried to argue.

“You might not have attended Britannia but you are worthy. You serve King and Country... And not in two hundred years has a portrait been taken out of uniform. It's not done.” The old man grumbled in a huff.

“I'll think about it.”

“Good! I'll see if you have done anything worthy of decoration.” The man grumbled a bit more pleased.

Roebuck broke his conversation to call someone over. The short, rotund, balding (strange for an Omega) man who approached was not what Falkirk expected. His dark brown eyes and still black hair making his exact age difficult to judge, late fifties Falkirk guessed. Falkirk knew that he was the second Omega to have joined the club but he didn't expect to meet the other right away. Roebuck introduced Capt. Jason Sansky and when the omega spoke it was with a deep gravely voice, also unusual to Omegas.

Sitting down in the chair opposite Falkirk, a footman arrived with a tray and a small glass of clear green liquid which Sansky sipped gently. When he asked about Falkirk's history Roebuck butted in “If he tells you you'll be taken out and shot.”

Giving Sansky a wink Roebuck continued. “Vice-Admiral Sir Thomas McLair, ask no more.”

Sansky seemed amused by the responses as he gave Falkirk a clinical look that would put Sherlock to shame.

Eventual Falkirk relented, describing some of his back story without getting to specific. Roebuck interrupting, “Start noting this down, Captain. Sir Thomas will need decorations for his portrait.”

The little round omega smiled, to hide his chuckle. Falkirk trying to cover his face, with his hand
to hid the blush. Leaning closer to the new omega Sansky whispered, “You might as well give in, they like tradition...wait I do remember you. It's was a... something. You were representing MI6. Most thought your presence was meant to be an insult to the old Control. But I smelt it, Control was terrified of you.”

Now the other Omega mentioned it Falkirk vaguely remembered him as well. “The MI5 briefing on Spider.”

“Sansky my man. Roebuck! And just the new member I wanted to see.” Hargreaves blasted. The old Alpha curled his finger and beckoned Falkirk and the others to follow.

The old man led them through the panelled halls with plush red carpets. In a stretch of wall between to deeply polished oak door. Where the prorates were fewer only a few dozen spread across the creamy expanse of wall, leaving plenty of space for more. Falkirk noticing, this is where his picture had been hung, along with Sansky's and Hargreaves', Rhett Butler too.

“Here.” Hargreaves announced, “Is where all the intelligence personnel are hung. Notice anything?”

Falkirk did notice something. Like the child's game one photo stuck out more than the all the others. Sepia, Black and white, colour, all contained men or women in similar black uniform jackets, with epaulette, and white brimmed caps. All apart from one, a colour photo of a lean man in a good, bespoke three piece suit, Falkirk himself.

“Why is Vice-Admiral Sir Thomas McLair out of uniform?” Hargreaves grumbled.

A random passing old Alpha grumbled, “Hear-hear.” and continued on, hobbling down the corridor.

Sansky whispered, “Tradition. You'll never hear the end of it.”

“Fine! I'll have a new portrait done!”

Hargreaves nodded, “Good. Lets go have a drink.”

After the scandal in the break of tradition had been dealt with. The group returned to the lounge where anecdotes where intermixed with serous observations. Information from contacts was casually mentioned looking for reactions, mostly by Hargreaves to Falkirk and Sansky who were still active in the intelligence community.

Falkirk said, “So why did Admiral Messervy join the Diogenes Club?”

As Roebuck and Sansky looked away, avoiding the question. Hargreaves announced, “Just because he was Navy, doesn't mean he needs to join the Hind Club.”

“Non Traditionalist?” Falkirk mused.

“Precisely.”

“Well I know what you think about them.” Falkirk teased.

--
Helping Mary make the bed, in perpetration for Alec's return. The Doctors had kept Papa and child in the hospital for slightly over a week. While Falkirk and Mary prepared the house, his car had been sent to pick up Daniel, Alec and Yulian. Turning down the bed, for easy access, Mary gave the room a final inspection before nodding her approval.

Moving across the landing, Falkirk put his head into Yulian's room. The gifts still lay wrapped. Daniel and Alec having more pressing concerns. The room was barely decorated, a crib and a changing table the only change.

Hearing the door bang open. Falkirk and Mary went down stairs to find Yulian sitting alone, in his car seat, just inside the door. Falkirk unbuckled his godson and cradled the baby, for the first time seeing the massive the light brown eyes, for all of ten seconds before the baby closed them and drifted off to sleep.

Daniel returned a moment later, supporting a protesting Alec but the way he reluctantly leaned on the larger Alpha showed Alec needed the support. Alec's other hand gently cradling his stomach as he walked slowly and carefully.

Mary and Falkirk saw to the baby allowing Daniel to concentrate on Alec. With Alec safely tucked up in bed. Falkirk called Selene and not long after she arrived with Keading and the two kids. Daniel held Yulian showing the baby to Cody and Andrew. Andrew in particular seemed fascinated by the new arrival wanting to get closer than Falkirk allowed.

Alec got Selene, Keading and Cody for visitors first followed by Falkirk and Andrew. Wanting to get closer to his uncle Andrew broke out of his Papa's grasp. A wayward hand placed too much pressure on the recovering man's abdomen. The Alpha's growling hiss sent Andrew back to Falkirk in tears not knowing what he had done. Falkirk reassured Andrew while Alec recovered.

Indicating they should lay down, Alec lifted his arm to hug it around Falkirk. Andrew cringed closer to his Papa as Falkirk took up the space beside Alec. With gentle caresses Alec gave a weak but genuine smile to the watery eyed boy.

“It's okay little laddie” Alec said using Daniel's term of endearment. Slowly Andrew recovered pressing himself against his godfather. Falkirk carefully blocking knees and elbows from making contact during the manoeuvre. Mewling Andrew rubbed against Alec in apology. Alec just stroking the long black and wild hair of his godson.

Becoming restless Falkirk wrapped an arm around his son an lifted him off. Alec was barely able to keep his eyes open as Falkirk left the room.

With Alec sleeping and Daniel hovering over Mary while she cared for Yulian. Falkirk called time. Falkirk waved with Andrew copying him at the departing Mercedes of Selene's with Keading and Cody waving back.

Strapping Andrew in beside him Falkirk gave the nod and the driver pulled away.

“T...ti...te,”

Falkirk looked to Andrew as he issued short sharp sounds. His head made odd wavy motions as he tried to follow the world passing by the car window. “F, fi” he said pointing to a truck that had pulled up beside the car.
Arriving home Falkirk unbuckled Andrew. Placing Andrew on the pavement the boy took to his feet in the direction of the park.

“Shit!” Falkirk swore chasing after the fleeing child. Catching up and plucking Andrew off his feet. Falkirk turned to see Hudson and the police escorts looking at him. Dismissing the car Falkirk informed Hudson they where going to burn off the excess energy. So Papa and son headed for the park, with Brayan the back up bodyguard following a distance behind.

Placing Andrew down. The toddler seemed very familiar with the route. Stopping at the crossing he stretched to press the button and watched adamantly for the man to turn green. Andrew held out his hand to his Papa and grasped it to cross the road. Falkirk watched, impressed. Keading must have repeated the process hundreds of times to get the procedure ingrained into Andrew.

Within the boundaries of the park Andrew didn't want to hold hands any more. The toddler yo-yoed, running ahead and returning to Falkirk. Andrew knew his way around so Falkirk followed his lead.

Coming to the pond Falkirk took hold of Andrew's hand. Pointing to the ducks Andrew seemed to expect something from his Papa. The blue eyes grew massive as the lower lip jutted forward and a begging mewl sounded.

“I don't know what you want.” Falkirk said knelling in front of Andrew and rubbing his cheek and neck. With a final mewl Andrew started tugging his papa's hand, wanting to keep going.

Arriving at a play park Andrew ran for the slide first. Falkirk keeping a careful hand out he watched his son climb the steps and slide down. After a few trips Andrew moved onto the swings, where he needed help to get into the safety seat.

Pushing the swing Falkirk watched as Andrew swung away from him. A sequel of delight issued as Andrew came flying towards his Papa. Touching the outstretched hands before the back swing pulled Andrew away again.

A new game started when Andrew figured he could hold onto his Papa's hand and stop from swinging back. With his new sense of control Andrew took control of his swinging.

With the air getting colder Falkirk decided it was time to return home. After another petted lip Andrew finally followed his Papa walking home.

Truly Falkirk enjoyed this, spending an afternoon with his son in the park. A whine brought Falkirk's attention back to Andrew. When he was sure he had his Papa's attention, plopping down on the pavement was enough of a clue to what was wrong. Picking Andrew up off his tired little legs Falkirk carried him the last few hundred yards home.

The rest of the night followed a long established routine of changes, then feeding of ever more solid food, for Andrew to use his teeth on. Followed by Falkirk's meal then Andrew's bath. Bed time was a story as Andrew lay on Falkirk's chest then into his crib for lights out. Picking up the receiver for the baby monitor Falkirk put it in his pocket as he did every night and returned to the library, to be greeted by a tray sitting awaiting him, containing a pot, a cup and a small lone cake.

Pouring the tea Falkirk took it to his desk and logged into the computer and connected to the MI6 system. Reading the reports from the day's activities, even at the weekend Falkirk had to work.
There was a report from James. Reading carefully, as James usually only made contact when he had done something stupid but there was nothing.

Moving on Falkirk read through all of the day's activities then pulled up James' report again. There was something off about the wording, the structure. On a hunch Falkirk pulled up the edit menu and removed all the formatting. As the lines unwrapped and the breaks returned to their original places. The start of the lines contained a message.

'DINNER AND A SHOW YOUR CHOICE'

There it was for all time. James Bond asking out his boss on an official document. With a smile Falkirk closed the window, disconnected from MI6 and logged off. Looking about, the tray was gone as was the cup from his desk.

“He's bloody good. No wonder M placed Hudson in Daddy's household.” Falkirk muttered to himself

Switching off the lights Falkirk met Hudson doing his rounds ensuring all access points were secure.

“Goodnight, Mr Hudson” Falkirk called heading upstairs.

“Good night, sir”

--

Falkirk was getting reports from Underwood via Tanner. Every day Daniel wasn't in Falkirk would pay a casual visit to Annie. His visits were to show he was watching over Q branch in the absence of Q. It was on one of these visits Daniel stumbled in. It had been several days since Falkirk had seen the man, letting Alec recover in peace.

Hair shaggier and beard the most unkempt Falkirk had ever seen it. Daniel looked like he would crush anyone who looked at him wrong. Coming up to his pack mate Falkirk took Daniel's arm. “I didn't think you were in today?”

“Priority message from Hwang. What are you doing here?” Daniel responded, exhaustion clear.

“Let R deal with it and I'm just here for the gossip.” Falkirk said.

Dismissing the suggestion Daniel ordered Annie to page Hwang. Falkirk shook his head at Annie out of sight of Daniel and mouthed, “R” to her.

Following Daniel into his office. “Would you do something if I asked?” Falkirk said. Giving an exhausted nod Daniel agreed.

“Come with me.” Falkirk asked holding out his hand. As Daniel started to protest. “Peter is already dealing with Hwang.”

Leading Daniel up, to the secure car park. Falkirk found the pool of cars and one with a driver. Giving the driver his home address Falkirk bundled Daniel into the back seat and ordered, “If you could spare MI6 a few hours. You can get a few hours rest, then go home.”
Daniel was almost asleep, the moment he sat down in the car. Watching the car disappear up the ramp toward street level. Falkirk pulled out his phone to warn Hudson about the impending visitor. Returning to Q branch. Annie directed Falkirk to Q's office.

Hwang's voice met Falkirk as he opened the door to Daniel's office.

“I needed Q! Not a weak, whipping boy.”

Peter responding, “I do not care what you WANT, only I can page Q.” Both men fell silent and looked to Falkirk entering unannounced.

Giving Peter a critical look Falkirk stepped back out to see if R would step up or not. Waiting at Annie's desk the intercom came to life.

“Security escort.” R demanded. Duly Hwang was escorted from Q branch as protocol dictated for a dismissed employee.

When Peter came down from Q's office Falkirk demanded. “I expect a full report on this matter. What did Hwang want anyway?”

Peter gave a shake of his head. “Just a signature.”

“Then you made the right choice, R.”

Chapter End Notes

So Alec has had the baby. The next part will be leading up to Falkirk dealing with Pushkin, which will set off a dangerous time in everyone's lives. I'd like to read it over as a whole before posting, so a small break.

In the meantime I will be posting a 7 chapter fantasy fic, with M as Q's fairy godmother, Sherlock as his father and King. And Alec and James as Q's knights in shining armour. There will be dragons, witches and characters stolen from Game of Thrones, Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings and of course Sherlock and James bond. I must thank 1MissMolly for reading it over and helping me proof read and edit it.
Biding Patience: Afganistan Negotiations.

In a video briefing with station K(Afghanistan), one of the tribes MI6 had been supporting where becoming a bit too aggressive. Phillson, Station K's Director, on the large screen. Tanner and Falkirk along with as experts in the tribal cultures of the Afghan warlords around the table.

The man dressed in Khakis and sweating profusely was chronicling the deterioration of relations with the warlord Faruq, and how he was again growing poppies, raiding the Army and sending incursions into Pakistan. Phillson finished with what Falkirk had been waiting for most of the meeting.

“Faruq is demanding a meeting with... the omega.”

“I take it, Omega was not the most accurate translation.” Falkirk mused. He could see the method in Faruq's actions, to force Falkirk's personal attendance. Looking to Tanner Falkirk ordered, "I'll leave the arrangements to you. And I want Double O Four out there too.”

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The covert plane disguised as a commercial British Airways jet landed at the Kabul Air Base on schedule. Three men were waiting on Falkirk, as he came down the plane's stairs. Double O Four, a man of Pakistani heritage, of handsome face and long wavy black hair, who specialised in the region. Beside Masood, the regional MI6 director, Phillson and in almost dress uniform, the Army representatives, Lieutenant Colonel Simon.

The army along with the MI6 tactical team made sure everything was prepared before the convoy of land rovers pulled out. It took hours to get to the designated meeting place. Falkirk casting a critical eye over the blooming poppy fields.

Setting up a tent, the private snapped a salute seeing Falkirk come over. Nodding in greeting, Falkirk was happy to see the small round table along with two chairs and everything else he had asked for. He thanked the Private and dismissed him, then busied himself lying out tea for two and setting the kettle to boil over the small camp stove.

Hearing boisterous shouting Falkirk crushed the urge to check his gun. Selene pulled back the flap to announce their guest had arrived, then taking up her position behind Falkirk they waited.

Hearing the approaching group Falkirk poured the hot water into the tea pot and swirled it round then discarded the water. Placing the leaves into the teapot Falkirk then filled it up with water. Ignoring the attempts to get his attention Falkirk didn't look up until the pot was left to steep. All done in a careful posturing display, that he was the dominant and all had to await Falkirk's attention.

Looking to Faruq, the man's beard greyer and stomach more round than Falkirk remembered. Falkirk indicated the chair opposite, in invitation.

Faruq flanked by two clothed Omegas, both armed. A curious development in the regional attitude towards Omegas, since the last time when they were naked and danced for entertainment. Another two Afghani Alphas entered, not carrying obvious weapons, along with Phillson of station K, the interpreter and Lt. Col. Simon.
Unsure of the British method of tea Faruq accepted the cup as Falkirk poured it. Through the interpreter Faruq said, “Do you like them, my personal guard. Inspired by you.”

Barely glancing at the Omegas, Falkirk couldn't tell from this distance if they where bound to the Alpha or not but they did seem to be devoted to Faruq.

“Very good.” Falkirk answered before going on to challenge the man on his conduct. The British didn't care what he did with his equals but crossing borders, growing poppies and attacking British bases where out of the question.

Instead of answering Faruq asked, “Are you the leader?”

“Some questions you shouldn't ask.” Falkirk said giving his calculating glare. Faruq didn't seem pleased by the evasion and was weighing Falkirk carefully.

“What happened to my nephew?” the interpretor said for Faruq, before adding his own opinion “I think Faruq wants to know if you know the answerer, M.”

Looking to Phillson of Station K Falkirk waited and got a shake of the head and a shrug indicating the man didn't know.

“Ask him.” Faruq said looking to the only Army officer in the tent.

“How am I meant to know?” Simon snapped, his privileged upper class voice grating.

“What happened?” Falkirk asked feeling thing spinning out of his control. Faruq started speaking and the Interpreter translated the story of how the British soldiers got jittery and open fire on a car in one of the nearby towns.

Under one of the MI6 tactical squad members Lt. Col. Simon had to be escorted out, for now was not the time for defending their actions.

Falkirk dropped his shoulder and even dared to look away form the War Lord, exposing his neck in a humbling act. Extending his sympathies for Faruq's Nephew. The war lord's voice was soft, less hostile as he spoke.

“I could have killed them all, I didn't. My people, my bother, want revenge. I showed them mercy for you.” Faruq said. Falkirk extended his thanks. After a respectful time on the subject of Faruq's nephew, Falkirk moved on to the cross border incursions into Pakistan. The tone of the meeting becoming quieter, as motivations became clearer and remorse was shown.

Faruq, speaking quietly with the English translation coming from the man at the side. “We were attacked first, they were like you(I believe Faruq refers to being Caucasian) not Pakistani.”

Falkirk asked for details of the encounters. It was clear Faruq was either making it up, which Falkirk doubted, the details were too suspicious. It sounded more like mercenaries wanting to either steal the poppy crops or take over the area. A glance to Phillson showed he had no idea what was going on. Falkirk nodded and moved on the poppy crops.

“I need something to trade for more guns...” the translator said. Faruq barked something at his accompanying Alphas, the two men left. Only when it was Faruq and his omega bodyguards did he
add something, that the translator spoke, “Special guns, smaller, better, for the omegas.”

Faruq explained the Omegas were best shots he had and were totally loyal as long as he treated them well. But the guns they used were too heavy and unwieldy for them though. Falkirk nodded in acknowledgement. He had tried some of the larger handguns and assault rifles and his accuracy tended to taper over time.

Tapping his finger a few times on the table, in through. Falkirk weighed everyone's desires, motivations and grievances before looking at the man again.

“I want to learn more about these 'not Pakistani'?” Falkirk stated. Faruq looked concerned as the translator spoke but nodded for Falkirk to continue. Indicating Masood. “I want you to show my friend these, 'Not Pakistani'.”

Faruq accepted his guest with graciousness. Then came the cost to destroy the poppy crops, the guns.

At the end of the negotiation. Deciding to give Faruq and his entourage a show Falkirk stood. Walking out Falkirk stalked towards the Ranking Officer. Catching the MI6 guard's eye Falkirk indicated the officer then the ground.

With a swift kick to the back of his knee, Simon tumbled to the ground at Falkirk's feet. Squatting down to the Lt. Colonel's eye level. “We have few friend here, please stop killing the ones we do have” Falkirk ordered. Hearing the interpreter speaking in the background.

Falkirk asked for a knife, he slipped it into the looped fabric epaulette with the man's rank. Falkirk said, “You can easily be replaced” and cut the fabric from his shoulder.

Returning to Faruq, Falkirk handed him the piece of fabric with the Crown and pip of Lt Colonel's rank. Placing it on his shoulder Faruq let out a laugh before flinging it to one of his men to play with. Reconfirming the deal, the feud with the British military would end, 004 would investigate the insurgents and Faruq would destroy his poppy crops for some UMPs.

Watching Masood hop into the back of the pick up truck and disappear along the road with Faruq and his men. Falkirk had to suppress the urge to wave at the Double O. Turning round. The MI6 personnel, the army around their disgraced Lt. Colonel, the two groups standing toe to toe. Not too concerned as MI6 took the cream of the crop then trained them to perfection, even at three to one there was no hope for the army personnel.

Clapping his hands everyone looked to Falkirk. “Time for home” he said pleasantly. When the tension didn't de-escalate, he mused, “Are we going to be professional or are you going to risk the head of MI6 dying on your watch?”

He would probably get a phone call from General Sir Mike Edwards for humiliating one of his but nothing he couldn't handle. And for continued relations, Falkirk would prefer to offend the Colonel rather than the man who truly ran the region. And it wasn't like the Army would ever face a trial for shooting up a pick up in the middle of a war-zone, even when it carried friendlies.

In tense and absolute silence the camp was packed up and the convoy moved out. The air base was a welcome sight and for the first time Falkirk was eager to get on board. The steward stood with a tray as Falkirk boarded. Accepting the cocktail glass with a matt green drink Falkirk sipped as he found a seat. Leaning against Selene, Falkirk settled in for the flight.
Back in London, Selene followed Falkirk up to the front door. So late, not even Hudson would be expected to be up still. Opening the door a renewed and fresh scent caught Falkirk's attention. Darting upstairs leaving Selene to secure the door and the alarm.

Pushing open the bedroom door a sizeable lump occupied the bed with a more subtle scent beneath his Alpha's more oppressive. Gently pulling back the covers a small dark head was nestled to James' chest.

"Welcome home" James mumbled, cracking an eye open.

Pulling on a pair of pyjama bottoms and crawling into bed Falkirk wrapped himself around Andrew. Whispering, "The books say we shouldn't encourage Andrew to sleep with us."

As a hand started stroking Falkirk's neck and face James answered. "He got here on his own"

Not sure what James meant but too tired too tired to think about it now. The gentle caresses doing wonders to relax the Omega further, Falkirk drifted off quickly.

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During the night the constant shifting of the young Omega pushed his parents to the very edges of the bed. When Falkirk's alarm blared the arrival of morning the sudden noise caused both men to crash to the floor. Meeting James' eyes across the bed. Andrew slumbered on oblivious, lying across the bed.

A sudden gleam appeared in James' eye. Quickly he rounded the bed and threw his mate over his shoulder and carried him into the bathroom. Closing and locking the door behind them, only the sound of running water could be heard for the next half an hour.

Clean and pleasantly sore Falkirk opened the bathroom door, lips still kiss swollen and a few red marks including a renewed red bonding mark on his neck.

Andrew was happily holding his Papa's phone to his ear making noises, "Ha! Anoo, yayaya." The unnoticed bear sitting perfectly beside him. Andrew whining and sending big pleading eyes as his papa pulled the phone from his grasp. The phone's security making Falkirk unconcerned for the child's tampering. Scooping Andrew up Falkirk took him upstairs for his morning change.

“Baa!” Andrew called to his dad and waved as he was taken out.

Returning after seeing to Andrew, Falkirk handed Andrew to the James so he could dress. When the three came down stairs Hudson had laid breakfast and Selene and Keading were there. With Cody dressed in his green blazer of his school uniform. Like always, when Falkirk and Selene were out of the country, Keading and Cody had stayed the night.

Falkirk divided his time feeding himself and Andrew. Andrew wanting to feed himself, but easily distracted and liking to play with his raspberry porridge as much as eat it.

Keading asked the standard questions. "Cody! Homework done?"

Answered with a bored,"Yes, Mom."
“Bag packed?”

“Yes, Mom.”

“Gym kit? GYM KIT?”

“YES, Mom.”

James offered to drive Cody to school, with Keading and Andrew accompanying him. Falkirk and Selene headed for MI6.

--

Deciding to knock off early, so he could stop in his club, for an hour or so, while James was still giving his debriefing.

For people like Roebuck with children grown up and living their own lives. Partners who were gone or used to a life lived without them. The club served as a place to remember and through the younger members like Falkirk remain a part of events. For Falkirk there was a wealth of experience, and the contacts of some of the member ran deep and far.

With Roebuck becoming an almost permanent resident of the plush and opulent rooms. Walking about it was only a matter of time before Falkirk found the man sitting on a couch with Capt. Sansky. The moment Falkirk joined them a footman appeared with a tray and a straight bourbon without prompt.

It was nice to speaking with Roebuck and Sansky right up until Mycroft called, “M?” from behind him. Roebuck seemed unimpressed by the intrusion while Sansky just studied the new arrival with a focus which would put Sherlock to same.

“Revenge for all the times I interrupted you?” Falkirk responded. Getting the typical tight smile in return to his comment. Falkirk gestured to the empty seat in invitation.

When a footman appeared Falkirk ordered another round and added a Fino Sherry for Mycroft. It took Mycroft some time before he even broached the subject of Afghanistan. Roebuck's interest piqued at the mention of something new. The moment Mycroft mentioned the army Falkirk knew why he was at the club.

“Is this to do with me humiliating that fast track Lieutenant Colonel?” Falkirk asked, exasperation in his voice.

“You ripped off his rank and presented it as a war prize.” Mycroft hissed quietly. Roebuck and Sansky looked on the arguing pair with interest.

“If General Sir Mike Edwards has the balls to face me, I will see him. I will not however, deal with Mummy fighting his battles for him” Falkirk snapped.

“You are making more enemies than friends” Mycroft warned.

Ignoring his brother Falkirk turned to Roebuck “George Windom is passing out soon. He sent me two invitations, would you like to come?” Falkirk said.
“Of course, my boy.” Roebuck answered. The young king was a sore point with his brother. Mycroft had been too close to the old King and it had cost them both their his position in the end. When the new king looked to Mycroft for support and realised Mycroft was the cause of his parent's devoice and father's exile it was another blow to Mycroft.

With no real comeback Mycroft gave a stiff, “Goodbye, M.” He stood and walked out.

“Wasn't that a little harsh?” Sansky said. As an Omega he could probably pick up on Mycroft's emotional que better than Roebuck.

“Yes.” Falkirk agreed but his brother had a habit of interfering especially when Falkirk was setting up a long game with the potential future head of the army. Deciding it was time Falkirk met Selene at the door to head home.

--

Lying awake in his Alpha's arms Falkirk listened to James talk about his ordinary day. Having breezed past his debriefing with ease James had spent the afternoon with Keading and Andrew.

“It was gymnastics or something...” James enthusiastically described the special classes for Omegas, Keading took Andrew to. Where Omegas' coordination and spacial awareness were improved. With pride James proclaimed, “It was sort of like dancing, pretending to be trees, waving their arms about. Andrew is the best in the class, didn't bump into anyone or trip over himself. And he was the youngest...” before describing the exercises in excruciating detail. By the way James was speaking it sounded like the Omega was showing off for his Alpha. After discussing some of Falkirk's charity interests which Keading administered James fell silent.

“He hasn't improved.” James said, suddenly changing the subject. After Falkirk confirmed James was talking about Alec he agreed. The pregnancy and surgery had been brutal on Alec and it would be a considerable amount of time before he was fit again.

--

Coming into his office there was a standard leave form sitting awaiting his approval. Darren had mentioned that he and Mallory had discussed children. It was apparently time for his heat so Falkirk signed off the leave. Taking the document to his PA's desk he handed it to the curly hared Irishman.

“Good Luck!” Falkirk said as neutrally as possible. Not sure of the appropriate level of enthusiasm for what amounted to I hope you get mounted hard enough and long enough for an Alpha's week and copious amounts of sperm take hold.

At lunch time Tanner knocked on Falkirk's door. As Tanner was one of the few people with open access to his office. Falkirk knew that his motivation wasn't work related. Waving him in Falkirk continued to sip his tea while Tanner looked uncomfortable.

“Well?” Falkirk stated.

“Mycroft is a bit, upset and I think...” Tanner trailed off as Falkirk sighed and nodded his head. Falkirk knowing he had been a bit harsh the last time they met.

“What's his favourite restaurant of the moment?”
When Tanner gave him the information Falkirk reassured, “I’ll make nice with him.” With a nod Tanner thanked him and returned to his own lunch.

With the remainder of his lunch and before something could interrupt again Falkirk descended. The natural light gave way to the fluorescent tubes of the inner building. Deep where natural light or radiation could never reach Falkirk entered Q branch. In the administration offices Falkirk greeted his old PA on the way past, who was steadily becoming bigger and grumpier as the months wore on in her pregnancy.

Opening the office door, if Daniel noticed Falkirk's entrance he didn't react. “How's things?” Falkirk asked. Although it had only been a few days since he saw the man last it felt longer.

“If I call home or take any more time off Sandy has threatened to kick the shit out of me. At least his humour is returning.” Daniel answered still concentrating on the screen in front of him.

“Yes, being the mother hen for a Double O, even an Ex one is a delicate procedure.” Falkirk said with experience.

“He is improving, slowly. He has just never been waylaid like this before” Daniel responded looking up for the first time. Falkirk's phone pinged its reminder for his meeting with the Minister. Dismissing the alert Falkirk warned he would visit at the week end.

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With Mycroft actively avoiding him. At home Falkirk found Mycroft's schedule it wasn't hard he had access to it for years. The man was insufferable, due to Falkirk, anything non work related was never stored electronically. Mycroft however, scheduled everything to the second and it was all synchronised to his phone, computer with various employees and associates being copied in. So there were things labelled 'haircut' or 'Suit Fitting' which were likely covers for doing something he didn't want Falkirk to know about it.

Finding a low priority meeting, Falkirk shuffled some things about to free up a dinner appointment. With the instantaneous synchronising across devices Mycroft would know something had changed and most likely what along with who had changed it. It was now up to his Brother to decide if he wanted to accept Falkirk's invitation.

Picking up the phone Falkirk made the booking. Casually dropping his title and his brother's name the high class restaurant was able to find a table for them.

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Sitting alone in the restaurant Falkirk waited to see if his brother arrived. Mycroft had five minutes to be early(unlikely), on the sixth he would be punctual(most likely if he came) and if he was late he would not be showing up.

As five minutes passed Falkirk became more agitated by the second until a tall lanky figure breezed in. Letting out a breath of relief, Falkirk stood as Mycroft approached the table.

Falkirk thought about following his brother's lead in ordering but dismissed it. Mycroft would see it as a ploy and not react well. Deliberately not discussing work related subjects the conversation became stifled. Grasping, Falkirk asked about Sherlock getting short clipped responses in return.
“Did you love him, G's father” Falkirk asked in the end. Mycroft refused to even acknowledge the question. “G's mother is gone, his father was packed off as a disgrace to Australia. He is no different to most of the Double Os, they just want someone to acknowledge them. Someone to say 'good job', or 'hello' even give them into trouble. To them it means they exist. ”

“He blames me for the dissolution of the marriage, Urquhart was sure to make that point clear to him. ” Mycroft admitted after a protracted silence. “He hated me so much he preferred dealing with the man who deposed his father.”

Fixing his brother with an intense stare Mycroft demanded, “He wants to be close to you, let him, protect him. Every King needs guidance, no matter how experienced they are.”

Surprised by the intensity of his brother's determination Falkirk could only nod numbly.

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POP!

The sudden sound woke Falkirk and made him sit bolt upright. Looking about the bedroom he couldn't locate the source of the sound.

James was suspiciously still calm and half asleep, the alpha just giving a sleepy, “He's here!”

Listening, a creaking sound drew Falkirk's attention to the handle of the door. Again the handle snapped back up causing the popping sound.

Slowly the handle was pulled down again and the door started swinging open to reveal Andrew with his teddy bear under one arm. Getting up Falkirk pulled on his underwear and lifted Andrew up.

“Poppet, you can't stay with us.” Andrew just whined and squirmed.

Coming to the bottom baby gate, closed and secure. Falkirk opened it, frowning as he did so. The gate at the top was also closed and secure. Falkirk opened it, still wondering how Andrew got out of his crib and down stairs.

Andrew was unhappy to be putting back into his crib and was vocal about it. Sending Falkirk a vicious glare Andrew became unnaturally quiet continuing to glare at his mortal enemy. His dark little lips in a tight little pout.

“He learned that look from you.” James accused referring to the glare. Looking to his father Andrew gave a brilliant and pleading smile full of hope and stretched out his arms. “Sorry short stuff, Papa's word if final” James said rubbing Andrew's cheek and neck.

Closing the door Falkirk made sure the barriers where secured as he and James came back down the stairs.

Just as Falkirk entered the bedroom James halted him with a hand on his shoulder and listened carefully. Moving to the banister James listened then indicated the landing above. Pushing Falkirk into the shadows they waited.
Hearing the distinctive pop of a door handle springing back into place Falkirk understood what they were waiting for. The body of Andrew's bear flew over the upper barrier to bounce down the stairs. The sound of quiet, high grunts of effort forced James forward to see what was happening.

Using the railings of the banister Andrew had managed to climb up and was in the process of swinging himself over the barrier. Falkirk froze in fear. James took off. One wrong move and the child would land on the tiled floor of the Foyer. James ran silently, vaulted the lower barrier and up the stairs and firmly grasped Andrew's middle and held him close. Falkirk able to breath again, with Andrew safely in his father's sure arms.

James looked to the landing below, to his mate bathed in shadow then to the foyer on the ground floor two storeys below. Andrew grumbled again at being stopped. Falkirk moved to meet his mate at the bottom of the flight of stairs. Andrew oblivious to the danger was only concerned for his bear lying on the floor. In silent agreement they headed back to their room, Falkirk scooping up the bear and handing it back to is son.

Happily nestled between his dads and snuggling his bear Andrew drifted off to sleep.

“Bone headed stunts. That one is all yours” Falkirk shot. James' answer was to pull his mate and child closer.
Sitting at his place, beside Smiley of MI5. The joint meeting with the security services, military and police with the political representatives, chaired by the the Prime Minister was going well. Until Mallory took a fortifying breath.

“The last item, an incident between MI6 and the Army in Afghanistan.”

“Incident?” Falkirk asked in genuine innocence. “MI6 has not been made aware of any, 'Incident'.”

Mallory flicked his eyes to the old and blading man further along the table. The man in the greenish jacket, General Edwards held firm.

“Perhaps.” Falkirk said, drawing Mallory's attention. “There has been no official notification, because the good General didn't want scrutiny falling on his own men. I for one believe all should face justice. Like the soldiers who shoot Afghans going about their business, including the nephew of our greatest ally in the region, and Faruq's most stable potential heir.”

Looking to the general, Mallory took the diplomatic action, the art of doing nothing. “Well General, did this, supposed, incident occur or not? And if it did, why was MI6 not formally notified of the accusations against it? And...what about the potential counter allegations against your men?”

“Must be crossed wires or something.” the old Alpha grumbled.

“Well if there was no incident, we can end early. Thank you all for coming.” Mallory said with a pleasant smile.

Falkirk, one of the nearest to the door was one of the first out. He waited in the hall of No.10 Downing street. Smiley was next out, along with the GCHQ Director, giving a goodbye to both. He gave a nod, to the Air Force Martial, a short round Alpha who Falkirk felt he had a good relationship with.

Then his target. The Alpha was pulling on his peeked cap, and came to a grinding halt. The old Alpha's double chins wobbled a bit as General Edwards gulped.

“Twice. Once Mummy. Today daddy. Seeing as you don't have either the balls or the knot to face me, you will do well to learn three key phrases, 'Yes, M.', 'No, M', 'Three bags full, M'. Because if you ever so much as look at me, challenge me, I will put the little bitch in his place.”

“Yes, M.” the general parroted.

“DIS-missed!” Falkirk snapped. With Falkirk firmly establishing dominance over the Alpha, the
general's instincts kicked in and he saluted, spun on his heels and marched down the stairs.

A soft chuckle sounded from just inside the doorway. A blond woman, in the dark blue skirt and jacket. She too was pulling on a peeked cap, the cuffs of her jacket the highest rank of the navy, First Sea Lord.

“Quite a thing to see.” Admiral Nechayev said. “The only thing missing was for you to bend him over and mount him. A word, in private if I may?”

The two walked down the stairs, and the Special Bach officer opened the door for them. They entered Falkirk's car, where he lifted the central armrest so he could pour his guest a drink as they made their way through London.

Accepting the glass, Nechayev thanked Falkirk then said, “You're part of that grouping of old codgers, the one my illustrious predecessor belongs to? I hope that's not too insulting.”

“The Hind Club, yes.” knowing insulting was exactly what it was meant to be, but in a friendly way.

“Captain Sansky, I would like your opinion, M?” When she saw the omega's caution the Admiral elaborated, “He has been in Naval Intelligence a long time, as an annalist, attaché, Chief of Staff. Passed over so many times for the top job, he didn't even put his name forward this time.”

“He is less, directly confrontation then me.” Falkirk said, the admiral gave a smile, as if on the verge of bursting out laughing in response.

“A Neanderthal Alpha would be less confrontational then you, M.”

“But every good omega finds a style of management that suits them. But, if you are asking my opinion. I would happily poach Captain Sansky. If I knew him a few years ago, he might be my deputy director when I needed one.”

The admiral nodded. It was enough of an answer for her. “Now, the old codgers club, have been pushing for an award to pretty up your costume.”

Falkirk looked out the window. He'd had a fitting for his uniform. The idea of wearing one when he hadn't earned it was still a little, uncomfortable.

Nechayev reached into her inside pocket, pulling out three letters. “I will admit, when I was given these I was concerned that it was just a show. Then came the investigation into your actions. You are quite a character, M, Sir Thomas, Falkirk Bond. You have earned these.”

Falkirk looked at the woman, his real name was an ever growing open secret. But wasn't too sure what she was getting at.

“Vice Admiral, Sir Thomas McLair. For your conduct, in leading MI6 through the aftermath of Raoul Silva, you have been awarded the Distinguished Service Order.” Falkirk was handed a letter, signed by the First Sea Lord herself, with recommendation by Admiral Hargreaves and Roebuck. She then said, “While Pregnant, you did risked yourself and did engage an enemy of this country. For this conduct you have been awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross.”

Falkirk took the next letter of notification.
“Finally, you are formally invited, to be the guest of honour at this years turning out. You'll need to give a speech.”

“Thank you.” Falkirk said a little shocked.

“M.” the First Sea Lord said and waited until the green eyes were focused on her again. “I thought you were just a blackmailer, most of those politicians, generals, admirals, all of them, they are always terrified someone will expose their mistresses, bastard children or how they line their pockets. But you are more than that, you fight very dirty, but you do fight for this country and those under your command. That is noble, worthy.”

Falkirk nodded, feeling that flutter every time an Alpha expressed their true and genuine respect. He crossed his legs, and rested his hands in his lap, desperate that he didn't do the little bouncy movement omegas make when happy or excited.

The First Sea Lord called to the driver, “Pull in, when you can.”

Falkirk again thanked the blond woman as she got out. They waited until she got into her car, which had been trailing them.

“Someone's happy.” Selene teased.

“Oh shut up.” Falkirk snapped in embarrassment.

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Knocking on Tanner's door. The beta smiled, as Falkirk entered.

“I have something for you and Mycroft.” Falkirk said and handed over two tickets, they were meant to be for him and Roebuck but they were now official guests. Tanner frowned as he looked at the guest tickets for the turning out at Britannia.

“I think Mycroft especially would like to go.” Falkirk said.

Tanner gave a still rather confused, “Thanks.”

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“There you go, Sir.” Hudson said, sweeping down Falkirk's arm with the lint brush. Falkirk looked in the mirror, he was in the dark jacket, with two rows of shining brass buttons, his right shoulder had a braid of gold on the shoulder and around his arm. He had a blue sash on and on the left side, about half way down jacket was a four pointed star indicating his Knighthood.

Coming out of the spare room, where Hudson had helped him dress, Falkirk pulled on the white peaked cap. The butler then gave a piercing boatswain's whistle. The old blond man gave an innocent smile. Falkirk continued down. Hudson then bellowed, “Admiral! On Deck!”

Falkirk looked down to the foyer. Those waiting, snapped a salute. James heading the line followed by Selene, Keading, Cody and they even got Andrew to salute, but looked a little like he slapped himself in the face.
“At ease.” Falkirk said and the group took a wider legged stance. Andrew just stamped a foot and gave a big grin. After a kiss for James and Andrew, Falkirk left them to their day out.

Falkirk picked up Roebuck on the way, he too was in the Blue No.1 uniform, similar to Falkirk's.

“Admiral McLair. Good to see you dressed, for once.” The old man greeted taking his seat.

“Sir.” Falkirk returned with a teasing smile. The car pulling off and heading for the Naval College.

“Now listen carefully, by boy. This is important. It's the duty of the speaker to talk for as long as possible. You want at least one fainter in the recruits, or you haven't talked long enough.” the old Admiral advised.

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It was a pleasant day as the cadets stood with their backs to the audience facing the faculty and as dignitaries Falkirk and Roebuck on stage, set up on the parade ground. The ornate building of Britannia the backdrop to ceremony.

“That's my filly.” Roebuck declared pointing to a cadet in the last row. The cadet wavered and Falkirk could figure out the bet.

“That one” Falkirk said looking to a tall ramrod straight man in the second row.

“There he is.” Roebuck said. It took Falkirk a moment to recognise G as the cadets were almost indistinguishable. But there he was, a young face, with sharp chin and dark blue eyes even visible from the distance.

Nechayev congratulated the recruits, in a speech. She then called Falkirk up and he stood beside the First Sea Lord. After a further speech, from the First Sea Lord, about his decorations. Falkirk had the two medals pinned to his chest.

Nechayev then turned back to the recruit and the audience further back. “Honorary Vice Admiral, Sir Thomas McLair, KG, DSO, CGC.”

They saluted and the First Sea Lord stepped back and it was Falkirk's turn to speak. Stepping up to the podium, before he could open his mouth, like a felled tree the tall ridged cadet slammed face first into the parade ground. As protocol dictated the cadets remained in position while other Navy personnel came out to the aid of the fallen cadet.

“Respect!” Falkirk said, watching the cadet being helped up. “Broadly speaking, respect comes in two forms. There is the type of Respect which is earned. And there is the respect, 'respectful' if you will. It is, of being respectful, I wish to speak to you today.

Being respectful is the respect you give to all, whether it be to man or woman, Alpha, beta or omega, to those who outrank you or whom you out rank, to your best Friend or your worst Foe.

To some this might be contrary to instinct, teaching or culture. You must never view yourself as superior or you diminish yourself. In my time I have met Alphas who have seen me just as an omega and they paid the price. Because they were not respectful. I needed to teach them I was more than they thought I was. I was not nice and I regret that, but it will never stop me from putting someone else who wasn't respectful in their place.

I have seen men, good men, who did not respect their enemy. They thought themselves better or their cause more just. They often died due to that belief. When you actually face an enemy, be
respectful, because if you don't they might surprise you. And if you are lucky you might live to regret not showing due respect...but don't count on it.”

Falkirk saw the filly as Roebuck put it, the cadet's wavering was getting wider and wider and down he went as he over balanced.

“I thank you for listening. And I wish you well in your career and life.” Falkirk said and stepped back, relinquishing the floor to Commodore Pellew, the man who ran the college.

Taking his seat again, Roebuck leaned close and whispered, “Two for Two. Well done, Admiral.”

The cadets progressed up on to the stage in a well rehearsed line. Falkirk noticed in the tiers of the audience, friends and family waved. The cadets unable to return the gesture. Then he saw the two he had been looking for, Mycroft and Tanner. Falkirk thinking his brother had a look of pride, but hard to tell from the distance. A small knot formed in the Omega's chest, sure of it was for G as Mycroft had the same look at G's coronations. Shaking off the desire for approval from an Alpha, Falkirk concentrated on the ceremony.

G came up, shaking hands with the Commodore and First Sea Lord. As his eyes met Falkirk's a very inappropriate smile for a parading cadet appeared on G face. Falkirk gave a small wave, the smile just grew on the young man's face.

“He's going to get it for that.” Roebuck teased.

At the official reception Falkirk found G speaking with a Chief Petty Officer and by the looks of his dress uniform a teacher. Recognising Roebuck the NCO saluted the former First Sea Lord, then Falkirk. Roebuck had been enjoying himself all day, his legacy was still alive in the halls of the Britannia Naval Academy and he was milking it for all it was worth.

At his appointed time G made his way for his official Photograph. Falkirk followed. Leaving Roebuck to speak with the still active members of the Faculty and dignitaries.

G squared his shoulders seeing the entourage awaiting him. Like the the other Midship Men, G handed over his token but unlike the others a team from the palace primped and preened him ready for the camera.

Standing in the official pose, the camera clicked. “Family pose?” the photographer asked. G's eyes flicked to Falkirk before he shook his head.

“May I have one, of us?” Falkirk asked. G's pleased nod was not tempered by the disapproving glares of the palace entourage.

Falkirk took the typical maternal pose, sitting on a stool with G standing behind. A hand was placed on Falkirk's shoulder and the photo was taken. Then for the club, Falkirk had an official portrait taken on his own.

Taking G's arm Falkirk warned him about his down time on the way back to find Roebuck. “Don't get into trouble and don't do anything you would mind me knowing about” Falkirk warned.

As the reception came to an end Falkirk found himself along with Roebuck and G, and most of the newly commissioned officers cammed into a near by pub.
“Banksy and Bumble had to carry me out of this place more than once” Roebuck informed before ordering a round and complaining about the price of a pint grumbling, “Thirty pence in my day.”

Even the First Sea Lord stopped in for a bit. Coming up to them, she smiled, congratulated G and Falkirk. “So was that an Omega version of the glass ceiling talk?”

Falkirk shrugged, “I suppose. Pain in the arse when most Alphas think I'll be cowed by just their smell.” almost having to shout to be heard over the din of the room.

“Well, good luck, Midshipman Windom.” the First Sea Lord said and moved on to the other groups.

“Well another round, I think it's the Midshipman's.” Roebuck said and slapped the boy's sholder. G went up to the bar.

The bell was rung and there was a scramble for last orders. Followed about an hour later, by the barman bellowing, “Bugger off, ya drunk Bastards. Home!”

G and Roebuck piled into Falkirk's car for the journey home. With confusion Falkirk looked over the slumbering men, he had drunk just as much and was the last man standing. “This is what two Scots, a Russian and Hungarian taught me” Falkirk mused.

Instructing the driver to go straight home Falkirk drunk dialled James to warn him. Between James, Hudson and Brayan(Falkirk's backup bodyguard) they got the impromptu guests inside and to the spare rooms. Hudson in a rare lapse in his professional demeanour took a double take at the young Alpha he had hooked under the arms and was dragging up the stairs.

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An impact made the bed bounce and dip, enough to wake Falkirk with a start. Under the covers the world was still black with the strong scent of James and himself. Another few impacts became too much to ignore and the dry mouth needed water. Suddenly the impacting force landed directly on him with a sequel of delight.

Pushing back the covers to see Andrew bouncing on James. Gently James threw the child off for him to charge again.

“Children, please” Falkirk admonished squinting in the light.

Getting out of bed Falkirk made his way to the bathroom while James in a sing song voice spoke to Andrew.

“Let's get Papa his hangover cure” and wound an arm around his son's middle and disappeared out the door.

Forgoing his preferred bath Falkirk decided to have a cool shower. Gargling with water to just moisten his mouth Falkirk then proceeded through brushing teeth and dressing in his casual ware. A plain cashmere cardigan and muted tartan trousers dominated Falkirk's style. As the last button of the cardigan came together James appeared, with Andrew carrying a tall glass of orange liquid. Carefully Andrew approached is Papa and presented the glass to him.

“Thank you, sweetheart.” Falkirk said and giving a nuzzle. Standing he downed the hangover cure.
“Breakfast in half an hour and I think G is surfacing.” James said. James then took some clothes for their guests while Falkirk took his son down stairs.

Falkirk was just finishing his tea when G appeared, dressed in Falkirk's trousers and a polo shirt of James'. Falkirk's maternity trousers were a bit loose but acceptable.

“That's for you” Falkirk said indicating a glass tall glass of Barocca with an aspirin in it. As G finished his drink Falkirk offered a coffee which was gracefully accepted.

Fascinated by the strange new Alpha Andrew kept a fixed gaze on G from the safety of his dad's side. Noticing his admirer the older teenage gave a smile and wave. Looking to his Father and Papa in turn Andrew hesitantly took a few steps forward scenting the air as he got closer. Slowly with constant glances to James, Andrew finally stood beside the strange new Alpha.

Offering his hand to the child Andrew took a hesitant scenting at G's wrist before moving closer to the Alpha. Lowering his head and G scented the boy's neck, the child squirming with the attention. Turning his head G let Andrew reciprocate feeling the blunt little nose touch where the scent was strongest, squealed Andrew ran back to his Father giggling and blushing all the way.

“He's cute, takes after you.” G said looking at Falkirk. Andrew still peeking at the strange Alpha and giggling.

Roebuck came down looking better than expected. With Hudson putting the finishing touches on the breakfast everyone made their way to the dining room. Serving themselves Falkirk sat Andrew beside him and gave him a toast soldier to chew on.

“Tanner called,” James casually informed “Apparently the King disappeared.” G let out a groan in desperation and slipped down.

“MI6 knew his location at all time” Falkirk returned with a smile. After breakfast Roebuck called a taxi while Falkirk arranged for a car to return G to his official residence.

On the doorstep, the blond teenager gave a blushing and bashful, “Thanks, M.”

“You did good, I couldn't be prouder.” Falkirk whispered, and G's face went a bit redder, even turning his ears red.

“See Ya.” James called as the watched G get into the car.

Andrew waving too and called, “Ba!” G returning the wave as the car puled away.
Falkirk hit the slumbering man behind him. James groaned and rolled out of bed. Falkirk heard the alpha opening the door, there was a whine, that slowly faded as James returned Andrew to bed.

Falkirk moved over to the warm space James had left behind. Rubbing his nose into his mate's pillow, loving the smell that lingered. But the continuing absence of his alpha, finally forced Falkirk up.

Pulling on a dressing gown Falkirk moved through the darkness. With the safety barriers gone in case Andrew climbed over banister and fell, it was now easier for the child to come down if he woke. A small bed had replaced the crib, too. For the same reason. If Andrew was able to climb out of it, it was now a risk if he fell. As an Omega, Falkirk understood his son's compulsion to be close to their alpha, but Andrew needed to learn to sleep on his own.

James and Falkirk had engaged in a battle of will, returning Andrew to bed every time he got out. But as Falkirk entered, he saw a new problem, an alpha who was so soft when it came to a tiny little omega. James was sitting on the floor, his upper body sprawling over the tiny bed while hugging Andrew.

Placing his hands on the alpha's broad shoulders, Falkirk leaned against James. When the man shifted, Falkirk whispered, “You can't sleep here either.”

“Mean.” James purred sleepily. Turning he pressed his nose to Falkirk's cheek giving a kiss too.

James pulled away, very cautiously. The two parents freezing when Andrew rolled over and patted around for where his dad had been. As the child settled, his face going to the warm spot James had left, seeking the Alpha's scent, nuzzling against the spot few times before he stilled again.

James wound his arm around he mate's waist and pressed their heads together. Both watching until they were sure Andrew wouldn't wake up. A tug from Falkirk and they headed for the door, ensuring they were quiet.

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On the road to work Selene looked over her shoulder to Falkirk “Could you look after Cody next week end?” she asked.

Nodding “Something planned?” Falkirk asked.

“Just a weekend in Paris, it's a surprise. Keading has wanted to go for a while now” Selene said returning to look forward.

“James took me. If we didn't drive there, I would have only seen the inside of the hotel room.” Falkirk teased.

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“Your turn.” James grumbled.

Falkirk pulled himself out of bed. Ready to continue the battle of wills. And it looked like Andrew might be the one to win. The small omega was so determined and neither parents had had a full night's sleep.

Pulling open the door. Andrew screwed up his face, knowing his dad was the softer touch. Falkirk picked up his son, rounded the landing, up the stairs and into Andrew's room. All the while, Andrew squirmed and struggled, giving full body spasms, whining loudly in his papa's ear.

Tucking the whining boy in bed, Falkirk sat a short distance off. He started speaking very softly in a monotone to bore and lull his son. “Once upon a time there was a boy named Jack....”

Andrew squirmed, down and down the bed to drop out the end. Falkirk immediately put him back in place. The faint sound of the hall clock, stuck the hour of two. Falkirk continuing, “...Jack's mother threw the beans out the window. Going to bed hungry...”

Seeing Andrew starting to shift, aiming to escape above the small barrier that stopped him rolling out of bed. Falkirk continued to speak as he shifted Andrew back into the centre of the small bed.

“...fe-fi-fo-fum I smell the blood of an Englishman...” despite his attempt to use a monotone, Falkirk got a little swept up in the excitement, and made his voice deeper, which drew the wide awake attention of his son.

By the time Falkirk had finished Jack and the beanstalk and moved onto Goldilocks. The distant clock was striking four. Andrew was again squirming down the bed. Before Falkirk could stop him, James appeared and placed Andrew in the popper spot. He sat down and stroked Andrew's neck, the instinctive gesture calmed the omega enough to send him off to sleep.

The technique was a cheat, but Falkirk was at the point of not caring. He just wanted to sleep himself. Already his eyes were closing, just like Andrew's. Absently he felt, an arm coming under his knees and around his back. Resting his head on James' shoulder, he fully fell asleep as he was carried down to their room.

Sitting, with the solid lump of his godson in his arm, straining it and making it numb. Size and his alpha physiology making Yulian heavy for his age, far heavier than Andrew was at a few months. Falkirk gave a broad smile, “HA-low, HA-low. You-le-ann, is that you, Yulian?”

The big brown eyes were looking at Falkirk wide eyed and very confused. Falkirk stopped making the excited voice and exaggerated words, the baby's look was clearly conveying, 'Who is this crazy person?'

Glancing up, to the deep couch. Alec was in the corner, trying to look like he was lounging rather than the bolsters and pillows behind him being there for support. And Falkirk deduced, the neatly folded blanket on the neighbouring chair had been over Alec until they arrived for the visit.

James had Andrew in his lap and was describing the night his son escaped and climbed over the stair barriers. Alec laughing at the appropriate points, but not his normal deep chuckle which
would strain the man's stomach muscles.

“Is that pride I hear in your voice?” Falkirk asked his mate. James looked a little bashful, without the risk to his son, he could now appreciate the skill of Andrew's escape. Alec launched into a similar story of James' escape from the naval college along a precarious ledge.

Mary returned with Daniel carrying the tray and Cody holding a plate of scones. As they drank tea and ate the biscuits Falkirk continued to subtly watch Alec. He still looked exhausted and he didn't move unless he had to and never stood. Entitled to a year for maternity leave Falkirk wasn't too concerned for the moment. Resolving to keep a close eye on his pack mate Falkirk turned his attention back to the infant happily gumming his finger.

Darren placed a cup of tea on Falkirk's desk and helped himself to a biscuit as he did so.

“What do you mean?” the Irish PA said.

Falkirk took off his glasses and scrubbed his face. The moment his eyes were closed he felt how heavy and dry they were. Pulling his hands away, he noticed another of his biscuits had found its way into Darren's hand.

“Andrew. Now he can get to our room on his own, he wants to sleep with us. Permanently. Still not had a good night's sleep.”

“Oh! You wanted me to remind you about my heat leave, closer to the time.”

Falkirk noticed, all the biscuits that had been perched on the side of his cup had now been pilfered by the other omega. “I may have noticed the small reminders. “ Falkirk said and lifted his cup to take a soothing sip.

Watching the other Omega through the glass wall of his office he was defiantly bulking before his heat. Every so often the curly haired omega's hand would slip into his drawer and emerge with something to be nibbled on.

Calling home Falkirk arranged Mrs Bridges to make some fairy cakes.

Coming in the next day Falkirk placed a tin on Darren's desk. The dozen small, decorated cakes were gratefully received and were slowly demolished.

When 005 returned and perched himself on Darren's desk Falkirk observed the interaction. As the straw blond's gestures became more dominating and intrusive into the Omega's personal space Falkirk pressed the intercom.

“Double O Five! In here now!” Falkirk voice making both Alpha and Omega jump.

After giving Addison his typical post mission blocking Falkirk dismissed him. Watching 005 stop at Darren's desk again Falkirk pressed the intercom on his phone. “Dismissed! Double O Five!” Falkirk ordered.
Calling Darren in Falkirk carefully prompted him to start his heat leave early. The omega was starting to scent his heat and 005 was not the first Alpha Falkirk had noticed sniffing around his PA. The last thing Falkirk wanted was a challenge to Mallory's claim on the Omega.

Most of the Alphas Falkirk dealt with knew what would happen if they stepped out of line but there were others still fixed on the old days of Alpha dominance. They couldn't be counted on to temper their drives in the presence of an Omega going into heat.

Making sure Darren had his snacks, Falkirk called for his car and Darren's MI6 bodyguard escorted him home.

--

Slightly over a week later a gaunt Darren returned to MI6. Falkirk hoped he didn't look so emaciated when he returned to work after a heat. But when Falkirk was met and scrutinised by the strange hazel eyes, Darren said, “God! You look worse than me.”

“Thank you, Darren. Andrew's still fighting for his place in our bed.”

A few days after his return Darren entered Falkirk's office.

“Can you scent anything” he asked hesitantly. Informing his friend and PA that the scent of the heat had faded to nothing. Darren confirmed a pregnancy test had been inconclusive but if the scent was fading it was unlikely he was pregnant.

--

Tanner burst into Falkirk's office. On the window that separated his office from E-Branch Tanner brought up some information. “We have word that Sloan will be in Georgia in two days time. No word yet on who his target is.”

With James' down time at an end, he was first in line for the mission. So Falkirk ordered Tanner to take the brief on the assassin to Daniel so James could be duly issued the mission.

That night, Andrew stood at his parents' bedroom door. Dressed in the green flannel onesie with his bear clutched tight. His perceptive blue eyes glared as he watched his dad, take clothes out of the wardrobe and pack them in the suit carrier. The small Omega whined softly, scared. His papa came up the stairs and picked him up. But he was just held instead of being taken to bed.

Falkirk carried Andrew down the stairs, following James. A car was waiting to take James to Gatwick Airport. On the top step, James wound his arm around mate and child both. Kissing Falkirk first, then giving a peck on Andrew's cheek.

“See you soon.” James whispered.

“NA!” Andrew said, not sure what was going on and not liking the changed smell of his dad or his Papa.

James gave a weak smile and slid into the back seat of the car.

“Come on, bed.” Falkirk said and Andrew buried his face in his papa's neck.
The clock in the foyer below struck four on Falkirk's eighth trip returning his son that night. Tucking him in Falkirk stroked Andrew's hair, sitting beside the small bed. Starting to speak in slow, calm tones. What Falkirk was saying was less important then the tone it was said in. A huge yawn broke Andrew's stillness as his eyes drooped. Falkirk continued until the world disappeared.

A throat cleared started Falkirk awake with Hudson sanding at the door with the early morning bottle for Andrew, and a cup of tea for Falkirk. Realising both himself and Andrew had slept past their usual wake up time. Reluctantly Falkirk roused the young Omega.

When Keading arrived with the car and Selene. Falkirk gave a quick warning about the child's grumpiness and that he was missing his Alpha.

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The following nights weren't any better. A beep from the new motion sensitive baby monitor heralded the imminent arrival. James' absence causing distress, only Hudson or Selene able to quieten Andrew's heart broken mewing for a time. The scent of distress was also starting to be a permanent queue from the child. Every night became a battle of wills to get the child to sleep.

Exhausted as he bathed Andrew, Falkirk then dressed him in his onesie. The moment Andrew was placed on the floor he went to his room. Grabbing his bear off the bed Andrew pulled the cover off and crouched down in a corner covering himself as best he could.

Falkirk looked at the rudimentary nest with empathy. Placing his hand on top of the bundle “I feel it too” Falkirk said, having gotten used to the separation a long time ago. Lying down Falkirk wrapped himself round the nest and tucked the gaps to close the holes without breaching the nest.

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Google had never been a major part of Falkirk's day but with Andrew starting to nest he could see no other option. Finding more than he ever expected Falkirk arranged for a trip to the specialist shop.

The little Omega running the place was pleasant enough as she informed, “We like to maintain a non stimulating atmosphere” as she looked to Selene. Getting the hint Falkirk asked the alpha woman to wait out side.

Casting his eyes over the small shop. There were all manner of Cushions, pillows, blankets everything you needed for indulgent nesting.

Explaining to the woman about Andrew she nodded her understanding. “The 'Nestie' is the latest thing. They have become popular for young children” she said indicating a few small dome tents made of fabric.

Falkirk felt the soft fabric of the surface. Sticking his head in the largest, the weave letting in enough light and air to prevent a stifling or constricting atmosphere.

Pulling his head out Falkirk decided on one about two foot high and three in diameter in a dull red fabric. Falkirk also picked up a few cushions and pillows. Knowing he was paying over the odds but not wanting to wait the extra time Falkirk handed over the money.

Arriving home Falkirk asked Selene to look after Andrew while he and Keading setup the new
Nestie free of an Alpha's scent. Figuring out the instructions took a bit of time and swearing on the part of the omegas.

Ripping open the hermetic seal Falkirk fed the ribs through the fabric and soon ended up with what had been on display in the shop. Opening the seal on the cushions Falkirk placed them inside and the whole thing was placed where Andrew had nestled the night before.

After dinner Falkirk saw Selene, Keading and Cody out, waving as the car disappeared from view. Taking Andrew upstairs Falkirk followed the usual evening routine, of bath and getting ready for bed. Putting Andrew down, at the threshold of his room. Falkirk was met with the light blue eyes as they shifted from him to the strange new thing in the room.

With a little encouragement from his Papa, Andrew approached the Nestie with caution. As wide blue eyes, grasping hands and scenting nose explored the new thing the Child still wasn't convinced by the intruder. Finding the flap at the side Andrew looked inside soon going all the way.

Sitting with his back against the wall by the closed flap Falkirk heard thumps and saw the walls bulges as Andrew moved himself and the pillows around. Andrew obviously liked it, coming back out to retrieve his teddy and went back inside. Soon all movement ended and Falkirk could just hear the imitation of talking Andrew did.

An hour or so later Andrew crawled out with his bear and climbed into bed. Giving a nuzzle and a kiss to the forehead Falkirk exited the room leaving the door open a crack to let in some light.

That night when the baby monitor beeped Falkirk pulled himself out of bed to intercept Andrew. Opening his bedroom door, Andrew nowhere in sight. Falkirk walked along the landing, passed the stairs down and to the stairs going up. Quietly pushing the door to Andrew's room open he was nowhere in sight.

The teddy was gone from Andrew's bed. Quietly Falkirk approached the Nestie pressing his ear to the fabric. Falkirk listened. Hearing slight movement but it was the scent that caught Falkirk. There was still the distressed, despondent but it was far less intense than the previous days.

Leaving Andrew in peace Falkirk returned to bed and wasn't disturbed that night. Entering Andrew's room in the morning the child had returned to bed at some point. Gently coxing him awake Andrew was in better mood than he had been in since James left.

“Good boy” Falkirk said nuzzling his son. The rest of the morning following a more familiar routine, something Andrew could remember and understand.

Arriving at the office. “You look better” Darren muttered as Falkirk passed his PA's desk.

“Actually got some sleep.” Falkirk responded absently reading through his messages and mail.

Opening a hard backed envelope Falkirk pulled out a photograph of himself and the king in their dress uniform. Checking the origin, a stamp from Buckingham palace on the back.

“How Touching.” Darren said, lifting a smaller piece of paper that had fluttered out.

Unfolding the white paper. Of the people Falkirk expected Mycroft's precise scrip was not it. Only the words, 'How Touching.' was written on it. It was always hard to tell if Mycroft was being
sincere or snide when you were speaking to him and written was worst. Deciding to take the words at face value Falkirk placed the photos back into the envelope and then the envelope into his brief case.

At home that evening, after Andrew was tucked up in bed. Falkirk sat at his desk in the library. Opening the large photo album, the book contained a craniological pictographic history of himself. The first page contained James’ MI6 service photo and the page from Falkirk's Q branch passport proclaiming him as 'Falkirk Bond'. The trip to the Bunny boi club, of Falkirk being served a green widow by a barely dressed blond boi in white bunny ears and matching fluffy tail. Clippings from newspapers of James and ones of himself, Christmas, birthdays there was even one of M and Villiers from David, his first god son's christening. Every Double O Falkirk had commissioned and buried had their place as well. Now after a few of Andrew, James and Falkirk himself, came the photo of G.

Once the photo was behind the protective sheet. Falkirk flipped the remaining empty pages. “I'll need a new album soon” Falkirk muttered to himself.
“Miss Evans.” Falkirk said in greeting to the Double O chatting to Darren, as he returned to his office.

“M” She returned, standing to follow M into his office.

The debriefing was going well. Evans a middle of the road operative, she got the job done without the usual flare or fuss the other Double Os tended to produce. Her training as a deep cover agent tended to make her missions slower but on the plus side she drew almost no attention. Her conduct throughout the assignment was neither egotistical or hesitant so Falkirk didn't need to berate her as he would do the others.

Bursting into Falkirk's office Tanner informed. “Situation brewing with Double Oh Five”

One of Falkirk's favourites. Graham Addison was insufferable, infuriating, endearing and charming in equal measure.

Following Tanner to the situation room the wall of screens already had feeds from a satellite with radio chatter coming over the speakers. Fixing his eyes on a screen following a motorbike racing down a forest trail pursued by several more. “A chase in the middle of nowhere?” Falkirk said looking at the GPS overly on a map.

“They're all ours.” Tanner informed.

“You mean King industries?” Falkirk asked and getting a nod. After the death of Olivia Mansfield's friend Robert King, and his daughter kidnapped M and tried to wipe Istanbul off the map, MI6 had seized King Industries and now quietly controlled the only major oil pipeline from the black sea to the west.

If 005 was now being chased by King employees something was very wrong. “Get me out there” Falkirk ordered Tanner. Looking to Evans “Double O Eight, I must ask you to forgo your leave”

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Touching down in Azerbaijan. Falkirk pulled out his phone, to get the latest update on 005. Tanner giving the location of the Operative and informed, “Double O Five, escaped his pursuers. He returned to his hotel a few hours ago and checked in with us. CCTV shows Ms Kane arriving five minutes ago.”

Ms Kane being a formidable Alpha in her early fifties Falkirk had never met before but had heard stories of. With a viciousness and ruthlessness that would put Gengus Khan to shame she had maintained control despite Russians, locals and gangster attempts to corrupt, bully or seize King Industries.
Getting to the hotel quickly. The MI6 tactical squad slid in the keycard, to Addison's door and gently opened it. Even before the door was fully open Selene grabbed Falkirk pulling him to the side. Evans and the tactical team surged forward and the silenced thumps of suppressed gun fire rang out.

“Secure!” Evans called from inside. Letting Falkirk up Selene looked into the room before allowing M in.

Coming round the door. Falkirk cast his eyes over the room. The Black clad tactical squad members moving about or covering the prisoners. Seeing Ms Kane on her knees with her fingers interlaced on top of her head, Falkirk glanced at her before moving on. Basic first aid was being applied to her henchmen.

Going to the bedroom. “Stop!” Falkirk ordered as one of the squaddies was about to cut the plastic ties keeping the nude operative spread eagle on the bed.

The only out of place person was an Omega female kneeling at the bottom of the bed. Again with her interlaced fingers on top of her head. Seeing a highly polished box beside the bed Falkirk flipped it open. Lifting out one of the instruments with a fine porcelain handle, a trigger operating a hinged spike at the end.

Falkirk mused to the tied up Double O, “You do make the nicest friends, Addison.”

“I'm getting cold. Unless you're appreciating the view?” 005 drawled.

Pulling out an instrument James had once described, used on a testicle to gradually apply force until they ruptured. A bit like vice grip pliers. Holding the three pronged claw, and slowly turning the delicately blue painted porcelain handle so the middle curving prong opened. Addison gulped, seeing M with the implement of torture, and knowing the omega was capable of using it.

“As far as I'm aware you have one consistent, fatal flaw. Most Double Os have it, it's to do with where they think from. I could fix it.” Falkirk said letting his tone get gradually colder.

“M... sir?” came the squeaking response.

“Stop thinking with that thing and you could be great” Falkirk said pointing between the Operatives legs with the castration tool.

“Yes, M, Sir.” Addison snapped in responded.

Switching to a hooked bladed tool, again with ornate handle matching the set. Falkirk slit the ties on the Operative's hand then handed him the knife.

“So what's your story?” Falkirk asked the kneeling Omega. The black hair, black eyes and olive skin indicating Mediterranean heritage. Like Falkirk she was in her mid to late twenties and the facial recognition in Falkirk's glasses turned up nothing. Refusing to answerer she just glared at him. Leaning in Falkirk scented only her omega and no emotional que, but telling was the same soap he himself once used to remove the scent of his bonded Alpha.

005 muttered, “You were all talk a moment ago,” Yanking on his trousers with unnecessary hast and force. “You were going to show me my knot. Make ribbons of my intestines. Pull out my eye, only one, you want me to see my heart stop beating.”

“Now that's not very nice, Miss?” Falkirk said squatting down to be at eye level. She was adamant to remain tight lipped and Falkirk knew it. Shaking his head Falkirk returned to the suite's lounge.
with the Omega being frog marched behind him.

Taking a casual seat Falkirk gestured to the chair opposite. Slowly Kane moved into the indicated position and Falkirk snapped, “Report, Ms Kane!”

Kane looked to the dead and wounded being removed then to the Omega. “I was doing my job.” Kane said simply and dispassionate as if discussing the weather.

“Your companion seemed to be taking her duties to heart?” Falkirk stated looking to the Omega girl. Addison muttered something in the background that Falkirk chose to ignore. “Are you her Alpha?”

“One bullet, back of the head please?” Kane responded. Falkirk hated the truly fanatical sort, they knew no fear and even death was something they would welcome.

“And her?” Falkirk asked indicating the still silent Omega. It was a vain hope that the Alpha would think of their omega but as Kane shrugged, it confirmed Kane only thought of herself.

Kane addressed the Omega girl. “Alice will find her own way. She is not so fragile.”

“Take her” Falkirk ordered the member of the tactical team guarding the Omega. Securing her hands he marched the Omega out of the suite.

After the Omega was out of sight Falkirk ordered Kane to be removed as well. Giving a subtle shake of the head. “Evans, accompany Ms Kane. I don't want her doing anything to herself, before we can ask her some questions.”

“Yes, M.” she said and moved out with Kane. Addison issued a threatening growl as Kane passed him.

“Report” Falkirk snapped at Addison.

“Went off the deep end, totally native” Addison informed. Addison detailed the corruption and kickbacks he had found in King Industries. Adding, “Kane boasted Alice was an FSB gift.”

Falkirk was at an impasse. He needed someone he could trust to take over King Industries. Someone who knew the area and practices of the groups operating locally. Alec was the first though Falkirk had, but he was just about fit enough to go to the end of the street alone, so the opposite side of the continuant was out.

There was only one thing Falkirk could think of. Pulling out his phone he waited for Mycroft to pick up. “I need favour”

Mycroft's tone was odd, reserved, as he responded, “I could hardly refuse”

Asking for a full management team for Europe's biggest oil pumping company was a big favour and Mycroft wasn't slow at saying so. Falkirk reminded, “King Industries is an MI6 asset and will maintain control”

“Of course brother. It will be a few days to organise someone, trustworthy.” Mycroft said. Like most times Mycroft spoke Falkirk didn't know if Mycroft was placating or threatening in his response.

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Getting Station B to set him up a residence. Falkirk decided to wait for Mycroft's team to arrive personally. Evans reported in just before leaving the country with Kane and the Omega. The local Station director showed Falkirk into an old factory, in a desolate area outside of the city.

“I thought the rat infested tunnels were bad.” Falkirk observed looking around the water stained rooms. Several birds detached themselves from the rafters and flew out the broken windows. The tactical team were setting up under Selene's command while Addison came very close to sulking in the corner.

Round a corner and out of sight Falkirk changed out of his three piece suit and into something more appropriate for the climate. Coming out, dressed in insulated black combat trousers and thick dark green jumper concealing the layers beneath. Securing the pocket watch James had gotten him in the shirt pocket beneath the jumper.

At a rickety table Falkirk debriefed Addison personally. Working together on a laptop Falkirk drew up a full chart of King Industries identifying who had to be repatriated, eliminated or ignored.

Jason one of the tactical team and designated cook set a kettle to boil over a camp stove. By the time Falkirk was drawing up a hand written list Jason placed a tin cup beside him. The citrus and bergamot scent acting like a reassuring balm.

Giving one of the lists to the Beta male from Station B. “I want them in England by dawn.” Falkirk ordered. The next order was dangerous while he was still in the country but he wanted it dealt with immediately. Handing the next list to Addison “Good hunting, Double O five”

“Thank you, M. See you soon.” The Double O said with a soft dangerous smile.

“Try not to screw anyone who can get my number!” Falkirk shouted but Addison was gone.

Closing the laptop Falkirk approached one of the sleeping bags. Two of the Alphas from the tactical team were already asleep, the group having moved to a shift. The smell of damp filled Falkirk's nostrils and surrounded by non pack Alphas prevented Falkirk from fully relaxing even when Selene came close enough for her scent to be added to the mix.

In the early hours Falkirk switched, letting Selene rest before sun up. Keeping one of her guns on her Selene handed the other to Falkirk before she lay down. While Selene rested, Falkirk busied himself. Filling the kettle from the water container and putting it on to boil. Mixing the porridge Falkirk handed the bowls to the waking men. Also making tea and coffee before booting his laptop Falkirk prepared for the visit to King Industries offices.

Piling into the two land rovers Falkirk and the task group went to the regional head office. Mostly populated by bewildered lower level functionaries, the senior staff running for the hills, kidnapped or having met their end during the night.

Falkirk confronted the only senior member of staff, an embedded Russian FSB agent who was moving quickly to destabilise operations. Unlike Operatives, agents weren't employed for their prowess but their ability to go unnoticed. Confronting the Beta male with his true identity he gladly accepted Falkirk's offer to run or be renditioned to somewhere International law was only a myth.

Extending the offer to a few others of questionable allegiance Falkirk set up camp in Kane's office. Hacking Kane's personal computer took longer than Falkirk expected. Berating himself for being out of practice Falkirk pulled up the personal files.

Securing the computer from the network Falkirk ordered one of the tactical squad to remain on site,
to guard the computer and files. Moving on Falkirk repeated the same process on multiple sites giving people their marching orders. From an early start it was long past midnight when Falkirk returned to the head office. Most of the night was spent going through Kane's files while being supplied awful mush and tea.

Not having found anything on the computer. No convenient, 'Evidence of corruption' folder. Falkirk suspected Kane had disguised her illegal activity within the legitimate accounts. Which meant it was down to the accountants to go through everything with a fine toothed comb.

Reaching the end of what he could do, Falkirk looked forward to having a doze on the leather couch. Closing the programs Falkirk noticed something, a discrepancy in the hard disk size.

Finding a hidden partition Falkirk got to work accessing the hidden data. There, he found everything. There were the real accounts, contracts, contracts. Resigning himself to not getting his nap he trawled through the information.

Exhausted Falkirk looked up. From arriving at the head office in the middle of the night, bright light was striped across the floor from the angled blinds. Getting up Falkirk tilted them up and was momentarily blinded by the afternoon sun. Returning to the computer Falkirk continued to work.

The light began to fade and the lights where switched on. Bathroom breaks where the only exercise Falkirk had gotten in the 24 hours he had been in the office. Realising it had been nearly two days since he had left Britain. With the time difference Falkirk didn't think it to be too late. Pulling out his phone and dialling home.

Keading sounded harassed and exasperated as he picked up. Falkirk's heart clenched as he listened to the distress Andrew was going through in the absence of both parents. Keading held the phone for Andrew but hearing his Papa without being able to make physical contact only made the situation worse. By the time the call was gracelessly ended both Falkirk and Andrew were in a worse state.

Falkirk wiped his eyes. Still hearing the sound of his son crying, long after the call had ended. He still had a job to do, so Falkirk rubbed the moisture from his eyes bringing the world back into focus.

Concentrating on the screens before him Falkirk pushed through his emotions getting the work done right so he could go home. Selene came in for a while, obviously having spoken to her mate. So her stressed scent was added to the room. Eventually Falkirk ordered her out as her presence was distracting him from the figures in front of him.

From the information Falkirk drew up an initial report. More research would be required but Falkirk was already drawing a contact list for 005. It was looking like Butler will have to spend time out here cleaning up Kane's mess too.

Selene and the tactical squad patrolling gave Falkirk the sense of security to not look up as the door silently swung open. As expected a cup clinked as it was placed on the desk, it was the Alpha's scent that caught Falkirk's attention. Looking up into the blue eyes of his older brother and sitting back.

“What are you doing here?”

“I had to ensure a smooth transition of management” Mycroft said taking a seat across from Falkirk. Taking an obvious sniff “Roughing it, I see.”
It was Falkirk's turn to give a tight placating smile at the obvious, simplicity of the remark. “Dose not bathing for three days smell so bad?”

“It dose give one a scent of history” Mycroft said before asking “Something upset you?”

Pulling out a bottle of vodka he had found and pouring a measure into an empty tin mug Falkirk offered it to Mycroft as he took a swig from the bottle. Grimacing at the hash taste.

“Someone, actually.” Falkirk rasped. Continuing after his throat recovered Falkirk told his brother about the phone call.

Where most Alpha would tuck the distressed Omega under their chin and stroke their back and neck Mycroft seemed at a loss as what to do. Giving up Falkirk stood. “I leave King Industries in the care of your associates”

Packing up Falkirk said he was heading home before looking directly at Mycroft “If you take advantage of this situation I will....” Falkirk warned, trailing off really not wanting to threaten his brother.

“I am aware of the need for King Industries for MI6's operational benefit and Britain's continuing energy security” Mycroft responded. Following Falkirk out there was a general increase in noise and movement. Mycroft introduced his brother to an old school friend.

Falkirk shook hands with the upper class twit. Daniel described Richard's type as 'Tim nice but dim', upper class, well connected but without the intelligence to make a success in his own right. I good stooge to have around, as long as they got their free champagne lunches they were happy.

Mycroft assured Richard was competent enough for the post without the ambition to go beyond what was expected of him. Falkirk warned 'Tim' that a representative would be out in a few days. Finally Falkirk thanked his brother who had decided to stay for now.

Stepping onto the tarmac it was the first time Falkirk was eager to get on a plane. Every clunk and rev brought Falkirk one step closer to home. The plane, a smaller private jet comfortably fit the team that entered Azerbaijan three days ago.

The pilot helpfully informed there would be a flying time of approximately three hours and the moment Falkirk felt himself get heavier he started counting down. Imagining a clock Falkirk closed his eyes '10800' not too fast he allowed the mental image to rotate '10799', '10798' so on, ignoring all distractions. '1556', '1555', '1554'

“This is you captain we are about five minuets from London City” the speaker squawked.

Changing his mental image '300', '299' the image continued until at '8' a jolt went through the plane and the noise mounted at the rapid slowing of the vehicle.

In his car, it took a monumental amount of self will not to snap at the diver to hurry up. 'Home' Falkirk thought as they turned onto Cherry Tree lane. Stepping out Falkirk ascended the stairs, unusually the door didn't open. Unless Hudson was asleep he usually pulled it open before Falkirk's foot landed on the top step.

Just as Falkirk was about to pull out his key the door swung open. The lines on Hudson's face seeming deeper with bags under his eyes. He also carried Andrew tucked under his chin. The moment Andrew saw his Papa he started mewling and squirming in the older Alpha's arms.

At the sound Keading burst into the foyer from the lounge. Hair messed from sleep, he looked as
bad as Hudson. Dark circles, prominent around his blood shot eyes. Keading relaxed seeing his Alpha and pack mate returning.

Taking Andrew from Hudson the child clung to Falkirk with all his might and issued small pathetic mewls.

Letting Selene and Keading greet each other Falkirk thanked Hudson and headed upstairs to wash. Entering his bedroom Falkirk saw an Andrew sized tunnel in the covers of the bed.

“I'm back now” Falkirk said and nuzzled his son again. Attempting to put Andrew down he refused to become detached from his Papa and his mewling got louder.

Filling the bath Falkirk resigned himself to having company while he washed. The scent unhindered by clothing seemed to help Andrew but he still didn't let go. Washing his hair with Andrew's arms wrapped around his neck was tricky but lying back in the warm water with Andrew resting on his chest was calming. Breathing in deeply the damp clean hair as he stroked Andrew's back.

Subdued Andrew stuck to his Papa the rest of the day and even night. Falkirk didn't have the heart to take Andrew to his bed during the night. In the morning Falkirk was able to move out of contact range but had to remain visible.

When Keading arrived Andrew refused to let go of his papa, screaming with tears streaming down his face. Shaking his head “Looks like you get the day off” Falkirk said to the Omega.

It was not the most professional point of Falkirk's life as he walked through the Executive Branch with Andrew perched on one hip, the baby bag over his shoulder and brief case in hand. Setting up a blanket on the floor of his office and scattering some toys Falkirk placed Andrew down and sat at his desk.

Making arrangements for Daniel to leave the building, so Butler could have a meeting with M. The three highest ranked members of MI6 not allowed to be in the same location at the same time.

“b o”

Looking up at the sound Falkirk saw Andrew with both hands and nose pressed against the window. Looking to his Papa he repeated the sound of a B and O. Seeing what Andrew was pointing at Falkirk smiled and in encouraging tones, “yes, Boat”

Knocking and entering Tanner waved to Andrew before placing a folder in front of Falkirk. The transcript of Kane and the Alice's interrogation. The Omega's was very slim 'Refused to Speak' was prominently marked along with a doubt about the effectiveness of more extreme measures due to suspected previous abuse.

It was easier contemplating torture when he couldn't hear his son making goo goo noises in the background. Closing the file Falkirk turned his attention back to Tanner.

Seeing something strange in the beta's posture but not quite able to pin it down, exactly. “Am I going to have to order you to spit it out?”

“Mycroft was happy you turned to him.”

Nodding “Lets just hope he doesn’t do anything, creative”

Darren interrupted the chat, informing, “Mr Butler is here.”
Looking up the Welshman was standing patiently for his audience. “Send him in” Falkirk ordered. The new Alpha despite his relaxed calm scent caused Andrew to bolt to his Papa's side and hide behind the desk.

Briefing Butler on the situation and giving the information he had found so far along with the interrogation report. Falkirk ordered, “Find out what Kane hasn't told us, Double O Five is on station you may utilise him. And could you keep an eye on the new management of King Industries as well.”

“'I'll leave at once, M.” the man drawled with a twinkle in his blue eye. He then left, giving a smile as he did so.

Putting his hand down Falkirk started stroking the absolutely silent child. Pushing his chair back Falkirk encouraged Andrew into his lap continuing to stroke his neck. Tanner quietly extracted himself from the situation. Falkirk continued to work around the child in his lap until after some time Andrew gained the confidence to further explore the new place.

Deciding on an early lunch Falkirk took Andrew's hand leading him through E Branch. Coming to the the reception. Falkirk passed the memorial wall and out. Selene following a few paces behind. Heading for the river Falkirk let Andrew see the boats moving up and down. Drawing Andrew's attention Falkirk pointed to the curved windows of his office, the one that exploded in Silva's purging fire ball. Shaking off the morbid thoughts Falkirk led Andrew to a cafe he once frequented regularly.

The perky Omega behind the counter recognised him and was joyed to see the new addition. Remembering his order Falkirk added something for Selene and Andrew as well. In the room mixed with strange scents Andrew reverted to clinging to his Papa hiding his face from the room.

Returning to MI6 Falkirk went to visit Q branch. Entering the administration Daniel was currently berating an indifferent Double O Nine while 008 was watching on in amusement.

Giving up on the unrepentant blond omega, Daniel approached placing his hand on Andrews neck and stroking.

“Separation anxiety.” Falkirk informed at the man's curious look.

Daniel leaned in to nuzzle, with Andrew reciprocating the gesture for the known Alpha. “Good little laddie” Daniel praised earning a small smile from his godson.

Closing in Maloney offered his wrist, first letting Andrew identify him as an Omega before coming closer. “Hello, little man” Maloney said with a pleasant smile. As a beta, Evans was accepted as she came over to see the boy.

Falkirk had brought Andrew a tour shortly after he had been born. But now Andrew could understand and interact. Reintroducing Andrew first to Annie who was pleased to see them. Chatting for a few minutes they discussed her due date which by the size and position of her bump seemed an optimistically long time time away. Underwood was as prim and proper as ever, if Mycroft didn't prefer the male form Falkirk would have defiantly introduced the pair.

Hal a Beta and an old colleague was acceptable to the young Omega but the moment Peter(R) approached Andrew cringed and hid from the Alpha in the crook of his papa's neck.

Returning to E Branch. Darren was able to keep Andrew as long as he could see his Papa through the glass wall. During that time Falkirk managed the teleconferences and phone calls he needed to
make.

Afterwards Maloney arrived for his debriefing. Andrew for his part was happy enough in the presence of the two Omegas even going so far as to climb into 009's lap and nuzzling him. A moment of panic arose when Maloney stood with Andrew still in his arms. Looking desperately for his Papa Andrew relaxed as he was placed in the chair that Maloney had been occupying.

“See ya, little M.” Maloney said and ruffled his hair and headed out.

Looking from the out of control hair of his son to his own reflection. Running his hand through his hair, more limp than it used to be and not quite as thick. There were even a few grey hairs showing even in the barely visible reflection of the glass wall. Shaking his head Falkirk returned his attention back to the screen.

On a whim Falkirk pulled up the latest activities on James, usually no news was good news when it came to James Bond. Finding covered up footage of an exhilarating chase over roof tops, along with CCTV footage of a hook up in a casino bar. Watching an unknown woman caress James chin made Falkirk's inside clench. They never discussed James' liaison when on missions. The only thing that prevented a full blown jealous rage was James himself. When the woman caressed the Double O's face James turned into the caress when with Falkirk he would expose his neck invitingly, wanting a nuzzle. The last known contact was when James entered Azerbaijan.

“Buggar” Falkirk's swearing drew Andrews attention. “He was less the sixty miles away and I had no idea” Falkirk muttered. Hopefully, Falkirk thought a couple of days and James would swan in bold as brass.

The office workers slowly started packing up. Usually Falkirk worked on for hours more, along with Tanner and a few others but today he needed to get home. Waiting for the day shift to leave Falkirk started packing up as well. Stopping at Darren's desk Falkirk instructed him to have an early night too. Before Falkirk could go Darren called him back and handed him a 'leave form'. The date was still over a month away but Falkirk signed it anyway.

“Just remind me when the time gets closer?” Falkirk asked.

“Will do” Darren responded

Home was a familiar routine. Feed Andrew, feed Falkirk, bath Andrew then together time before a story and bed. Not sure how Andrew would react to his absence Falkirk left the door open a crack and went for his own bath. Doing some last minute admin with a cup of tea in the library before going to bed. Giving one last check on Andrew, still in his bed Falkirk went to his own room.

Knowing it was late but knowing he would be up Falkirk called Daniel. Requesting a report on James before asking Daniel to forego as much of the post mission requirements as possible. Due to Andrew and his own growing anxiety. Daniel agreed and on Falkirk's request passed the phone to Alec.

They chatted for a while before Alec asked to return on light duties. The request was a weight off Falkirk that he didn't realise he was carrying. Agreeing Falkirk told his friend to report to his office first thing and they would discus appropriate duties. Hanging up Falkirk switched off the light and pulled James' pillow close breathing deeply the lingering scent. The baby monitor beeped but Andrew didn't show up so Falkirk ignored it thinking he was going to his Nestie.

When Falkirk woke in the morning he had a slumbering visitor curled up on the other side of James' pillow.
When it came time to get up Falkirk stringently followed normal routine. When Keading and Selene arrived Andrew started to protest but MI6 was no place for a child and leaving a mewling crying child tore him up.

Riding in the car Falkirk let his thoughts run in circles round his head. By the time they arrived at the underground garage Falkirk realised he had written his resignation in his head.

Shaking off his thoughts Falkirk entered the building. He met up with Alec as he waited to pass through the checkpoint outside E branch. Falkirk walked through the office with his pack mate. Noticing Alec still wasn't as graceful as he used to be and how the other man stopped himself from holding his stomach.

Tanner was waiting outside his office along with the head of internal affairs. Falkirk made it clear to Ferguson although Alec was in his department Alec would be reporting directly to M. Giving Ferguson his orders to extend Alec every possible courtesy Falkirk then turned his attention to Alec.

Ordering Alec to familiarise himself with the operations of Internal Affairs and to bring his fitness levels up. He would work as Falkirk's eyes, ears and if needed a gun in pursuing those who had fallen from grace. Dismissing them Falkirk asked Alec to wait.

Waiting until Tanner had closed the door Falkirk looked to his first pack mate and friend. “How are you?” Falkirk asked in concerned tones.

“M isn't meant to ask that question. It's always 'Are you fit?', 'Competency?' at the most 'Can you do the job?'.” Alec said a bit petulantly.

“I'm more than just M.” Falkirk said softly.

“Would you drop the tone. I'm not about to drop dead” Alec complained.

Tilting his head to the side and exposing his neck Falkirk also made his voice as innocent and naïve as possible. “Yes, Yes you're still my hero who saved me from the big bad men”

Snorting Alec gave a teasing smile as he told Falkirk to, “Shut up.”

Watching Alec move he still didn't convey the power and grace he one held although he didn't have the injured gate he had been sporting the last few months.

Ending the day in Whitehall Falkirk was trapped by a Minister attempting to stamp his authority on MI6. One benefit of Mallory's predecessor, the ego centric politicians weren't brave enough to challenge the only person Urquhart though of as a threat.

Mallory didn't instil the same level of fear and control over his ministers and now they were taking the opportunity to be assertive now they could.

“And you decided on a three day holiday?” the Foreign Minister demanded.

Falkirk was willing to be polite to the representative of the people but there ware only so many times he could say 'MI6 Operations were on a strict need to know basis'.

“Need to know, Minister.”

“You disappeared for three day and I don't need to know?” the minister demanded.
Considering he was a non executive director of King Industries' main UK rival. “No!” Falkirk answered.

Deciding to end this Falkirk said, “Perhaps we could discuss your three day trip to Thailand.” the minister froze.

“If that is all Minister?” Falkirk stood and headed to the heavy oak door of the old fashioned style office. Frowning, a thought came to him. Looking to the silently fuming man and then the civil servant standing unobtrusively to the side of the room. “Do you know where I was?”

The permanent secretary to the foreign minister, a position not controlled by the politician who had no say on some staff members answered.

“Of course not, M. When MI6 declares something 'Need To Know', we can't overrule that.” Sir Humphrey said, in a way that made Falkirk think he knew exactly where Falkirk had been.

“I'm so glad. I would so hate to conduct an investigation into a leak and who was the recipient of the leaked information.” Falkirk said in a tone that meant he would find and hold to account anyone who talked.

By the time Falkirk got home the threat to the Foreign Minister's had made it's way to Mallory. The man himself was sitting in his library awaiting him. Just as in the old days Falkirk pulled the bourbon out and filled two glasses. As Mallory started to broach the subject of the foreign minister Falkirk snapped, “Keep your ministers in line if they are to face me.”

“You are making enemies” Mallory warned.

“At the moment another Conservative government is unlikely” Falkirk said knowing he had hit a sore spot with the PM.

“That may be but there is time for manoeuvrings to be the end of you” Mallory continued.

“I wrote my resignation on my way to work this morning because Andrew didn't want me to leave him” Falkirk fell silent for a moment before continuing. “There are two people who will get me out of MI6, James is one, Andrew is the other. If anyone else tries they had better come equipped with a halo and wings because if they don't, they will fail.”

“M, Urquhart, Bond you have learned from very strong individuals. A bully will...”

In a voice cold and hard, adamant and true Falkirk said, “I have learned from more than just them. Above all I am M and I am Bond. And as for being a bully. Yes I am. Because if I was anything less I would be the one being trampled on and dominated.”

Knowing Falkirk was not going to budge on the matter Mallory resigned himself to telling his minister to suck it up. Giving his thanks and goodbyes Mallory departed having achieved nothing more than getting a bourbon.

Andrew was sitting on the top of the stairs with Keading and Cody not willing to approach until the strange Alpha was gone. Opening his arms Falkirk scooped up his son when he ran to him. Waving Selene and Keading off Falkirk began the night time routine as he had done for two years before.

The bleep from the baby monitor roused Falkirk. As before Andrew didn't come downstairs right away and Falkirk dozed off again. The sound of the door alerted Falkirk to an immanent guest but the scent preceding the person was too heavy and intense.
“James” Falkirk moaned in his half awake state. A soft chuckle sounded as the bed dipped with the added weight. The sensual nuzzling brought Falkirk to full wakefulness.

Chapter End Notes

Everything is a bit hectic at the moment. I might get a couple of chapters up over the next few days. But updates will be sporadic until the new year. Thanks for baring with.
**Biding Patience: Road trip**

Chapter Notes

First of one huge chapter that I decided to split up. Making it short and easier to edit and put up. There will be a few, hopefully before Christmas.

As always. Thanks for reading. All kudos and comments. And in case I forget in later chapters.

Merry Christmas! Seasons Greetings! Happy Holidays!

“Da! Da!”

The high squeal waking up the two in the bed, followed by a flying jump. After fully waking his parents Andrew wriggled and pushed to squirm and press himself against his Alpha bathing in James' scent.

Issuing a playful growl James wrestled Andrew down nuzzling him. The happy child giving a rapid woodpecker like laugh.

“He's getting so big!” James said with wonder, it had been just weeks but Falkirk too had noticed the rate their son grew at. In Falkirk's case it was manly down to the clothes he had to buy for the ever growing child.

“And people are starting to understand him.” Falkirk added referring to the simple words their son was making now.

Andrew barely noticed his papa leaving for work that day. Not too put out, it was the nature of an Omega for their world to revolve around their Alpha, parent to begin with and mate later on. Sexiest it may be but there was an element of truth in it none the less. So Falkirk watched his mate and happily grinning child as they waved from the top of the steps as his car pulled away.

--

Falkirk first noticed the unconscious reminder of Darren's on coming heat. Snacks had started appearing at his desk and the Alphas had started circling like sharks.

Shaking his head Falkirk concentrated on his work until an alert sounded. One of the people he monitored had entered the building, habit forced Falkirk to see who it was. Alec's new id appeared entering the building and was registered at check points as he made his way to training.

Looking up, the day shift was gone, only Darren remained in the anti-section of Falkirk's office. The communal section beyond Darren had moved to the night shift with only a few of the workstation were occupied. Tanner and a few others should be about but they had there own offices.

Getting up, Falkirk sent Darren home for the night and reassured Selene he was not leaving the
building, but his bodyguard followed anyway. Moving through to the inner building in order to access the subterranean levels Falkirk got off the lift before reaching Q branch. In one of the smaller gyms reserved for the assessment of a single person Falkirk found Alec.

Alec was bare chested as he did pull ups. A nasty scar ran from his belly button to beneath the waistband of his ugly blue tracksuit trousers. Falkirk knew the c-section was the more dangerous type, but the doctors went for it, something about less damaging to the muscle structure or something. There was still the livid stretch marks too.

Alec demanded, between grunts of his pull ups, “What... do... you... want...”

“Usually when someone comes in like you did, it means trouble. But if you're intending to behave I will leave you in peace” Falkirk said getting a typical Double O style “Yes mother”

Shaking his head Falkirk threw a “Have fun” over his shoulder as he left. Happy to see his friend returning to strength again.

--

Paying his mate a visit one day, James passed the PA's desk and entered M's office. “He's getting close” James said of Darren.

“I know! I've been chasing off Alphas since yesterday.” Falkirk responded casually.

James fell silent as he wandered around the office, forcing Falkirk to look up. A beckoning finger forced Falkirk to come up beside James at the full length windows looking over the Thames.

Looking to where James was pointing they could see Keading in the distance holding onto Andrew as they watched a passing boat. The two just standing there, watching their son in the distance.

“I'd like to go for a drive, just the three of us.” James mused as he maintained a professional distance.

“Sounds nice.”

Darren called through the intercom, “Butler on the line.”

Indicating James could stay if he wished Falkirk pressed the button for speaker. “Report!” Falkirk ordered.

The deep resonating tone of the former 007 filled the room.

“Kane was in it up to her neck. She was playing all the groups off each other, crushing unions, pitting one gang against other, siphoning funds and oil to as yet unknown locations. It actually looks like she was destabilising the region. Most of the groups are now after her, King Industries is under siege. I recommend termination of the Omega, what I have found points to her being an FSB agent.” Butler summarised before justifying his conclusions. As Butler spoke something caught Falkirk's attention. “...The situation isn't helped by some diplomat and spies stepping on our toes, so to speak...”

“Is Mycroft Holmes still out there?”
“He's a regular visitor, three trips in the last week.” Butler informed giving Falkirk a sinking feeling.

Instructing Butler to continue Falkirk listened to the information Butler had and on the Omega female. Only known name was Alice but that was the latest in a host of nicknames, the current given to her by Kane. Falkirk could hear Addison in the background complaining about the 'Psycho Bitch' and Butler trying to quieten the Double O.

“I am aware of Double Oh Five's opinion on Alice. Anything more on her?” Falkirk drawled. It was not a nice life Butler described for Alice. Butler warning what he was saying was just the stories he had uncovered and some contradicted other.

Alice's life boiled down to a child taken by a criminal for whatever reason they used to justify there actions(depending on the story it was to repay family debt, personal debt or someone just wanted her). Alice was then passed around as a reward, prize, or just discarded until her first proper bond mate(Butler saying there were many conflicting rumours about that time in her life). From that bound Alpha, she was taught first hand about pain.

Butler finishing, “One of the more credible stories say Alice was passed from one of the criminal gangs, into the hands of an FSB agent. Which is where she learned her skills. Alice was then used to watch, or help, or bribe Kane, depending on what rumour you listen to. She may be a victim. She may have been siding with Kane because that had been her life for so long. But she may now be a fully aware accomplice in Kane's action. I would side on the latter.”

“M?” Addison called, softly. Even James recognised the tone. It was the benefit of the doubt, given to the people caught up in the bad situations they couldn't get out of. “She.. Alice...”

“Double O Five, do you think she is or was loyal to Kane or whatever Kane was doing?”

“I don't know. And as long as she's in a cell, without access to pointy things I'm willing to give her a chance.”

Finishing up the call, Falkirk disconnected. The cold analytical part of his mind awoke at the assessment of the Omega. At that moment Falkirk realised how much like M he had become. Sending Tanner a message to make the arrangements.

James, as if reading his mind, said, “Double O Five won't be pleased.”

“When Double O Five becomes M he can decide what to do. Until then he can tow the line. And besides, 'I don't know' without the desire to kill is almost spy speak for ‘I trust’.”

James and Falkirk then headed out. Joining Andrew and Keading in the cafe Andrew immediately abandoned his minder in favour of his Alpha. Selene took up position beside her mate.

“He's planning on recruiting Addison's new friend” James said conversationally

“Oh, Addison has Darren to protect him from the mean little girl.” Selene teased.

Andrew was very cranky as he was woken far earlier than usual. Going out the back and into the garage where James was packing the Aston Martin. Falkirk secured Andrew in his car seat and
tucked a blanket around him but his curiosity was keeping him awake. Hudson waited at the double doors for James to pull out into the lane behind the houses. Hudson closing the doors behind them and returned to the house.

“Where are we going?” Falkirk asked. James would only give a quick smile and return his attention to the road.

Andrew dozed off again holding his bear securely in his sleep and giving it an unconscious nuzzle every now and again.

It didn't take long for Falkirk to figure out where they were heading. There was only one thing that would pull James north. Instead of a long journey James detoured to Yorkshire pulling up at the private road to the house of Shane Ford. Falkirk's nephew, David was hard at work at the kitchen table, his school work spread out in front of him.

Andrew refused to leave James' side in the presence of the two other Alphas despite David's best efforts to engage his cousin. Shane didn't push the skittery Omega beyond his comfort level. During the night Andrew slept with his parents basking in the safety of their presence.

In the pre dawn hours James roused the Omegas. After a quick breakfast Falkirk nuzzled his brother and nephew before they headed off again.

Moving through Glasgow and past Perth the rode became desolate with encroaching mountains either side. As the valley widened, instead of the road to Skyfall James headed along another road, to the village.

Being Sunday the village was silent, most of the population packed into the small Church. Knowing the old Game keeper was not religious, James parked at a small cottage by the old dirt track that crossed the moors to Skyfall.

Pulling Andrew out Falkirk placed him on his feet while James knocked the door. Getting no answer James circled the building looking for any sign of the old man. Seeing the well trampled grass paths James started to follow the most well used. Andrew trotted to catch up over the uneven ground.

Falkirk followed James as he watched Andrew make good progress over the ground and up a small hillock. When Andrew reached James, the father placed the his son on his shoulders as he looked over the terrain. Coming up to the pair Falkirk could just see the rebuilt Skyfall and the small chapel that stood in the distance.

“Up for a trek?” James said with a teasing smile.

Resigned to his fate and luckily they all had sturdy shoes and warm clothes, Falkirk nodded. Encouragingly, James placed Andrew on his feet and started to move off. For nearly an hour they trampled through the countryside. Falkirk stumbling a few times and Andrew tiring himself out. With Andrew again on his father's shoulders, a sudden bang rang through the valley. While Falkirk and Andrew looked startled towards the originating location James seemed unsurprised and continued on.

Another shot rang out closer and more distinct, James just continued on. Coming on a man stooping down.
“Traipsing about like a heard of Elephants, going to get your selves shot” the old man grumbled not looking up.

“Never pull a trigger, unless you know what you're going to shoot.” James said, earning a chuckle from Kincade at have one of his own lessons thrown back at him.

With his brace of rabbit Kincade stood to look at James, his eyes drawn to the person sitting on the other Alpha's shoulder. “Another impudent little pup?”

“He's learning.” James returned.

“Tommy lad” Kincade said addressing Falkirk. And patting the slight man on the back.

Kincade led the way back, until he started down an old over grown path.

“We parked at your place.” James informed nodding towards the village.

Giving a quiet nod of understanding, Kincade gave up on the path to Skyfall and headed to the village. “Tommy fixed the old girl up, better than new.” Kincade informed. James made a dismissive noise as Kincade discussed the rebuilt property. “And what he did to your Father's gun.” Kincade continued with a tone of awe and respect.

James continued to endure the rambling in silence, still unwilling to discuss the house he had forced himself to ignore. Along with his father's gun that he discarded with as much ease as the Q branch issues, and finding it months later by chance rusted and decaying.

Arriving home Kincade invited his guests in. Setting a kettle to boil over a gas hob he joined James and Falkirk at the kitchen table. Andrew sitting quietly in his father's lap, would look at the strange Alpha openly until his gaze was noticed then hide in his father's chest.

The visit was brief and after a cup of tea and a gift of a rabbit it was time to head back down the road. James drove into the early ours to get back to London.

In the morning Falkirk had a leisurely time getting dressed while James dealt with Andrew's morning routine. Keading and Selene arrived on scheduled and with a nuzzle to his son and mate Falkirk headed for work.

Returning home that evening, Falkirk was impressed by Mrs Bridges Chicken a la King until Hudson casually informed, “It's Mr Kincade's rabbits.”
Standing on the tarmac Falkirk waited for the small private jet to come to a stand still. The first off the lowered door, the blond doppelgänger of Sherlock. Peter Guillam came to a sudden stop seeing who was waiting for them, Mycroft bumping into his back.

“Gentlemen.” Falkirk greeted as they continued down off the plane. Like most Alphas when confronted with wrong doing Guillam had trouble hiding his guilt. Mycroft on the other had was completely unabashed.

“How is Azerbaijan?” Falkirk mused before continuing “Your seventh trip in three weeks, Mycroft? Mr Guillam, your second?”

Falkirk knowing despite his guilt Guillam wouldn't speak and Mycroft wouldn't admit to anything either. Gesturing Mycroft to walk with him Falkirk took his brother's arm.

“I can not prove it but I think the Foreign Secretary knows I have something to do with King Industries. You know the Tory Party, they will sell every asset off in sight given half a chance. I will not tolerate it.”

Making sure they where out of ear shot Falkirk warned.

“I had to hobble the bastard. If I find you had anything, and I mean anything to do with him finding out. If you are taking advantage of my moment of need. I will not only never forgive you, you may or may not live to regret crossing me and endangering MI6's income.”

Mycroft, reassuring his brother, “King Industries is not my focus.”

“The network Kane set up? Is that what you want? But Mycroft you are stepping on MI6 toes and I'm getting concerned.” Falkirk said.

Mycroft gave a smile, that conveyed nothing.

Calling in Tanner to his office, Falkirk was faced with two options, subtlety that the man should see through easily or being straight forward.

“How's Mycroft?” Falkirk asked going for the blunt approach.

“I am not your spy or Mycroft's keeper.” Tanner responded. Getting angry, “You should have seen him when you asked for his help...”

“As honoured as Mycroft was, will it stop him from doing something stupid? You know him, he is an enthusiastic amateur. And in the past has made some big mistakes.” Falkirk demanded.

Letting his last comment sink before Falkirk said, “Warn Mycroft or it won't end well. Dismissed!”
Arriving at the HMP Downview. Falkirk was greeted by the governor. The austere woman, an Alpha large and imposing. Extending her hand in sharp militaristic movements she introduced herself as Ms Trunchable. Her black hair pulled into a severe greasy ponytail, mottled skin indicative of a heavy drinker and exposure. Whenever she spoke she was on the verge of shouting as if she was on a parade ground.

The Omega known as 'Alice' or as Trunchable dubbed her 'the special case' was in the solitary wing. “She escaped from the hospital and the Bitch prison” Trunchable said, headless of who she was speaking to. “Not strong enough to fend off the general populace though.”

Falkirk entered the visiting room. Alice was sitting at one of the metal tables fixed to the floor. The curving benches too, were fixed to the floor. Alice watched him, completely blank faced.

“Remain here!” Falkirk ordered the governor in an unquestioning tone.

Approaching the table Falkirk sat opposite Alice. Rather plane, almost black hair down to her shoulders, dark brown eyes, small and fairly young.

“Hello!” Falkirk said pleasantly, gaining no answer but a continuous staring into his eyes. Placing a folder in front of him and opening the information Butler had uncovered.

“Quite a life” Falkirk observed flicking through the pages. Deciding not to rehash old times Falkirk decided to focus on her future. “You have talent. You even intimidated one of my best.”

“Yours?” Alice muttered. Her voice a little flat, with an eastern European accent Falkirk couldn't distinguish further.

“Mine?” Falkirk asked curiously but only got the same staring in response. Thinking over what he said. “Yes Addison is mine.”

Looking to Selene “Mine” then the nu-intrusive Beta who had accompanied them “Mine” then to the extra MI6 security saying 'mine' in turn. Only the prison personnel were omitted. Seeing she was taking a subtle scenting Falkirk leaned forward exposing his neck.

“You have an Alpha?”

“Mine to.” Falkirk informed, now she looked suspicious.

It was at time like this Falkirk could use a posturing Alpha to slap down for show. Only the prison personnel where likely to do something silly but they were being paragons of professionalism in the situation. So that left Falkirk the only option to confront Alice's suspicions.

“You don't believe me?” Falkirk said taking a more relaxed posture. “Information is and always has been my business. I got so good at tracking down every piece of information I could, I became a threat. I was then given the opportunity to do what I do best. I am now one of the most powerful people in the country. I'm giving you the same option as me, and others. I can get you out of here or leave you to rot for the rest of your life. The choice is yours.”

“You want me to hurt people.” Alice said but something in her still unbroken gaze made Falkirk think she was testing him rather than having problems with being a sanctioned MI6 torturer.

Instead of answering her Falkirk called over the Beta, the current head of interrogations within
MI6. The man a card carrying psychopath contained a deep seated desire to understand a person's reactions to pain and pleasure. Falkirk had watched some of his interrogations and they made what Falkirk did to his father look like a petty slap in comparison. Even Alec the most experience in interrogation techniques had to turn from the man's methods.

“This is E. He will be your mentor and teacher.” Falkirk said. This got a reaction.

“I am best, I don't need teacher” Alice spat at E with contempt.

The psychopath insulted but being charming drawled “You are an amateur.”

Alice said something clearly dismissive and Falkirk looked to Selene for a translation. She said, “Approximately, your ego makes you weak”

Before E could react Falkirk clapped his hands.

“Excellent! You'll get the standard remuneration and get out of jail card.” he said to Alice then looked to E “and you'll get a protege. Be nice or you'll get a one way trip to the village.”

The small weedy man smiled hollowly at the order, threat and the idea of a student.

--

Having returned from his heat the day before Darren was still a little delicate at the moment. Even if he was fully fit he wouldn't have been able to intercept the furious Double O Five storming through E branch.

“Mr Addison” Falkirk calmly greeted as his door was thrown open.

“You hired that, that...”

“Bitch?” Falkirk interrupted, supplying the word he was not able to say.

“You forgot Evil, vicious, cruel...”

Falkirk let the man rant until Addison fell silent. Falkirk reassured, “Alice will be released under the strictest surveillance MI6 has. Unless you go to the brig or start following her, you will not see her.”

Addison complained for a bit more but Falkirk knew it was just him lodging his protest. As long as he kept Alice under control there wouldn't be any trouble.

“Double O Five?” Falkirk called, stopping the man before he pulled open the door to make a show of storming out.

“Did you scent anything in Darren?”

The sandy haired Alpha shook his head. “A little fatigue was all. And the mate, he's covered in it.”

“Thank you, dismissed. And I'll keep Alice away from you.”

Addison nodded and left. Q watched the man as he had a brief word with the curly haired omega.
But the Alpha kept his interaction casual and normal, before heading out.

Going to the break room to make a pot of tea and a plate of biscuits Falkirk carried the tray back to his office, asking Darren to join him. Setting up the tray on his desk and indicating Darren should take one of the guest chairs Falkirk sat beside him. As he poured the tea Falkirk asked “How long have you been over your heat?”

Giving a dismissive shrug Darren answered, “Four-five days” with disappointment in his voice.

With the answer Falkirk was more reassured with what he was about to say. “I think you're pregnant.”

“Ya'bastad!” the omega shouted, jumping up. Falkirk had a bit of trouble following what the other omega was saying, Darren was speaking so quickly and his accent had gotten so much thicker. But clearly over the moon.
Biding Patience: Mycroft Schemes

Falkirk's deputy, Butler, returned from Azerbaijan. King Industries, for the most part secure against the gangs and other intelligence agencies again. During his report, he was unable to add anything on what Mycroft was doing. When Mycroft actively stopped Falkirk from learning things, it left a gnawing pit in the stomach of M.

After hacking his brother's data. “He's learning.” Falkirk complained as he downloaded every electronic record and turned up nothing on Mycroft's actions.

Finding himself going to the only other person he could turn to for an unofficial operation. By the sounds of shouting, the occupants were having quite the argument. Falkirk knocked the door of 221 Baker Street.

The door ripped open, showing John, he stopped shouting up the stairs to ask, “What do you want?”

“I have a job for Sherlock” Falkirk answered calmly.

“Good! Perhaps he'll, GET HIMSELF KILLED!” John spat, the last shouted up the stairs.

Following the sound of the tortured violin Falkirk entered the flat. A sharp screech made Falkirk wince as Sherlock noticed his guest.

“How would you like to annoy Mycroft?” Falkirk offered.

“He'll do it!” John shouted coming in behind Falkirk. “He hasn't had anything in months and he decided to quit smoking AGAIN!”

Falkirk could understand. A bored, craving, Sherlock was not a nice creature to live with. It was little more than token resistance from Sherlock before he started carefully listening to the details. Even John, in an improving mood agreed to accompany the detective to Azerbaijan.

Finally Falkirk gave Sherlock the only thing he had found in Mycroft's records, his schedule full of discrepancies. Along with the travel documents Falkirk wished them luck.

--

Darren had been on cloud nine for days, since confirming his pregnancy. A bounce in his step and his easy charming smile just a little wider and his blue eyes held a brighter spark.

Falkirk watched from the corner of his eyes as the only other Omega in E-Branch chatting away with Darren. A sip from the herbal tea had an almost instantaneous affect, Darren's face drained of colour and he ran from the room.

Luckily for Falkirk he never really suffered from morning sickness, only a few foods would affect him. In the following days it was clear Darren wouldn't be spared that fate as the moment anything touched his stomach it would be violently expelled moments later.

Tanner placed two mission outlines on Falkirk's desk just as the sound of a chair crashing to the
floor and Darren doing a fifth yard dash towards the break room.

“I'll get cover from the pool.” Tanner said helpfully.

The shorter more pressing assignment was an arms market, giving the file back to Tanner “Take this to Q, for assignment to Double O Seven.” Falkirk ordered. If the mission ran to schedule it would mean James and he could have some personal time when he came back.

Pressing the intercom Falkirk asked, “Get, Double O Fi....” before he noticed the desk was empty. Dismissing Tanner's offer to get the Operative Falkirk reassured he could make his own phone calls.

After searching his own computer Falkirk decided it would be quicker to just use Darren's. Finding the neatly organised access to the Double O files Falkirk got Addison' mobile and dialled the number.

“Hello, Bright eyes...”

“Double O Five!” any whitey continuation was cut off by the sound of Addison's phone hitting the floor and distant swearing from the man.

“M? I thought...” Addison tried to explain before Falkirk cut him off

“My office!” Falkirk paused, looking through the day planner for a gap “Twelve, thirty five”

At the allotted time Addison appeared at Darren's empty desk. Falkirk having sent Darren home after his fourth sprint through E branch.

Waving in the Operative Falkirk gave him the mission outline “Prepare you leave in ten days time” Falkirk ordered.

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Andrew had reverted to his anxious state in the absence of his Alpha. Clinging to Falkirk from the moment he entered the house and mewling pathetically when Keading arrived in the morning. In day care, where Andrew could meet other children, he had become introverted but the teacher had reassured Keading who accompanied him it was common at that age. Falkirk saw the stress Keading was under, taking the brunt of Andrew's anxiety, seeing him through the worst episodes.

However. At night, when Selene and Falkirk returned from work. Despite the stress of Andrew. Falkirk thought he saw a frown when Keading took Cody's hand and went down to the waiting car with Selene. The Omega holding his Alpha's hand desperately.

Before Keading took his son's hand on one side and his Alpha's on the other. Falkirk hooked his arm with the other omega's, so they were very close. Leaning in, “Is anything wrong?”

The shrug and quiet no from the American was not reassuring to Falkirk. “If you need a break from babysitting, I can work something out.”

The shake of the head was a more sure. “It's not Andrew.” Falkirk tried to get more out of the omega but Keading would just shake his head. Deciding to let it go for the moment, Falkirk let the omega press himself to his Alpha, seeking comfort and escape.
The next morning. On their way to work, Falkirk wrestled with his conscience before deciding to do the wrong thing for the right reasons. So called to the woman in the front seat, “Selene? Is anything up with Keading?”

The woman looked back, from her place beside the driver, “The school want to test Cody. They think he has, Emotional development issues. They think he's autistic”

Falkirk began to chuckle before turning mirthful eyes on Selene. “Have you not met Sherlock, Mycroft, Shane even Me?” Falkirk said.

“I suppose.” Selene said, taking a little comfort in the similarity, that Cody's absence of friends and inability to associate with other children was common to the Holmes children. Selene returned her attention to the road.

--

On schedule Falkirk's spies indicated Mycroft and Peter Guillam had left the country. So Falkirk decided to go visiting.

MI5 and MI6 where like siblings, they could play nice for short periods of time. There was one absolute rule, no going into each others bedrooms. Leeway could be given like the Silva incident when he moved his campaign to British soil and MI6 kept jurisdiction. Walking into the traditional styled offices of MI5 Falkirk was shown the the upper floor where Control held dominion.

The short Alpha with thick square glasses welcomed Falkirk in. “M. What may MI5 do for you?”

The Alpha owed Falkirk a favour and now was the time to collect.”What is Peter Guillam up to?”

Getting the typical run around common to their respective levels Falkirk made his question a little more specific. “Why is Peter Guillam accompanying Mycroft Holmes to Azerbaijan?”

The moment of absolute confusion was enough of an answer for Falkirk. Smiley didn't know.

“I can not promise his safety if he is operating beyond his of MI5's remit” Falkirk warned. C only nodded and started cleaning his glasses with the end of his tie. With that a bust it was down to Sherlock to find out what the pair were up to.

--

Watching the suffering Omega who refused to go home Falkirk supplied him with a mug of hot water. Sipping hesitantly Darren gave Falkirk a smile when it stayed down. Unlike Falkirk, finding a few things he couldn't eat. For Darren it was the opposite, finding the few things he could.

Excusing himself as his phone started ringing Falkirk pulled it out as he entered his office and answered.

“They've got Sherlock!” John whispered desperately. Getting the details from the doctor was quick and efficient, John experienced in high pressure situations.

“I will be there in a few hours.” Falkirk reassured.
Foregoing Tanner, Falkirk asked Daniel to make the arrangements before calling 009 who had arrived back the previous day. Getting a volunteer tactical team, there was a distinct abundance and eagerness to accompany Falkirk on one of his legendary unofficial missions. The kicker was Alec who demanded to come the moment he heard, with him scraping passed the fitness requirements Falkirk relented and allowed him to come.

Stopping at home Selene told Keading what was happening. Falkirk went to his bedroom pressing his finger to the hidden scanner on the bedside cabinet drawer, and it popped open. Pulling out the ornate box Falkirk opened it. Loading the magazine Falkirk placed one into the strap of his holster and the other into the bronze coloured Falcon. Giving Andrew a nuzzle Falkirk had to leave him whining and crying in Keading's care.

Baku was quickly descending to Hong Kong on Falkirk's list of placed he hated. Finding the rundown truck assembly plant, Alec, Maloney and Selene organised the scouting of the building.

One of the tactical team returned quickly, having found Watson watching the building. The Doctor informing, pointing to the factory along the road, “They took Sherlock in there”

Maloney coming up with another tactical member trotting behind him, the two also finished scoping out the factory. 009 informed, “Six perimeter guards, two additional confirmed, more suspected”

As Alec, Selene, Maloney and the head of the tactical squad were discussing strategy. Falkirk noticed a car approaching. Lifting the binoculars Falkirk could just make out the passenger behind the driver as the car turned to go into the front gate of the building.

“Mycroft's here, probably Guillam too.” Falkirk informed the group. “Selene, Maloney, Watson and I go in the front door while everyone else secures the perimeter. I remind you, only one of us has a licence to kill.”

Maloney grind at the ex-Double O Six and Two. Alec thumping the man in the arm. Maloney hitting back. Both rather playful, until Selene hit both upside the head.

Walking round to the front Falkirk could see the tactical team moving to there ingress points. Pulling out his phone Falkirk dialled Mycroft's number. When Mycroft answered Falkirk casually asked “How's the weather in Azerbaijan?”

“I'm not sure what you're talking about, brother.”

“Knock, Knock” Falkirk said and hung up.

Selene and Maloney detached themselves, surging forward to secure the gate. Falkirk walking through the gate casually moments behind, while Selene was pulling the hands of Mycroft's driver together and securing them with zip ties and Maloney was doing the same with the local version of the Mafia.

Walking into what would have once been the assembly floor. Mycroft and Guillam stood across from two strange Alphas, in ill fitting suits. Ignoring Mycroft for the moment Falkirk approached the lead Alpha, of the mafia. Holding up a photograph, Selene acting as translator, Falkirk ordered, “Bring him!”

If the answering growl was anything to go by the Mafioso really didn't like being addressed by an
Omega in such tones. The lead Alpha not overly tall but well muscled, shaved head and intense hazel eyes switched his glare from Falkirk to Mycroft, spouting something off, rapid.

Guillam started to translate before Falkirk ordered “Do not talk, Mr Guillam!” and nodded to Selene. Selene translated the Lead Alpha's demand for what was going on, he was clearly confused by the change in dynamic.

“I am the one in charge” Falkirk explained.

“He thinks it's a joke” Selene informed, a moment before a thick muscled hand clamped round Falkirk's neck and forced his head down.

The affect was immediate. Falkirk's heart rate jumped while his body tried to still. Absently he could hear Alec, Selene and Guillam shouting in unison. It was hard and it took everything Falkirk had to move, slipping his hand into his jacket.

The moment the lead Alpha known as Mikhail pinned the omega to the floor. People sprang out from the darkness about them. His gaze darted from the walkways above them to the Woman flanked by the beta and muscled Omega. Of everyone in the room the one person he was not looking at was the Omega in his grasp reeking of fear.

Bang!

Collapsing to the floor, immense pain ripping through Mikhail's his knee. The impudent bitch brought himself up, standing over him, a gun held with a familiarity and certainty he had never seen before. The bitch spoke his own language, what little light there was flaring off the glasses hiding the bitch's eyes. The woman spoke in the common Russian dialect.

“Very foolish!” She said.

Mikhail just cradled his knee, concentrating on not crying out or fainting with the pain. Kirill his associate was complying with the demand to kneel with his hands interlace atop of his head. Mikhail watched in amazement as the bitch commanded the alphas around him.

Falkirk ordered Watson to see to the fallen Alpha at his feet. One of the squaddies throwing the doctor a field medical kit.

Sherlock charged into the room, following the sound of the gun shot, risking his life in the presence of the on alert MI6 personnel, who took aim at the detective. Falkirk looked is brother over, despite a black eye and a few abrasions he seemed unaffected by his ordeal.

Rounding on his elder brother and Guillam Falkirk snapped, “Report!”

Sherlock wanted the attention and boasted,“They are trading on your reputation. Kane was gaining power, she was feared, she controlled, Caspian sea to the Black sea, from Russia to Iran. She disappeared and Mycroft was taking credit it, he's been...”

Falkirk interrupted Sherlock's quick fire assessment, he was getting the picture. Mycroft braced for what as to come.

“I don't care about them” Falkirk said said pointing to the gangsters in the middle of the floor Watson was working on. “Now, because of your secrecy, because MI6 did not know what you or
MI5 were up to you have endangered Sherlock and have been discredited. Good luck, Mycroft you'll need it.”

Looking round the room Falkirk bellowed, “We're leaving!”

Looking to Sherlock Falkirk offered a lift which was accepted and before leaving Falkirk warned Guillam he had talked to Control, so Smiley was not best pleased with him.

Mikhail said something though gritted teeth. Alec translated, “He wants to know if you killed Kane.”

Looking at the Alpha who had pinned him. “I only kill threats.” Falkirk answered and walked off. Hoping the man got the intended insult. The MI6 personnel following along with Sherlock and John.

Approaching the plane. Falkirk mused, “At least I'm only spending hours in this hell hole”

In the background Watson fusses over Sherlock's injuries while Alec said, “That was boring! So unfair! And only M got to shoot someone.”

Maloney adding, “I know. What's the point of bringing a Double O if you end up shooting the bad guy yourself.”

Falkirk settled in and listen to Alec start to tease Sherlock and Sherlock defending, that he didn't need rescuing.
Keading followed Falkirk through to the library. Telling Falkirk about the school psychologist Cody had been seeing. The American asked, “Dr Garret wants to meet Cody's family?”

Suppressing his desire to laugh at the absurdity of an Educational psychologist assessing the Bond/Holmes Matthews/Corvin/Trevelyan/Carrington clan.

“Who would you like to be here?” Falkirk asked. At this Keading looked hesitant.

“He wants to see the people who have influence over Cody or biological connection?” came Keading’s weak voice. As if the omega was demanding the world.

“He'll have to be flexible about time.” Falkirk warned getting a nod. “And to be frank. I don't give the poor sod a snowball's chance in hell.”

Relieved by Falkirk's support Keading returned the smile and joined the patiently waiting Selene and Cody to go home.

--

Daniel approached the office at the front of the room. The Alpha noticing a fog of distressed pheromones and sickness as he neared the desk of M's PA. Darren still suffering and refusing to admit it just waved the guest through, and put his head on the desk with an unhappy groan.

Closing the door behind him Daniel took the offered seat opposite Falkirk.

“With Alec recovering and starting work, full time, Gran has decided to go home. Alec and I can only think of one person we are willing to trust with Yulian.”

Falkirk nodding his understanding said, “I can't speak for Keading but you can ask him and when you do I would suggest only you or Alec go, rather than both.” Then brought up the subject of Cody and the psychologist.

Daniel agreed to attend also agreeing on Alec's behalf, not only as part of the pack but having become quite fond of both Cody and Keading since they moved to London. As not to intimidate the Omega Daniel said, “I'll pop over to your house at lunch time.”

--

When Falkirk returned home he pulled Keading into the library. “Daniel told me you agreed to look after Yulian.” Falkirk said before sitting beside the other Omega on the small settee. Getting a
nod Falkirk insisted, “You are under no obligation.”

Giving a small smile, looking up with his head still bowed. Keading insisted, “I Love being part of a real pack and I like being able to help out. Even if it's just as babysitter.”

“Don't forget you keep me balanced, surrounded by all those Alphas.” Falkirk said, thankfully, lying his head on the other Omega's shoulder.

An arm came round Falkirk's shoulders “We're thinking of having a baby” Keading muttered into Falkirk's hair.

“That's nice. You've already done a wonderful job with Cody. And Selene would make a great father.” Falkirk mumbled, getting lost in the calming scent of the other Omega.

When Keading's uncomfortable silence continued Falkirk was forced to look at him. Keading said very quietly, “She wants to be mother.”

Seeing the uncertain embarrassment Falkirk let out a snort and lay his head back down. “Very progressive.” Falkirk teased.

Keading continued in the same tone of uncertain embarrassment “I know. I thought with an Alpha even with a woman I would be the one to have the baby”

“James, sometimes... you know... lets me...” Falkirk admitted, waving his hand in a circular gesture that had nothing to do with what he as trying to get at.

Getting the gist Keading blurted, “You mount him!”

“Shhh!” It was Falkirk's turn to look embarrassed. “Not often but sometimes.”

“Well that's a new one even for me” Keading admitted in a show of self deprecating humour and gave a giggle. Never having heard of an Alpha male allowing themselves to be mounted by an Omega male.

After recovering and showing Keading, Cody and Selene out Falkirk called to them “Have fun” earning confused looks from Selene and Cody and a glare from Keading.

“I'm sure James will have just as much fun” Keading shot back.

--

When James returned from his latest mission. Falkirk and Keading organised a suitable day for Cody's psychologist to meet the pack. A few well placed threats to Mycroft got him to attend but Falkirk found his willingness a little suspicious. Warning John, he and Falkirk decided to leave informing Sherlock of his attendance to the last moment.

The first to arrive on the allocated day, and unusually, early, was Mycroft. For a man who prided himself on punctuality being early was as grave and unusual as being late. Barely acknowledging Hudson Mycroft walked directly into the library calling “Quid pro Quo” to Falkirk as he passed.

Following his brother in, Mycroft was already standing, looking over the back garden.
“Quid pro Quo, you are here to help your brother and his mother” Falkirk snapped.

Spinning to glare at his brother “I have three brothers, no more.” Mycroft brawled.

“What you choose to believe is up to you but Cody and many more are our brothers, fact!” Falkirk responded.

“Yes, yes can we get to my point or should I leave?” Mycroft said in overly pleasant tones.

Seeing this was the only way to gain Mycroft's cooperation, without a threat Falkirk gestured to a chair as he walked behind his desk. “What do you want?”

“I would like you to return to Azerbaijan.” Mycroft said. Before Falkirk could respond he continued “Along with the Omega girl.”

“Alice is mine and until she betrays my trust she will not be used as a pawn for you or I.” Falkirk insisted in hard unquestioning tones.

Dismissing Falkirk's protestations. “Considering no one believes in Guillam or Myself any more. The local mafia want proof. The only fact they have is the person who dispatched Kane took the Omega so she is now the proof we need to further our negotiations. General Pushkin has been seen in the area, as head of MI6 I thought you would be....”

“Do! Not! Mention! Pushkin! To me!”

Mycroft visibly jumping with each snapped word thrown at him. Getting a tight smile and a nod in response Falkirk continued in a calmer tone of voice.

“I take it you went to the prison to find Alice gone?” Getting another slow nod. “Alice's attendance will be her choice and I'm about to go through a heat so it will be after I recover.”

Falkirk's sex life, as it usually did made his brother uncomfortable and had the added bonus of ending the conversation.

Coming out of the library James was prowling with Andrew stalking the alpha.

“Something wrong?” Mycroft drawled to the other Alpha earning a growl in response. The three turned to the high pitched, elongated 'grrr' sound. James struggled to hold in his laughter as Mycroft raised an eyebrow at the little Omega's attempt to copy his dad's growl.

Reaching down Falkirk scooped up his son “My big brave boy.” he praised with a smile. Carrying Andrew Falkirk deposited him at the doors leading to the garden and with a little encouragement Andrew stepped out and down the stairs to play in the pleasant sun.

Selene and Keading arrived next with a glum looking Cody. Immediately Cody escaped in the direction of Andrew in the back garden leaving his parents with the rest of the adults. Selene moved to the French doors. Keeping an eye on the two children with James.She said to the room, “Cody's already tried escaping twice.”

Daniel and Alec were next with Yulian sleeping peacefully in his car seat. Daniel, placing Yulian on the floor between his chair and Keading's place at the end of the couch. The American Omega looked over his new charge.
In his sleep Yulian took a few shallow scenting, the little wide nose twitching, and relaxed in the familiar presence. Alec stood by James looking out into the garden watching Cody follow his nephew about as he explored, occasionally the older boy showing something to the younger.

“Doctor Garret.” Hudson announced as a balding beta with round tortoise shell glasses stepped in. Standing, Falkirk approached extending his hand.

“Sir Thomas McLair” Falkirk introduce himself before indicating Daniel and introducing him then James, Alec and finally Mycroft. “We are expecting another two but they haven't arrived yet” Falkirk informed and offered a chair to the doctor.

Garret weighed Falkirk and the order of introduction comparing it to the known pack hierarchy. “Rather odd for me to be greeted by an Omega and for him to introduce another Alpha before their mate.”

Mycroft snide musing, “I'm sure Sherlock is kicking himself for missing this display of deduction.”

As if on cue they heard the door opening and Sherlock marched in by John, the detective protesting all the way. Fixing his gaze on the unknown guest Sherlock circled him muttering, “Missed while shaving, dilation of blood vessels in the nose...”

“Sherlock! Behave!” Falkirk snapped and indicating a seat for his brother to take, the one nearest Alec.

Falkirk introduced Sherlock and John to the doctor before identifying Mycroft, Sherlock and himself as half brothers to Cody. Giving a sharp rebuking look to Mycroft at the well concealed contempt he showed when Falkirk revealed the family's dirty secret.

“So doctor, now we are all gathered what can we do for you?” Falkirk asked pleasantly.

The doctor, looking about the room. Falkirk sitting to the doctor's right with Keadin on the far side of the omega. Assessing the sheer press of Alphas, the ones standing or sitting. Only two Omegas and only one other beta. All the eyes that bore into him, intimidated without even trying. Feeling out numbered and like an insect under observation only the other Beta and Keadin held something other than intense gazes. Becoming uncomfortable.

“This is a most unique pack...” Garret continued his observation from earlier and Mycroft didn't hesitate to point it out. Again Falkirk rebuked his brother

“How can you insult his intelligence when there are fare more pressing concerns, Alcoholism..” Sherlock said this time a warning growl from Alec and Daniel was added to Falkirk's glare.

As Garret protested, Mycroft cut through him to correct Sherlock. “No bother, clearly sober, the burst blood vessels in the nose are more likely from medication, diabetes most likely.”

“Enough! Both of you, do not speak unless spoken to.” Falkirk ordered his brothers. “I do apologise, doctor. My brothers tend to let their mouths run away from them, and as you have seen they tend to notices things. Please, do continue.”

Dr. Garret took a breath, recognising aspects of Cody's psyche in those around him. “Six Alphas, two Omegas and one Beta. I would have expected Cody to be more aggressive due to the pack
structure but he is more.... introverted.”

Falkirk could see Sherlock champing to speak so he nodded.

“Incorrect, five Alphas affectively and no Betas and one omega. We're not part of the primary pack” Sherlock corrected enthusiastically.

Garret accepted the information as he observed Sherlock deferring to Falkirk for permission, the omega an Alpha by ranking rather than biology. Taking it all in, the two pack alphas not a mated pair with one being an Omega. The level usually populated by Betas where all Alphas leaving only one Omega, not bound to either of the pack alphas. Having trouble getting passed the oddness Garret reluctantly admitted he was floundering.

“You are concerned about Cody's ability to relate to other children. I can not alleviate those fears” Falkirk said. Indicating Mycroft “Control issues, I am aware of only two close associations, amongst other issues I am not willing to discuss.” then to Sherlock “Substance issues, attention seeking with only one close association but unlike Mycroft a small circle of less close people.”

“As for me. I am what the Alphas in my life needed me to be, requiring support from James and Daniel primarily, as well as Keading. Without them, and others, some here and others gone, I would still be the meek little Omega James found years ago”

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“No High pressure positions?” Garret asked.


“I believe I have seen you in the paper” Garret said looking to Falkirk.

“What about me?” Sherlock demanded.

“The Guardian doesn’t usually carry the gossip but yes Mr Holmes I have see you as well.” Garret said. Although the long faced man made a bored shrugging gesture in response, the Doctor was able to see the validation being recognised meant to Sherlock, fitting in with the attention seeking the omega had mentioned and Cody too had displayed.

Convinced that despite the unusual pack structure Cody was well loved and supported Garret moved on. Looking to Falkirk. “There are some things Cody refuses to discuss. Has he ever born witness to anything...”

Nodding Falkirk glanced to Keading before answering. “We are not sure how much Cody remembers but about three years ago an assassination attempt was made on him. Keading along with their house mate were shot, Luke the house mate was killed. There was a stressful flight a few days after and Cody has shown a dislike of flying.”

With Selene placing a comforting hand on Keading's neck she added, “Cody was being carried, Keading fell on him and bled out when he was shot.”

“At that age, memory is not precise but fragments may remain. What Cody dose remember he might be unable to put it into context” Garret informed.

When Garret outlined the procedure to confront what Cody might remember. Selene the closest increased her ministrations to her omega, then Daniel and Falkirk became aware of the distressed
scent from Keading.

Reassuring the group, the Child psychologist Dr. Garret would be referred Cody to, like himself and the school staff would be fully vetted. Despite the reassurance Falkirk insisted he be given the Doctor's name before hand, and sessions would only ever occur in authorised locations. Garret didn't seem surprised by the demand. Slowly the doctor pulled a card from a small leather pouch, for the doctor he intended to refer Cody to.

Reading 'Dr. Tom Wexlar' Falkirk nodded his thanks, placing the card into his inside pocket.

With the home visit complete. Falkirk and Daniel saw Dr Garret out along with Keading and Selene hanging back.

“I think we warped his fragile little mind.” Daniel mused.

"Don't sound so pleased” Falkirk shot, heading back to the lounge.

Keading shook his head, to clear it of the turmoil. “That's Cartmen's line.” he said trying, to get back into a better mood.

Falkirk wound an arm around the other omega. “Whatever happens. You and Cody have a whole pack around you.” Keading gave a weak smile and nod of thanks.

Daniel too, reach over Falkirk's head and tussled the long dark strands of the American's hair. “It's a bit pointless asking a parent not to worry, it's their job. But we'll see the wee-yin right.”

Entering the lounge Alec spoke over the general din of the room to Falkirk “Someone mentioned there would be lunch?” A few other voices also speaking up on the subject.

“Yes, yes, Lunch is served at One” Falkirk answered.

Finding out Dr Garret had been and gone Cody was happy to join the furore of the pack as they waited for lunch to be served.

Andrew under the supervision of Daniel and Keading situated himself by the small Alpha, fascinated. Yulian's massive brown eyes locked on the strange boy in front of him. Andrew's blue eyes darting about as he took a scenting of the strange small Alpha.

“Yulian.” Daniel said to his godson.

“Yooyoon” Andrew tried with a wide smile.

“Yooyoon” Falkirk cornered Mycroft while he kept an eye on Andrew. “There is still time to call Tanner” Falkirk said very softly. Mycroft looked uncomfortable and shook his head slightly and returned his attention to watching the proceedings.

With a quick look to Andrew, Falkirk made sure his son was alright before slipping out the room. The little Omega made little impact in the presence of the pack. Keeping quiet he drew little attention to himself unlike Cody who was trying to hold a conversation with Sherlock. Daniel was also keeping a close eye on Andrew, deliberately engaging with him along with Keading. Despite the loud room, full of Alphas the Omegas felt safe and the anxiety of some was absent.
Falkirk pulled out his phone. Walking to the small hall just off the stairs he waited for an answer. Hearing the man answer Falkirk said, “We're having a Luncheon. Mycroft's here too. Would you like to come?” After listening to the response Falkirk added “You'll have to hurry.”

Pushing the door down to the kitchen open. Hearing Mrs Bridges complaining but she was never happy unless she could complain. Clearing his throat, startling both Mrs Bridges and Hudson, Falkirk informed there would be another guest.

“Oh the more the merrier” the little round omega woman in rolling skirt, reassured pleasantly. Hudson said he would set another place.

Just as Falkirk reached the top he could hear Mrs Bridges complaining about another mouth. Hudson rebuked, “You could feed the five thousand and have left overs”

Shaking his head at the banter Falkirk closed the door quietly as to not disturb them further.

Returning to the lounge Falkirk took his place beside Keading who was holding Yulian while Andrew sat in Daniel's lap. After losing an augment with Sherlock Cody positioned himself between Falkirk and his Mom, a petulant pout firmly in place.

Through the frosted glass doors dividing the lounge from the dining room Falkirk could see the butler moving about. Hudson moved towards the door before the bell even sounded, Tanner appeared shortly after. Despite Mycroft's annoyed glare there was a softening in his eyes as he looked to the Beta, especially after the 'hellos' and Tanner moved to Mycroft's side. A whispered conversation kept the pair occupied until Hudson called, “Luncheon is Served”.

The lunch passed amicably enough despite Sherlock's attempts to provoke James, Daniel and Mycroft in turn. Only when Sherlock turned his attention to Tanner did Falkirk and John pull the detective to heel. With intense concentration Andrew mimicked everyone using the soft plastic spoon to feed himself, getting one in three spoonfuls into his mouth and protesting any attempts at help.

Looking round the table James at the head at the far end. Daniel to Falkirk's right, Andrew beside his papa, Keading to Falkirk's left, then Cody, Selene and Alec. Sherlock and then John followed by Mycroft and Tanner beside Daniel. Falkirk as always sat at the foot.

“This is nice” Falkirk proclaimed cutting through the separate conversations “Even the infuriating ones make it nice”. Several proclamations of innocence sounded from those who thought the comment was directed at.

Knowing something was up Andrew had been playing up with his papa's on coming heat. Responding best to Daniel and Alec's presence they had agreed to take him during the heat. The young Omega was slowly introduced to the changes. Starting with Keading looking after Andrew and Yulian from Daniel's house during the day. Then Andrew would stay the odd night, building up to the day Falkirk's heat would hit.

Hudson was going a trip to see his brother while Mrs Bridges had already left to see her sister. From his little nesting tent Andrew glared at his Papa, the crystal blue eyes glinting out of the shadows. Falkirk packing a small hold all. James came into Andrew's room squatting in front of the Nestie, coaxing out the child.
“That's my boy” James praised when Andrew stepped into his waiting arms. Not sure how much he was understanding but James continued “It's your Papa and my special time, so you are going to stay with Uncle Alec and Yulian”

“Uncle Daniel too” Falkirk said coming up to the pair earning a soft rumbling growl from James. The rivalry between the two more for show now a days, although Falkirk had heard a few rumours on the two men's professional life. Being the handler for 007, could not be an easy thing.

Keeping themselves relaxed and their tones light and encouraging the two parents took Andrew down stairs. Just like the days before, Keading was waiting to take Andrew for the day and look after him at Daniel and Alec's place. Falkirk nuzzled Andrew who was still in James' arms. Placing Andrew down James nuzzled him as well. Taking Andrew's hand Keading lead him away.

“Sirs.” Hudson greeted coming down the stairs carrying a suit case. It was odd to see the older man in casual wear, well proper trousers and a jumper was as casual as the man went. Falkirk and James wishing him luck and waving the Alpha off.

Retreating to the lounge Falkirk collapsed onto the couch. Acknowledging the uncomfortable itching of his skin, Falkirk started loosening his clothing. Before giving up and going to change into soft silk pyjamas.

Like a good Alpha James appeared with a cup of tea and some muffins. Graciously accepting the offering Falkirk sipped the warm liquid and practically inhaling the muffins.

The two lay along the couch, spooning with Q on the outside so they could watch the film plying on the TV. But James was only interested in the omega pressing against him, smelling so inviting and getting hornier by the moment. Holding a muffin in the arm Falkirk was pillowed against, the other hand was breaking off pieces and bringing them to the wide dark lips of his mate.

“What's it like, Skyfall I mean?” James whispered pressing his nose into the wild fall of dark hair.

Q hummed, taking a few moments for the words to make it through his muddled brain. “Oh, nice. I modernised the kitchen, made sure there was a nice big bed in our room. I didn't choose the master suite, your aunt said it was your mother's favourite though, the one that looked over the moor and the chapel...”

James listened to the dreamy voice give a full description of the house that had been rebuilt. And how Charmain and Kincade had input to make it close as possible to the original, but with modern conveniences that would make it more liveable.

Rolling on top of the leaner man, James kissed his omega, silencing him. Pulling back, the large glasses had slipped up and James gazed into the eyes with blown pupils, the green almost completely black. Falkirk giving a wide dopey grin, James ran his hands over the extra padding that had been put on to see the omega through a week without food and water.

As James pushed his hand under the silk pyjama top, finding a nipple and caught the hard little nub between his fingers. With Falkirk not stopping him and actually seeking out the touch, giving a moan for more, the alpha took it to mean the omega was ready. James rolled right over Falkirk and landed on the floor. The Omega's glistening eyes looked to him in abandoned hurt. James gave into the juvenile urge, he surged up catching the omega and throwing him over his shoulder. Delivering a spank to the silk covered arse, the omega giving a surprised yelp then moan as the spank turned
into a grope. James feeling the trapped erection pressing into his shoulder. It was a little hard walking up to their room, with an Omega moaning and humping his shoulder, but James managed it.
The long Jaguar and its police escort turned off the road and up the private tree lined driveway. Stopping in front of a large white painted house, Falkirk threw open the door, with Selene exiting the front passenger door.

Pressing the porcelain button, in the middle of the brass plate. Falkirk heard the distant ringing of the bell, then the sound of heels on hardwood floors.

The large door opened a crack and the silver maned woman smiled so sweetly. But her blue eyes were very guarded as she greeted, “M?”

“Victoria. I was wondering if I could ask a favour?”

Victoria pulled open the door fully and held her arm out to a room on the right. Stepping into a large and rather traditional but elegant lounge. A table in front of the bay window had a vase and cut flowers lying on a plastic sheet, ready to be arranged. Falkirk noticing an L shaped bulge under the plastic sheet near the edge.

“So?” Victoria asked, casually moving to the table to continue arranging the flowers.

“I here Frank Moses has retired. You ran with him in the old days. I was wondering if you had a way of contacting him? Quietly.”

“I might.” Victoria said.

Falkirk pulled out a photo from his suite's inside pocket. It was awful, taken at night with a cheap phone's camera. Falkirk tapped the bald headed man almost out of frame. “I have been looking at Azerbaijan. I just need a yes/no, is that the man who was speaking to Mr Blond, the one who shot Mr Moses?”

Victoria lifted the photograph to study it.

“My brother is up to something. So this is Need to Know, Double O Eight.” Falkirk said, to make sure Victoria knew not to speak to anyone without Falkirk's knowledge or consent.

“I'm not Double O Eight, not anym...”

“You might not carry the active number anymore, but you'll never really get rid of us until we can't reach you. Isn't that why you have a Glock within arm's reach, Ms Winters?”
Victoria stepped closer and brushed his chin with her long fingers. She gazed into his eyes, with a soft smile. “Oh, M. How I wish I was forty years younger. I think I would have liked serving, under you.”

“You still could.” Falkirk whispered. “You do bore so easily, don't you?”

“Nope! I don't do that sort of thing now.” Victoria said and moved on, ending the subject of her occasional private jobs.

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The section Falkirk walked down had no official name. Unofficially, as the people who worked here were all designated I, this was unofficially known as I-Branch when it and was officially designated as general use. The fact it had direct links to the brig was a coincidence overlooked with regularity.

Passing the guards at the door, of the only room in use. From the darker corridor, Falkirk entered a tiled and well lit room. An Alpha, with long face, curly unkempt beard and the dark eyes and skin of a Pakistani, wearing a grey jumpsuit, was currently shackled to a chair. There was also a table with a chair behind, both also bolted to the floor. The scent of the Alpha's fear and nervousness was ripe and thick in the air, more powerful than the hollow anger of the man's bravado as he growled and threatened the little Omega woman in front of him. The alpha barely noticed the new omega's entrance until Falkirk perched himself on the table.

Completely ignoring the Alpha, Falkirk focused on Alice. “I have been asked to return to Baku and we would like you to come with us?”

The dark haired girl froze a moment and the scent of her fear cut through the Alpha's. A dark chuckling made both Omegas turned their attention to the amused Alpha prisoner.

The Alpha taunting, “The little bitch doesn't want to go home?”

Looking to the Alpha's legs then back to Alice, Falkirk mused, “Haven't you kneecapped him? I find a sudden extreme display of violence to be highly motivational.”

“I have to break him without touching him.” Alice responded looking to the mirror, where they were being observed.

“In that case blackmail is highly affective.” Falkirk mused. Shaking his head to get back on track, “Anyway, there is no alternator motive. Your presence is all that is required. The gangs want proof they are dealing with the ones that got rid of Kane, seeing you at my side will be that proof. You will be given your own personal protection and the full protection myself and MI6.”

The Alpha accused, “He'll betray you the moment your go back, it's way of the infidel.”

Fixing the Alpha in his gaze Falkirk asked, “Are you here for resistance training? Or for real?”

The disembodied voice of I, the psychopathic beta who ran the branch echoed through the room. “Real. He infiltrated the immigration service at Heathrow, to assist in the illegal ingress of jihadists and radical preachers to England.”
Nodding and making a show of thinking and processing I's statement, Falkirk then mused to Alice. “You could play konkers. A childhood game, two horse-chestnuts (Konkers) are attached to strings. One player dangles their knoker while the other hits it with their konker.”

Alice was completely confused so Falkirk clarified, “Strip him from the waist down. Let his testicles hang, then swinging a weight at the end of a rope, hitting his testicles repeatedly, until they rupture. Like using two wrecking balls, or those old office toy... a Newton's cradle.”

Nodding her understanding, Alice responded, “I prefer the cartel method. Cover the genitalia in lighter fluid then set it on fire. The smell of the burning flesh adds to the pain.”

“I have rights” the Alpha demanded in a weakening voice.

Both Omegas looked at him. Falkirk snapping in a voice that bounced around the room. “We protect everyone else's right here. We protect their right to a safe home free of religious intolerance, violence and death. You, yourself have the right to say and call our government to account for its crimes, for it is not innocent and there are charities and organisation doing that at this very moment. But you have no right to do as you did. You allowed murderers, hate mongers and terrorists into the country. ANY and I mean ANY righteousness you had died when you helped them.”

Falkirk knew it was a waste of breath, some people got to the point where their bias, hate and anger blinded them to fact, and points of logic no longer existed to them. Muslims were not the only ones guilty, in truth everyone was to some degree.

There were more babbled protestations but the scent of terror was mounting in the Alpha.

Going back to ignoring the Alpha. “So will you come?” Falkirk asked. Getting a hesitant nod, Falkirk thanked Alice and again assured her of her protection throughout the negotiations.

Looking to the Alpha who had gone very quiet, his head bowed and a single tear sliding down his cheek. The dehumanising technique was effective if it was done right, talk about a person like they were a piece of meat, make them believe they were alone and their own fear did the damage.

Placing a comforting hand on the Alpha's shoulder. Falkirk said softly, “Terrorism is a nasty way to wage war. Despite what you have been told there is no honour or glory in it. Eventually it always comes down to you, alone, with no one but you and god and how you want to face him. You can face him carrying hate, anger and pain having caused pain, hate and anger in others. Or as something more noble. As a loving father of children that teaches them to make the world a better place. As son who dose his father proud. As a neighbour who will be remembered with reverence and respect by all, not just a hate filled few. The choice is yours, because it's not too late...yet.”

With Falkirk’s last word a small sob broke out from the Alpha.

When Alice's report arrived on his desk, endorsed by I. Falkirk read over the proposal and wasn't surprise that the Alpha had been recommended for turning. Signing off on the recommendation that the man be turned into an agent Falkirk put the report in his out tray.

--

Returning to Alice, in her office several days later. Falkirk carried his growing folder. Victoria had
paid a visit that morning with Frank Moses' answer. Having researched the groups he had found something suspicious. Amongst the FSB agents and Operatives there was one person Falkirk suspected working with them but no one had any information on him. Well one person did, but Falkirk couldn't trust Smiley on this, especially given what Falkirk's intentions were.

Putting the clearest photograph down, the same one he had shown Victoria. Alice was able to identify some.

Pointing to the bald man in the far left of frame, almost out of it. “Him?”

Alice ducked her head. “He was around, sometimes. Never met him. He stopped coming when Kane took over.”

“Why are you scared of him?”

Alice shook her head. “Not him. It's gong back.”

“It will help me and my Brother if you were to go. But if you say no, I will honour your decision.”

“I just have to stand, that's it?” the girl demanded.

Falkirk nodded and again said Alice would get her own bodyguard. She said quietly, “I'll go.”

“Thank you.”

--

Alice was almost as bad as Falkirk on the plane for anxiety. Mycroft and Guillam not used to the pheromones from the omegas, or the intensity were not reacting well. Both Mycroft and Guillam were left to snap impatiently at anyone who dared cross their path, in their heightened state. Selene took her usual place beside Falkirk, offering comfort. Alice still wasn't close enough to anyone to have someone close to her when feeling vulnerable.

The sudden thump passed through the plane as it touched down. Then the long journey to the meeting place, by road. The factory for the meeting had been cleaned up and a circle of tables set up on the old assembly floor. Falkirk and Alice took their seats but as Falkirk had no interest in the groups present he allowed Mycroft and Guillam to do the work.

The only person Falkirk was interested in was the nondescript Beta from the photographs. The thin man, sharp facial bones sticking out, with short cropped greying hair around the sides of his head, the top bald. The beta stood back, the occasional flare of a cigarette as he took a drag. Trying to observe the Beta without arousing Mycroft's, or worse Guillam's suspicion Falkirk kept the man in his peripheral vision as best he could.

Falkirk concealed his own reaction, the beta started when their eyes met. Knowing he had been made the Beta subtly looked about the room before falling unnaturally still. The sudden change in the beta's demeanour was enough to draw Mycroft's attention and Falkirk was forced to abandon his observation in the hope Mycroft would lose interest as he was pulled back into his negotiations.

The scent que of and Omega's anger and fear wafted from Falkirk's side. Looking to Alice, the source, then to her point of focus. Falkirk observed a creepy, leering Alpha with his possessive gaze racking up and down the the other omega. Falkirk demanded cutting through the speeches, “If
The only local who was taking Falkirk seriously was the Alpha, Mikhail, from their previous meeting. Seeing a point needed to be made and with a target presenting himself Falkirk nodded.

Quicker than anyone could react the MI6 tactical team had subdued the group of gangsters. The once leering Alpha, he was now held down on the table, face up. Looking to Alice Falkirk gestured to the Alpha. With a truly vicious smile Alice stood and pulled a pouch from her pocket. Everyone watched her saunter towards the table with the Alpha being held down. All who knew Alice could imagine what was to come next.

Mycroft made a sour face and desperately whispered to his brother, “You can't!” protesting what was about to happen. Falkirk glared at his brother until he ducked his head. Guillam more used to the worst of humanity, and not afraid to get his hands dirty kept silent. Through it all Mycroft watched with fixed attention, needing to prove his stomach was as strong as the likes of Guillam, his omega brother and the girl hurting someone.

’Benefit after benefit’ Falkirk mused internally as Mycroft lost interest in the Beta Falkirk was observing. Alice hurt someone she didn't like and Falkirk asserted himself as the leader above even the likes of Mycroft and Guillam.

The Beta kept an eye on Falkirk as Falkirk kept an eye on him. Barely noticing Alice returning with a mutilate eyeball mounted on a scalpel. Presenting the prize to Falkirk Alice still sported the smile, perhaps a little more victorious than before. Plucking the scalpel from her grasp Falkirk stood and walked up to Mycroft showing it to his brother.

“I suppose I'm desensitised to the violence. Putting two bullets in our father tends to do that. There are people in existence who only understand violence and to make an impact on them you can not be squeamish.”

Grasping his brother's hand and placing the scalpel in it. Falkirk walked off snagging the old Beta as he passed, while Mycroft was still distracted by the eyeball looking at him in return.

Walking out, Selene followed several paces behind. Taking the man's arm as they walked down the street. “Do you mind if I call you Karla? Like myself you appear to have many names all with an element of truth but none quite accurate.”

Karla remained silent as the only known account had indicated. The man was serene in his stillness like an old rock just enduring.

“Well Karla, my companions would very much like to meet you. Guillam especially. I however, see a possibility. I know you are the front runner to replace General Pushkin so I would like to propose something.”

Remaining on the pavement they turned a corner, just as the street before it was deserted and Falkirk continued on. “When the time comes I would like to propose a favour for a favour. I want Pushkin, purely personal you understand. No interrogations or negotiations, you may even be present at his end”

Karla still didn't respond but gave Falkirk a weighing look.

“You may wish, to not return with me. Mycroft Holmes and Peter Guillam work closely with
Control.” Falkirk warned and let go of the Beta’s arm. Looking about Karla started walking off and disappeared round a corner.

Returning to the factory. Mycroft and Guillam were trying their best to reclaim authority in Falkirk’s absence. “I’m finished here so would you two hurry up” Falkirk demanded taking up his original seat beside Alice. As the translation worked its way through the criminal groups, a few of them gave contemptuous sniggers to the alphas.

Whispering to Alice. “Do you think I should warn them, anyone who doesn’t make a deal isn’t getting out of the factory alive?” Falkirk said. Giving a snort, as Alice continued to pick gunk from beneath her finger nails and gave an unpleasant smile to those around them, then shook her head.

Enough where intelligent enough to read the known Omega and the unknown Omega who was clearly the dominant and conspiring over something. Mikhail, the gangster from last time was the first to properly negotiate with Mycroft, with a few others also falling in line.

Falkirk glanced around as the groups talked. Musing to himself, on how nice it was when he didn't have to get bogged down, just be the looming threat on the horizon and let Mycroft do the talking bit. Falkirk enjoyed watching the proceedings.

With a heaviness in his heat, Falkirk nodded to the only one who wouldn't cooperate. Two shots rang out from the darkness and the gangster fell to the floor. Alice voiced her disappointed ‘One Eye’ was not amongst the dead but she did blow the man a kiss as they walked out the factory.

Meeting up with Fairbanks and the rest of the MI6 team. “Double O Two.” Falkirk greeted.

On the plane Alice was much calmer. Reassured she was not being returned to the gangs that once controlled her. Despite being on a plane, just knowing James and Andrew were waiting on him helped Falkirk through his anxiety. When Mycroft asked for a moment alone with his brother Falkirk felt up to the conversation.

Mycroft knew of Falkirk's conduct in the field. But as the day demonstrated. Knowing how the little omega had shot and maimed their father. Even first hand when Falkirk shot and killed Sebastian Moran. Bearing witness to the full conduct of M when dealing with the criminal scum of an old eastern block country was disconcerting to Mycroft.

“You are more uncompassionate than I remember.” Mycroft prompted.

“You mean I'm not the meek little Omega scuttling to the nearest pack Alpha for protection or support” Falkirk said a bit more sharply than he intended. Apologising before Mycroft could respond he went on.

“I go up against Alpha, after Alpha, after Alpha. Most are like those criminals, or worse. If I'm not...” Falkirk trailed off before continuing “If I let an Alpha assert themselves I'll be on the back foot all the way, and I will exhaust myself trying to stand up to them. I have developed a technique of shock and awe, and honed it. I am now stuck with it” Falkirk supplied unsure if his brother could truly understand how he felt when every natural instinct told him to submit, every time he went up against an Alpha.

“I show compassion when I can, to who I can.” Falkirk said looking to the dark haired Omega girl on the other side of the plane speaking to Fairbanks(002).
An arm coming round his shoulder was both unexpected and awkward for the brothers. “So who was the person you didn't want me to notice?” Mycroft whispered.

“A potential successor to Pushkin. I thought making friends early would be of benefit” Falkirk informed. It may be enough to lead Mycroft to Karla but Falkirk had to take the risk as an outright lie would draw too much attention.

Stepping off the plane Falkirk saw a figure in the distance. Approaching, the figure became two, one holding the other. Stooping, James placed the smaller on his feet. Andrew barrelled into his Papa at full speed almost knocking both over, calling “Papa! Papa, papa, papa!”

With a grunt Falkirk lifted his son as James closed the gap at a far more sedate pace.

Leaning into the crook of his mate's neck James issued a low rumbling growl. “I don't like seeing you leave without me” James said as he nuzzled his Omega. Ending in a brief kiss.

“Is that an order?” Falkirk teased earning another low growl.

“A fact” James responded and looped an arm around Falkirk's waist and lead him through to his waiting Aston.

Ignoring the fact he was leaving the entire MI6 team, Guillam, Mycroft and Selene, Falkirk was happy James had met him. James' possessiveness was endearing and relaxing and Falkirk decided to indulge letting James go so far as to buckle his seatbelt for him.
Returning to E-Branch, coming back from a meeting at the Foreign Office. Falkirk, approaching his outer office, he saw the sandy haired Double O, Addison perched in his PA's desk.

“Very dignified.” Addison drawled to M's curly haired assistant.

Darren's responding, “Screw you!” was heavily muffled by the munching and puffed cheeks full of the Cool Original Doritos chips. With more being shoveled in his mouth from the party sized bag.

“The morning sickness at an end?” Falkirk asked pleasantly startling the pair.

“No, the the little bastard just likes the disgusting things.” Darren shot and continued to wolf down the packet of fowl smelling chips.

“In!” Falkirk ordered Addison with a jerking nod to his office. The Double O jumping off the desk and heading for the door.

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Later that afternoon. Returning to his office with a cup of tea and a plate of sandwiched, and a mug of warm water, one of the few things Darren could keep down. Falkirk called his PA in. Falkirk sat beside Darren, both in front of the desk and pulled out a notepad.

“So I was thinking of the baby shower.” Falkirk said as he took a sip from his cup. Darren brightened instantly, with an expectant look and wide smile. “I should warn you. I’ve only been to two and one was mine. Villiers' was full of Omegas while mine was more of a get-together”

“That sounds nice, a party.” Darren said. Like Falkirk the pool of Omega friend was limited for Darren, so restricting guests to Omegas would bring it down to Falkirk, Keading and Darren himself, perhaps a few from the office, but Darren wasn't that close to them.

Falkirk asked, “Where would you like to hold it? Your place, my place or we could book somewhere.”

With an exited demand of. “My place. I don't mean that fucking office with bedrooms attached. God I hate Downing Street! My home.”

Falkirk took notes and the two discussed everything. In his distracted and hungry state, Darren picked up a sandwich. True to Darren's earlier prediction, within moment of eating something other than the chips, the Omega slapped his hand to his mouth and ran from Falkirk's office, tumbling his chair and slamming the door. Falkirk just watched as everyone in E-Branch jumped out the way of the omega running through it.

After finishing his tea and sandwiches, Falkirk was back on his side of the desk and working away. Glancing up, it looked like Darren would be spending most of the afternoon in the bathroom. As had been planed for, one of the pool secretaries took over automatically. The Beta started screening M’s calls until Darren's return.

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A few days later Darren stormed straight into Falkirk's office. “The bastard wants me to invite some... snobs” Darren shot as he manoeuvred himself into a chair.

“He is aware there will be three active Double Os, two ex Double Os, amongst a host of MI6 personnel.” Falkirk said.

“I suppose I could offer to hold another one for his snooty politician friends.” Darren mused not liking the idea of having a bunch of the politicians and or their mates and partners at his shower.

A few hours later Darren returned Falkirk's office. “Gareth has agreed to another shower for show” he said with a tone of begrudging acceptance.

Falkirk nodded “Do you want the assassins at that one as well?” Falkirk teased.

Sniggering “Don't tempt me” Darren uttered under his breath and returned to his desk

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In the middle of writing a report for the Foreign Secretary every alarm Falkirk had went off. Popups appeared on screen as well as an insistent beeping from his phone. It was the panic alarm for his house.

Tanner burst in along with Selene before Falkirk could get to the door of his office. Tanner informed, “Someone attempted to break in. James has the intruder, on site security has not reported secure, M.”

“Tactical team are en rout, Surveillance has been activated.” Selene added.

In E-Branch's tactual room, a dark theatre like room. The rear wall showing all the cameras from the house. The panic room currently contained Keading, Andrew, Yulian and Mrs Bridges. Hudson was moving about the house, with gun drawn, sweeping room after room. While the image of the library showed, James covering a bald man sitting calmly in one of Falkirk's low backed Mackintosh chairs.

“Call the squad back! Get my car!” Falkirk ordered.

Taking out his mobile Falkirk watched James move carefully to answer. “I know you may want to, but don't kill him...” Falkirk ordered.

Suddenly Falkirk rounded on Tanner fixing him with a glare “There is to be no discussion of this event, to anyone. Everything is, Need To Know.” Falkirk stated making sure Tanner knew who 'anyone' referred to, then added “Start cleaning this up, I don't want a hint of that man coming to my house, CCTV, Taxi, whatever get rid of the evidence.”

Arriving at home. Hudson reported that Keading and the rest were still downstairs while James and the 'guest' were in the Library.

While James continued to covered the guest. Falkirk took his own seat behind his desk. When everyone was in place. Falkirk stated, “It's only been a few week. I didn't think we would meet again, so quickly.”
The man Falkirk knew by a whole list of aliases and known by his MI5 counterpart as Karla sat in comfortable stillness. Watching Falkirk without the scrutiny of a stare, little more than the intensity of a gaze. Karla may as well have been watching boats on the Thames or birds in the park.

What occurred was not so much as a staring contest but a watching one. For a moment Falkirk let his mind wander and only years of association with Sherlock and the rest let him see the subtle change in Karla as he noticed Falkirk's lapse in concentration, along with Karla's recognition of being read.

Karla pulled out a folded up piece of paper, he placed it on the desk. Taking it up, Falkirk read the documents or tried to. He handed them to James to translate.

James scanned the Russian writing, summing up. “They want to fire General Pushkin. But he is too connected and hasn't done anything worth firing him. So The General is refusing to go.”

“So Pushkin is not popular at home, I know the feeling well. Well it's a start, Karla. Is that all, some internal politics?” Falkirk said. The answer was silent, only a single slow shrug.

“Thank you for coming” Falkirk said addressing Karla before looking to James and ordering, “Double O Seven, escort our guest to London City airport. Make sure he leaves the country.”

“With pleasure, M.” James growled with a vicious smile. Grabbing a bony shoulder and hauling the older man out the chair and pushing him out of the house.

Calling Daniel Falkirk arranged for a Q branch team to forensically examine both the security footage and the house in case Karla left something behind. Going down stairs Selene was comforting Keading while Mrs Bridges plied Andrew with milk and a cookie. Yulian had slept through the whole incident.

“Oh I remember this time.” the old cook to mused to the whole room. “One of Master Sherlock's experiments went wrong. There was an almighty bang! Shook the whole house....” Mrs Bridges said attempting to calm the distressed Omega with old war stories of her time as cook for the Holmes house hold. “And young maser Sherlock ran across the garden, all covered in pink stuff with Master Sherrinford chasing him.” She ended with a chuckle.

Hudson standing in the background had a wistful smile at the memory and added “Master Sherrinford made Master Sherlock clean every inch of that room. It stained both their skins, they were bright pink for weeks.”

They stayed in the kitchen around the table while Hudson kept an eye on the Q branch team. Having faith in his old colleagues and Daniel's subordinates Falkirk felt no compulsion to go up. Especially when Alec came down the stairs, checking over his still snoozing son.

“Was he anywhere near Yulian?” Alec asked, Falkirk seeing his oldest pack mate holding onto his composure with an iron will.

Keading shook his head, “James just shouted for us to get down here and then the alarm went off.”

Falkirk tactfully pointing out, “James, only person who would be more protective and capable is you or Daniel.” He saw some of the tension leave his friend, James was the person Alec trusted the most.
With Falkirk and Mrs Bridges calm and with presence of his Alpha, Keading soon relaxed as well. Alec's easy going attitude also helped to relax the atmosphere.

When James returned Falkirk did have to ask if Karla had gained any new injuries. The mischievous smile was enough of an answer.

“Nothing to prevent him flying” James added for good measure.

Shaking his head with a small upturn of the side of his mouth Falkirk turned his attention to his cup of tea. “Well Karla should have known what would happen. Breaking into the home of M, while Double O Seven was on down time.” Falkirk mused, but noticed Alec tense again.

“Who is he?” James asked.

“Someone who Control and Mycroft would dearly love to meet. Karla trained and implanted Bill Haydon into MI5.” Falkirk informed, referring to the incident years before. The right hand man of Falkirk's father turned out to be a Russian spy who Falkirk helped uncover, costing Siger Holmes his career as head of MI5 along with a few others who were friends of Haydon in MI5.

By the way Selene deliberately kept herself out of the decisions of M and 007. And how Alec was solely focused on Yulian and the bottle he was feeding the baby. By James' silent glare Falkirk knew his mate didn't approve.

James said, “You're playing with fire, be careful”

James was man of action, excellent in planning for short to medium term. It was the long term strategies that let him down. It was why he made an excellent operative and not an agent or analyst, he couldn't see how something small today, could mean something big in years to come.

“I would like the chance to get to know my enemy.” Falkirk mused, subtly informing James he knew who and what the Beta was. Going off on a tangent. “How many times did you break into M's house?”

“Just a couple.” James teased.

“Why don't I get any attractive Double Os breaking into my house?” Falkirk mused, earning sniggers and growls as appropriate

Alec teasing, “Because you'd shoot them, yourself. Never saw the Wicked Witch pick up a gun, let alone fire one.”

“She was never that good a shot.” James said soberly.

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Falkirk and Keading walked arm in arm, into No.10 Downing Street. Keading giving glances to the photographer and journalists watching them and taking pictures. Both carried wrapped gifts.

This was the party, just for show. The moment they were in the large reception room, and were announced, Darren forced his way between them. “I'm ready to deck one of them.” the Irish omega threatened.
Falkirk nuzzled Darren one side and Keading the other. Darren giving a sigh of relief, thankful for
the friends and the physical contact. “I wish I let Addison come.” Darren mused.

“Lady Grey!” someone announced.

Falkirk looked round, “No, Earl Grey, please.”

The older beta woman who had been announced, was not pleased by the joke but said, “How droll,
Sir Thomas. Lady Samantha Grey, I'm the Wife to the leader of the house of lords.” Falkirk taking
the thin bony hand and shaking it carefully, as if it would break with too much pressure.

Darren plastered on a wide forced smile. Unwinding his arm from Falkirk's to shake the woman's
hand. “Thank you for coming, Lady Grey.”

The moment she moved deeper into the room, to schmooze with the political elite. Darren turned to
Keading, “Just because her dad ran a shop in the 50s and 60s, she thinks she still has a common
touch. I saw the photos of it, before it was airbrushed, 'No Blacks', 'No Irish', and she's a bigger
bitch than us three us combined.”

Keading gave a shy smile. “So it doesn't matter if I embarrass you?”

Falkirk snorted his laughter. “What you must know about Darren is, he has to be the biggest
embarrassment.”

“Too bloody right! I have a reputation to uphold. I'm thinking of a rendition of 'Ooh Ah Up The
IRA', see how the snooty gits like that, or seeing if I can belt that bitch in the mouth.” The Irish
Omega said with pride, indicating an austere Alpha with hooked nose.

“What did she do?” Keading asked.

“Puts her grubby mitts on my Alpha. Always hanging off Gareth's arm. Patted his chest once, I'm
sure she was trying to play with is nipples.”

Falkirk asked, “Is she here?” Keading mouthed the 'she?' in question and Falkirk mouthed back,
'Mother in law'

Darren said, “Gareth isn't that stupid. With this lot and her. I'd probably try to Guy Fawkes this
place. Boom!”

“Oh MI6 is going to have to keep an eye on you.” Falkirk teased giving another nuzzle. Absently
noticing that they had been actively avoided for quite some time now. Which wasn't a bad thing.

Looking over the only thing from the house the Q branch forensics found. Falkirk shook his head
pocketing the lighter. He knew the relevance but not the meaning of the inscribed gift. Was he to
return it, keep it, Falkirk didn't know. Pocketing the gold device Falkirk moved out of Q branch
returning to E branch.

A priority message was left on his desk, a sudden meeting with the Foreign Minister. Not in the
least suspicious from a man who floated between fearing and hating Falkirk. A twenty minute
meeting had been set up at 14:30 at the Foreign Office. On a hunch Falkirk first checked Control's
schedule, a twenty minute dental appointment had been made at 14:30. Mycroft had pulled the same trick with a slightly altered times, a meeting at 14:20 with the Intelligence Minister, where a time allotment of forty minutes had been made.

“Typical” Falkirk mused to himself, the more you want something to remain a secret the more likely it will come out.

At the appointed time. Breezing passed the secretary, outside the Foreign Secretary's office and pushing open the door.

“Surprise, Surprise” Falkirk stated walking in. Mycroft and Smiley sat at a conference table, the Minister himself, absent. Playing his hand early, Falkirk placed the lighter in front of Smiley as he passed the Alpha. Smiley clearly recognising it and visibly shaken.

“So it was him” Mycroft said, also recognising the lighter Smiley lost in the only confirmed interrogation of Karla.

“You may very well say that, I couldn't possibly comment” Falkirk returned as he took a seat opposite the pair.

Running his fingers over the inscription 'To George from Ann All my love' Smiley closed his eyes. A sudden blast of movement sent the lighter across the room as Smiley stood. “I don't care what you have with him but I will be no part of it. Karla will remain a priority target and if he crosses our path...” The Alpha trailed off. The angriest Falkirk had ever seen the man, it was no surprise Smiley stormed out, their professional relationship a little worse off.

“You're alone now” Falkirk said as he stood to go pick up the fallen lighter.

“Smiley, another enemy. You do make so many of them, dear brother. Why do you think I was called in on Azerbaijan. There are some who believe you are out of control, the loss of Scarlett Papava has blinded you, Pushkin is stable and in our line of work that is rare.” Mycroft mused.

“Control has a vendetta where Karla is concerned, what makes his vendetta ignorable and mine not? Have you or Smiley considered, I have had two meetings with Karla and I'm in the process of developing a relationship with him. Or at least, with Pushkin's death, I will be putting Karla into a position where we can keep an eye on him. As director of the FSB Karla will be easier to monitor.”

Reluctantly, Mycroft nodded, seeing the benefit to his brother's actions. Even when his motive was not pure. Building a rapport with Karla, and if the spymaster became the new head of the FSB it would be far easier to track the ghost's movements.

Mycroft had always gained a sense of superiority when pointing out the flaws in Sherlock's deductions. Faced with his little brother's manoeuvrings Mycroft always was left feeling inadequate. He would tell himself a lot of things to help appease his ego but it always came down to, he should be the Alpha, the leader, not his baby brother, the Omega. At the end even mummy and Daddy recognised Falkirk as the one to be proud off. Leaving his brother the victor again, Mycroft walked out.

Shaking his head Falkirk decided to wait for the minister's return. Smiley and Mycroft had paid for forcing him out of a safe place, in order to have tactical superiority when meeting. It was now the turn of Falkirk's boss to face him too.
The personal computer Falkirk didn't need to hack. Starting to type variations of common egocentric, rude or inappropriate words and numbers, and information associated with the Minister. On the third attempt Falkirk typed, 'sexgod69' and was rewarded with the desktop.

Pressing the intercom Falkirk ordered an Earl Grey and a biscuit.

The secretary who entered was very wary of the Omega who had taken up residence. She placed down the china cup with three biscuits.

“Thank you. Is the minister brave enough to show face?” Falkirk asked the Alpha woman. Refusing to answerer she scuttled out as fast as possible. Calling to her before she could fully leave “Please tell him, I could always pay a visit to his home.”

Falkirk was sure the message would get to the minister. It was up to him to decide if he wanted to meet Falkirk here, in private or at his fancy dinner party tonight.

Browsing the cache files Falkirk found the porn the Minister was trying to hide. It took a special type of arrogance to look at illegal porn on a government computer. The only thing that stopped Falkirk calling the police himself, there was nothing involving anyone underage. He decided to leave what he found to the IT engineers to report.

Moving on to the email caches Falkirk found pictures and correspondence with the woman who brought in his tea, a prospective MP and a host of interns. All sexual in some way. He decided to print off a few emails.

At five o'clock Falkirk decided to give up. Executing the program he had been working on, a rather obscene video started playing in an infinite loop and preventing anything else being done. It would play until someone pulled the plug and would need an IT engineer to remove the program. Like Falkirk, an IT engineer would be easily be able to trace the history of all the files Falkirk found.

By the time Falkirk got to the Foreign Minister's home the man's dinner party was in full swing. Handing his card to the tall dark haired butler Falkirk was duly announced.

“Sir Thomas McLair, Director of MI6” the butler announced.

The guests thinking it was just another guest gave Falkirk the barest acknowledgement politeness allowed. Only Falkirk and the Minister's wife noticed the terror that passed over the man. The few Omegas in the group also noticed the change in the man's scent, after a moment. The minister put down his glass a bit too heavily as he stood.

“Why don't we discuss that, *thing* in the study.” The Minister beseeched

Walking to the foot of the table Falkirk handed the Minister's wife the bundle of e-mails he had printed out. Leaning down Falkirk whispered “There is far more to come, far worse. I suggest you start proceeding quickly.”

Looking to the Minister himself. “That will not be necessary” Falkirk informed and walked out.

Absently Falkirk wondered, he felt sympathy for the Minister's wife, even a tiny bit for the minister himself, even when the man was reaping what he had sown. Being aware of an other's pain meant he was not a psychopath or sociopath, but he would burn the man, in his private life, in his professional, he would not hesitate to see the man in jail and if necessary dead. There was no
convenient label like 'Psychopathic tendencies' in his MI6 file and the question ran in a circle in Falkirk's mind. At least until he settled in with James, were the day just melted away as he was surrounded by his Alpha.

Come the morning, they were acting quickly, the papers had the Foreign Minister retiring from politics 'for health reasons'. A tiny story was buried in the government announcements, of a retired Ex Minister's infidelity, inappropriate conduct and voluntarily presenting himself for questioning in relation to accessing obscene material. And when it would be eventually picked up and plastered over the front pages, the government could say they released the information months or years before and couldn't be accused of trying to covering it up.

Dropping the paper on the seat beside him Falkirk removed his glasses and scrubbed his face.

“Something wrong?” Selene asked from the front seat.

“No. Just annoyed with the morons deemed fit to run this bloody country” Falkirk answered and replaced his glasses. Falkirk was looking forward to the day when James would retire and he could bake cakes, tend roses, shopping trips with Keading and Darren destroying their Alphas' bank balances and all the other things of no consequence.

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Mallory looked over the growing crowd, feeling his territory being a little violated. But Darren popped with excitement, sitting beside an Alpha, too handsome for his own good.

“I know that feeling.” The mate of M said to him quietly. “You want to rip Addison apart.”

Mallory smiled at James, “I am able to control my base instincts, Bond.”

James just shrugged and headed for the dining table where there was buck's fizz and nibbles laid out.

Addison, surrounded by Darren, the mate of Selene's and everyone else who outranked him. But seeing Darren smile was enough. He liked being part of the gathering. “So there I was with this beautiful Beta woman. Legs that went all...”

“Mr Addison?” Falkirk called. “Children present.”

“Hay! Don't listen to him, it's not like he's in charge or anything.” Alec demanded, holding one of the referenced children. Cody and Andrew floating about somewhere too.

“Me too! I want to hear the story.” Keading demanded, with Darren agreeing.

Addison smiled, “So where was I, oh yes the beta with the legs....” He said, his voice full of sultry gravel.

The Bing-bong of the doorbell allowed Mallory to escape the story. In the hall he heard the laughter from a punch line but not what it was. Pulling open the door he was relived to see a beta woman and an omega man, but as for the omega Mallory had seen more delicate looking Alphas.

“Maloney, Evens.” James called in greeting, from the door of the lounge, also identifying the guests for Mallory.
“Welcome, do come in.” Mallory said, introducing himself to the Ciri Evans, the beta and Nathan Maloney, the omega. James gave a better greeting as they passed, with a bit more ease, born of familiarity.

Returning to the lounge. Mallory saw the two omegas in hysterics, Darren leaning heavily on Addison as he laughed. Even M's face was contorted, trying not to laugh like the other two.

As the party progressed. Mallory grew more jealous. He noticed the big Scots Alpha and the Alpha of M become more vigilant. He was adamant, that he would not act like a territorial Alpha. Sitting beside the blond omega. “So what do you do, Nathan?”

“Oh if I told you I would have to kill you.”

“I'm sure the Prime Minister has clearance.”

Addison noticed Darren was slowly being drawn by something else and wasn't listening to him. Following the Irish omega's gaze, to the Prime Minister and 009. Addison tipped his head to the side, he could hear Maloney’s response but only make out a deep purring tone as Darren's mate talked. Whispering to Darren, “Is he chatting up Maloney?”

Darren shook his head, whispering back, “Can't be. He prefers Alpha women.”

Keading saying, “Looks like it to me.”

Addison looking around himself. Beside him was Darren with Keading on the far side of the omega. Figuring out what was going on, Addison whispered, “Is he trying to make you jealous?”

Darren watched his mate and Maloney speak. Slowly he nodded, realising Gareth was doing just that.

A general quietness in the room made Mallory look up. Everyone else looked away or hastily started a conversation. Most trying not to giggle. Then noticed how tight the face was of the omega beside him. Mallory gave an embarrassed smile and went to get more champagne, escaping. Everyone's giggles burst out, Maloney slumped and groaned.
Biding Patience: Domestic Interlude

Lowering himself into the water, at the shallow end of the pool. James was taken by his son. Andrew stood on the edge, just in his shorts and inflatable armbands. But it was the first time James consciously noted a change in his son's body, it was losing its squashed and rounded appearance. The bowed legs were straight, the body not covered in quite so much baby fat. Standing on the edge of the pool was a miniature human, not the baby.

James clapped his hands and called, “Come on.”

With absolute faith in his dad, Andrew jumped in. James needing to help Andrew back to the surface. “That was so good.” James said to the coughing boy.

With his hand supporting Andrew's chest, James got his son to swim a bit. “Will you jump in again?” James encouraged.

“'kay daddy.”

James lifted Andrew out of the water. “Hold your breath this time.” James said.

Andrew pinched his nose and jumped. Again James had to scoop his son up from the water. But this time there wasn't so much coughing. Giving a kiss, “You're getting so good.”

While he still had Andrew in his arms. James saw, across the centre, in the pool with the diving boards. Giving a silent chuckle, knowing how much Falkirk hated wearing the Speedos, no matter how much James said he loved seeing his mate in them. The two omegas looking delicious, all long and lean, standing on the highest platform.

Turning Andrew around and pointing to the high dive, “Who's that?”

“PAPA!” Andrew said with a bounce.

“And?”

“Unc'e' eading!”

“Uncle Keading.” James enunciated, Andrew growing a little lazy with his pronunciations.

“Uncle Keading.” James gave a kiss and told Andrew how good he was. “What papa doing?”

“Jumping, like you. Just higher.”

The small face darted from looking to his dad to his papa in worry. They watched Keading talk to Falkirk, then Falkirk dive off the board. There was a bit of a splash before the dark head broke the surface and made for the side.

James noticed Selene had stopped her laps, to looking across to the diving boards too. Keading was careful and flawless, doing a somersault before hitting the water with barely a ripple.

James whispering, “You'll do that one day.”
“Today?” Andrew asked with a waver in his voice.

“No little man, when you're bigger.”

Noticing his son shiver and the goose pimples, James lifted Andrew out then climbed out himself. The two headed for the kids pool, where it was warmer. Andrew liked this pool, because he could feel the bottom and could splash in a doggy paddle, chasing his dad.

Falkirk's car moved through London, heading for the town house of Gareth Mallory. Darren refusing to be at Downing Street as his pregnancy came to a close.

With Brayan as Falkirk's bodyguard, and no Selene within earshot, Falkirk asked Keading, “It's gone a bit quiet. You told me, you and Selene were planing on having a child?”

The other omega shrugged. “Selene still wants to be mother. I'm scared of being a father. I don't know, a voice in my head keeps saying, she's the Alpha, I'm the omega and that's how it should be. She's the strong one. What if something happens to her. What if I...”

Falkirk wound his arm around the other omega pulling Keading close. “You have a pack and a place in it. Not just as Cody's papa, or Selene's bond-mate. You're my friend. The only person I trust to watch Andrew. The only person Daniel and Alec trust to look after Yulian.”

“I love looking after them. But being a dad, seems so much more responsibility than a mom. I know it doesn't make sense but it's what I think and feel.”

Falkirk thought there was some conflict of old stereotypes at the root of Keading's fear. Along the lines of 'man=provider' and 'alpha=provider' competing with 'woman=child bearer/home maker' and 'omega=child bearer/home maker'. And being the father was scary because it would mean, Keading viewed himself going from one group to another.

“Oh, Keading. I think I do understand. But you have nothing to fear.” Falkirk said and nuzzled the other omega.

The car pulling to a stop ended the conversation. A little unsatisfyingly in Falkirk's opinion.

The door to Mallory's was pulled open, by a silver haired woman. Her watery grey eyes scanned Falkirk and Keading, with the same look one might give a spider crawling across the doorstep.

“Sir Thomas McLair, to see Darren Mallory.”

“He's resting.”

“NO HE FECKING WELL ISN'T. HE'S NOT FECKING DEAF EITHER. YA OLD COW!”

Falkirk walked passed the woman, who looked like she had just bitten into a lemon. Keading sticking to his back.

Falkirk found Darren, sitting in the middle of the couch, arms and legs splayed and looking miserable.
“MI6 will never have to pay me again, just one kill order on HER and...” Darren trailed off in a groan, happy when Keading settled one side of him. Falkirk coming to the other side.

“Oh a hate her. And Gareth's spine goes out the fucking window whenever she's here. I did the baby's room in a nice green and white. She painted it white, 'Colour is so common.' Stuck up COW!” Darren said, roaring the last word towards the door.

Oh, Falkirk hated this but offered, “You want me to hobble her?”

“Naw, I can deal with the cow. I KNOW YOU'RE LISTENING AT THE DOOR, SO YOU CAN TAKE YOUR BEAK AND FECK THE RIGHT OFF.”

Falkirk heard the soft feet moving away. Keading whispering, “I don't mind babysitting, when you get back to work.”

“Thanks.” Darren said rubbing his head against the American omega's. “I think Gareth wants a nanny, like he had, already enrolled 'Conrad' at that stupid school. I'd love it to be a girl, to see his plans all messed up.”

“You know it's a boy?” Keading asked, Darren nodded and told them about the last ultrasound where it was clear the baby had something girls wouldn't have.

Falkirk noticed as long as Darren was sure his mother in law was not listening he was calmer and swore a lot less. It looked like he was going to have a private word with Mallory.

One hour, exactly after arriving. The door swung open and Amelia Mallory entered, “Time for your friends to go home, Darren.”

Before Darren could blow his top. Falkirk said, “We were invited for dinner and we accepted. And it will give me time to see the Prime Minister.”

“A little inconvenient, I think you should go.” Mallory's mother informed as if they were children asking for a sleep over.

“No.” Falkirk said and settled in, the three cuddling on the couch still. Able to feel Darren tremble with the effort to not scream at his mother-in-law.

Falkirk asked, “Where do you keep your blankets?” When Darren told him, Falkirk went to the cupboard upstairs, retuning with a quilt and a few pillows too. As Amelia Mallory was not being a host in any way, shape or form. Falkirk then ventured into the kitchen. The woman herself, sitting in the conservatory.

A small omega, was pottering about, cooking. Falkirk picking up on an aura of stress from the small woman. She asked if Falkirk needed anything. Falkirk answering, “Well there will be two more for dinner, if that's not too much trouble.”

“That's fine sir, plenty to go around.” the cook said.

“Thank you. And I think Darren is feeling peckish just now. So do you have those chips he can eat?”
Falkirk saw the cook flick her eyes to a cupboard as she said loud enough for her voice to carry to the conservatory. “I’m sorry, Sir. We have run out.”

Falkirk was on the verge of seeing red. The cook, needing to lie, and even the lie had a lie in it. Falkirk would bet pounds to pence, Mallory's mother had banned the chips or thrown them away. Falkirk pulled open the cupboard and pulled out the contraband and headed to the lounge before he decided the give Darren his wish.

Falkirk had heard, admittedly one sided stories of the woman. How she bullied the omega Mallory brought home from Ireland. And how she scorned the omega when Mallory did the decent thing and honoured their bonded status, not even treating the Darren as a supplement to a marriage, like some omegas were treated. But from being lied to at the door, to being treated like children and now being petulantly ignored, Falkirk was quickly learning to dislike Amelia Mallory.

When Mallory came home, the man dressed casually so he would look like a normal person while he attended some photo opportunity. Falkirk let him greet Darren before asking, “Prime Minister, a word if you please?”

Falkirk followed the alpha into a study. Mallory asking, “Is this as M?”

“No as Darren's friend. Is your mother the best person to be around at this time. Darren hates her, the feeling is mutual but Darren is the one who is currently under the greater stress and your mother isn't helping that.”

Mallory sank into the plush, green leather swivel chair. “I know they hate each other. But my mother will love our son.”

Falkirk sat opposite the man, “I'm sure she will love her son's son, her grandson. But what about the son of Darren Tracey? Will she even acknowledge he has had a son?”

“Probably not. But she did promise to be civil.”

Falkirk wanted to snort out a laugh. “While I will admit, Darren was screaming at her, calling her a cow. Your mother's behaviour was not that good either. You do know she has banned one of the few things Darren can eat?”

Mallory shook his head, putting his hand over his eyes. “I will have a word with her.”

“Once he has dropped Andrew off at nursery school, I will ask Keading to come over. It would give Darren and your mother a break from each other.”

Mallory nodded, “I'll make sure she understands she needs to give them time alone.”

On the way home, Falkirk looked to the omega beside him.

“Could you please look in on Darren, tomorrow?” Keading nodded and agreed. “I know it's hard but don't let Amelia Mallory bully you.”

Keading nodded again.

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James' fingers lacing between Falkirk's, holding the delicate hands either side of the omega's head. Falkirk feeling his alpha's slow thrusts, his legs wrapped around James' waist. They gazed into each other's eyes. Falkirk rolling his hips up into the slow thrusts. Falkirk bit his lip, his body aching for the release, but his alpha making them go slow. James leaned down and Falkirk gave up on biting his lip as his mouth was invaded. The Alpha's mouth then moved to Falkirk's cheek, jaw, a slight tug on his earlobe. James' warm breath coming out in pants, sounding like a hurricane next to his ear.

“Miss you.” James grunted.

“Miss... you... too.” a sharper thrust brushing over all the nice places between Falkirk's words.

Falkirk loved this. Able to see the hungry eyes boring into him. Feel his Alpha inside him. Smell his Alpha, the pheromones making him light headed. Even the drops of perspiration falling from the shot blond hair landing on Falkirk's chest or face felt like heaven.

As they grew closer to the slowly building climax. Falkirk bucked and met the incoming thrusts. How James pushed in so far it truly felt like being impaled in the most delicious of ways.

On the edge, Falkirk felt blunt teeth scrape over his neck. The Alpha growled, “MINE!” and Falkirk came as the mark was renewed, a livid bruise that said he was bound to an Alpha.

Falkirk giving a scream, “Yours!”

The comedown was long, Falkirk feeling the hard lump just inside the ring of muscle, tying them together. Falkirk fell into a doze, with his Alpha's weight pressing down on him, and the cock inside him continuing to twitch and release its seed.

About half an hour later, the Alpha's knot was not able to keep them tied any longer. The two started with the usual morning routine, of showering, brushing of teeth before dressing.

“I will miss you.” James said again, watching Falkirk prepare for the day of work. James himself had hours before he had to leave, so this would be the last time they saw each other until he came back from the mission.

“I will miss you, too. My Alpha.” Falkirk said.

The two shared a kiss on the doorstep. Andrew getting a peck on the cheek. The boy calling, “Bye-bye, Papa.”

“Bye-bye, poppet, Daddy.” Falkirk called in return, the two waving him off.

On the way to work. Falkirk asked Selene to join him in the back of the long car. When he raised the divider between the back and front. Selene headed him off, “Keading told me, he's scared of being a father.”

Falkirk nodded. Selene said, “But he raised Cody on his own, for years. I don't think I really understand.”

Falkirk shrugged. “People get all sorts of things in their head, dreams, desires, fears, worries. Some justified others not so. But they all affect us.”
“I could be the father, but honestly I always dreamed of being the mother.” The alpha woman said.

“Did you tell him that?”

Selene looked away, admitting, “Maybe not in those exact words.”

“Try. For our Alphas, omegas will do almost anything.”

“I may have seen a certain fanatic at his best.”

“Hay!”

Selene became quite sombre, “But if you weren't I wouldn't be here, in more was then one. Thank you.”
Falkirk was the first around the door, Keading stretching his head to see. Darren was sitting in the far corner of the couch, his arms full of a white bundle.

“Hay.” Darren greeted, softly. His eyes still locked on the chubby sleeping face, of the boy nestled in his arms.

Falkirk sat, sliding close to the other omega. To see the rounded full cheeks, little squashed nose and when Colum blinked his eyes open briefly they were the same strange hazel as the boy's Papa.

“Oh, such pretty eyes.” Falkirk squeaked. Keading almost in his lap to get a look at the boy.

Gently Darren passed his son to Falkirk. Whispering, “You'll be godfather, I'd hate for her to raise Colum of something happened.”

Falkirk nodded. “I'd love to. How has she been?”

“I've been around enough terrorists to know when someone is plotting something big. But I can deal with her.” Darren said, softly as not to disturb Colum.

The three just sat a moment looking at the sleeping baby. Keading reminding, “You can call me, if you need to do anything.”

Darren gave a shrug. “Gareth and his mother picked a nanny. Not met her yet, Gareth says she's alright.”

“Alright?” Falkirk asked and got a shrug from the other omega. He hoped this was not something that he would have to deal with. Like himself, other alphas Darren could deal with. Only when it came to their own Alpha was it a different story, for that they needed a champion.

After the brief visit to Darren. Falkirk and Keading headed home. Falkirk's car first stopping outside Selene and Keading's, where a goodbye was shared. Arriving home, Falkirk flung open the car door, the blond bodyguard waited until the director of MI6 was inside before leaving with the car.

Falkirk could hear the excited voice of Andrew and the deeper rumble of an Alpha who must have returned within the last few hours. Looking into the lounge, listening to James tell stories of what had happened.

“And I...rugby tackled him.” James said. Andrew letting out a scream as his dad pounced and caught him around the waist, the two hitting the floor with a thud. Andrew's scream turning into a rapid, “Hehehehe.” laugh.

Loathed to disturb them, but if Andrew didn't start his evening wind-down, he would be up to high doh and awake to the early hours. “Come on you two.” Falkirk said softly.

“Aww, Papa?” Andrew said giving big puppy dog eyes, from where he was mostly covered by James.
“Dinner, bath, story and then bed.” Falkirk reminded. “Not! One of daddy's stories, with wrestling and flying tackles and acting out what's going on.”

“Aww, Papa.” James teased.

Arriving home, after a typical day of listening to reports, reading reports, and meeting with his new boss. The moment Falkirk walked through the door he knew something was up. From the extra stiffness in Hudson's posture to the scent cues of James and Andrew in the air.

Finding his Alpha drowning his sorrows in the lounge Falkirk sat beside him and leaned his head on the muscled chest. Automatically James pulled Falkirk closer nuzzling the top of his head.

“I thought I'd give Andrew a treat. Ended up in a fight. He told me he wishes I never came back. Been in his room ever since” James informed before spitting “Fucking ducks!”

“You didn't take him to feed the ducks?”

“They're just bloody ducks” James growled.

Sitting up so he could look his Alpha in the face. He was sympathetic to his Alpha as he said, “No they are not, not to Andrew. Andrew is at a stage where he recognises routine and gains comfort from that recognition. You leave and he misses you. Then you arrive back in a whirlwind of excitement and expectations, you disrupt everything and he doesn't know what is happening. So Andrew gets scared and lashes out while trying to cling to the things he dose knows. And what Andrew knows is, Keading comes in the morning, they go to the park to play and feed the ducks, then lunch then to an activity like swimming or one of the clubs. Or an activity in the morning and the park after lunch.”

Lying back down. “Tomorrow, Keading takes Andrew swimming in the morning. You you go with, you will fit into Andrew's routine, not force him to change his. Andrew will love the opportunity to show off to his Alpha. And no matter what was said, Andrew loves being with his dad.”

Getting a non-committal huffing sound Falkirk thumped the muscled chest under his cheek “I'll make it a bloody order Double O Seven” Falkirk snapped

A soft rumbling sounded through Falkirk's pillow before James responded “Sir, Yes Sir, Sir”

Making a happy humming sound Falkirk rubbed against the chest a bit more before moving up to the neck and then placing a kiss on the Alpha's lips. “I knew you were a big softie at heart” Falkirk said and caught James' hand pulling him up.

Bypassing the first floor Falkirk pulled James to the second. Finding Andrew in his Nestie Falkirk sat one side while James sat the other of the small dome tent.

“Andrew, poppet” Falkirk called getting no answer. “Your dad and I want to speak with you” Falkirk prompted. Only getting a distressed meow in response Falkirk noticed James' guilty flinch at the sound.

Trying for a few minutes more before the scent of distress omega permeated the small dome of
fabric. Switching on the night-light and the overhead off. Falkirk started reciting a poem from memory, speaking in the same soft tone he did every night. At the end Falkirk stood and held his hand out for James.

“Good night, love.” Falkirk said to the dome.

“Night, little man” James said and brushed the material of the Nestie.

Accepting Falkirk's hand James pushed himself up and followed his mate out.

In the middle of the night the baby monitor indicated Andrew was moving about. Assuming it was Andrew going from his Nestie to his bed when he didn't show up, slowly Falkirk fell back asleep.

Another buzz had both Falkirk and James up and armed instantly. The small panel which controlled the lighting, alarms and bells flashed a status code and gave a quiet buzz-buzz.

“Front, kitchen door, has been opened” James informed, while Falkirk was fumbling with his glasses.

Meeting Hudson coming down the stairs also armed. The older Alpha said, “The young master isn't in his room”

James and Hudson swept the ground floor before moving to the basement. Coming down the stairs, the door onto the tiny courtyard that led to street level was swinging slightly. After a quick sweep of the basement James darted out the door and up the stone stairs to the street.

A hum from Hudson drew Falkirk's attention. The butler was holding up a bag containing a loaf of bread, and then flicked his eyes down to the chair that had been pulled from the table a distance away. Slowly Hudson returned the loaf to the bread bin and Falkirk realised what had happened. Darting out the door Falkirk found an almost frantic James darting about the street in a vain hope of finding the direction Andrew had gone.

“James!” Falkirk hissed heading down the road. Moving through the park they walked quickly along the man-made lake.

The moment James saw a man kneeling by Andrew, the Alpha saw red. Faster than Falkirk could keep up James ran on, barrelling into the stranger. James started hammering is face. Andrew had dropped down wrapping himself into a ball in the presence of the violence.

“DOUBLE O SEVEN! STAND! DOWN!” Falkirk ordered with all the authority of M. James stilled as if someone had flipped a switch, his hand raised and ready to give another punch. “Get off of him” Falkirk stated and pointed to Andrew cowering. Getting the point James moved to scoop up the precious bundle, looking over Andrew as he did so.

“Are you alright?” Falkirk asked kneeling beside the Beta male. The answer was a mumbling and a wince. Pulling the belt from his dressing gown Falkirk pressed the silk to the seeping wounds on the side of the man's face.

“What are you doing?” James demanded, as Falkirk helped the Beta stand.

Pointing to a bum on a distant bench “FSB agent” Falkirk informed. As they returned home Falkirk, supporting the beta. Falkirk indicated a car “They're the Iranians”
Passing a house several doors down from their own. “The Winestines, Mossad. Mr Ping who admires the Aston…”

“Chinese?” James prompted.

“Amercians,” Falkirk corrected. “The Chinese are Madam De La Tore” Falkirk informed referring to an Alpha spinster who lived several doors in the other direction.

“So who’s he?” James demanded of the man Falkirk was helping back to their house.

“Not sure, Mycroft or Control. Odds are even at the moment. Defiantly British domestic intelligence.” Falkirk informed.

With the Lamplighter (an MI5 designation) well and truly exposed he gave the number of his overseer with ease. A black Mercedes pulled up to the serviceman’s entrance and Falkirk bundled the Lamplighter in.

Under the constant reassurance of his Alpha. Andrew had calmed down considerably.

“I still don't know why you were so unconcerned?” James accused still stroking the neck and back of the Omega sitting in his lap.

“Because I'm me, I'm a fanatic and I'm merciless when I want to be. I have explained to each in turn, the consequences of collateral damage. The ones with the most to lose will keep the ones with less, in line. Because they will all pay if something happens.” Falkirk informed.

James had to suppress his instinct to hunt down and kill the people watching the house. Falkirk calmly explained Control, Mansfield and a lot of others were under the exact same scrutiny. “I do the same to my counterparts, it's all in the game” Falkirk finally finished with. Not liking the situation any better than his Alpha but understanding it.

Going to bed James kept both Omegas close, lavishing nuzzles and caresses until both fell asleep. Waking to the sound of his morning alarm Falkirk doubted James even got a wink of sleep.

“Are you still concerned about the surveillance agents?” Falkirk asked. Andrew protested the disturbance to his peaceful sleep with a disgruntled noise and burrowed deeper into James’ chest.

“I knew you would be under surveillance. I even had the car and Ping was always to talkative for London... but the rest” James' sombre tone ended with a small growl of frustration. “I won't kill them” James said with a begrudging smile.

“Good boy” Falkirk teased and gave a quick kiss before heading for the bathroom. James darted out of bed just before the bathroom door close forcing it back open he kissed his omega and shut the door with his foot.

--

A long day of work topped off by a bout of vigorous love making. Now it would appear James had been slipped Sodium Pentothal as he kept talking while Falkirk tried to go to sleep. Over the course of James' ramblings Falkirk learned the argument over the visit to the duck pond had all but been forgotten. The late night excursion had been dealt with, mostly by Keading doing the explaining and an apology and a promise had been made by Andrew not to open doors without permission.
“I went swimming with them” James informed, referring to the trip Keading made every week to the pool with Yulian and Andrew.

“Andrew was really good, he could easily do laps of the kids pool. I took him into the big pool, he managed a full lap. Then he showed me how he good he was at swimming below the surface. We ended in a game, getting weights from the bottom of the pool”

Falkirk could hear the pride in the Alpha's voice and was in no doubt that Andrew had been pushing himself to show off.

--

A few weeks after the first visit, Falkirk went to visit Darren again. It was a Sunday and Darren would restart work the next day. Sitting with Colum in his arms Falkirk was making a fuss over the new arrival. Apart from Darren's strange blue eyes it was hard to tell who he physically took after as both Mallory and Darren had dark hair and similar complexion.

Hearing Mallory moving about Falkirk took the opportunity to relay a message “Addison is looking forward to your return”

Hearing a growl from the background Darren snapped “Stop eves dropping”.

After the events of the baby shower Mallory had been a little jealous of Darren's associations with the dashing operatives. Especially Addison, who in particular fawned over the expectant mother. Mallory in attempted retaliation heaped attention onto the only unbound Omega who just happened to be 009. Everyone agreed watching Mallory attempt to flirt with the third most senior Double O was equally entertaining and pathetic. Ever since the baby shower Darren with the occasional help of Falkirk had teased the man mercilessly.

“What are you sure about this Nanny?” Falkirk whispered. He had seen the woman skulking at the top of the stairs when he arrived, and she looked like many a hard-faced, emotionless, traditional nannies Falkirk had immediately dismissed.

“She's polite. Suppose she'll do. And it keeps, her from being here as much.” Darren admitted.

With the final reassurances and arrangements made for Darren's return Falkirk handed the baby over. Mallory gave begrudging goodbye still not forgiving him for the message from Addison. Darren saw Falkirk out carrying Colum with him.

Passing the Policeman on the door. A few flashes drew Falkirk's attention as the paparazzi across the street tried to get another image of the baby. Getting into the car the relief bodyguard on duty held the door for him.

With James out with Andrew. Falkirk was at a loss. Looking into the library Falkirk shook his head, he was not going to work on the first opportunity of peace and quiet. Wandering from the library to the lounge then out into the garden.

“What bugger” Falkirk whispered to himself.

Shrugging, Falkirk headed upstairs and drew himself a languid bath. Full of bubbles and soft complementary, calming scents. In his youth Falkirk loved baths often refilling them as the water
cooled, now he was getting board after twenty minutes.

Dressed in soft casual cloths Falkirk returned to the library. Never one to read for the sake of reading there were only a few trashy Omega literature novels along with the poetry and technical reference books. Going to the lounge Falkirk looked over the rows of concealed movie discs. Pulling out a theatrical performance of Phantom of the Opera, Falkirk placed the disc in the player. After another twenty minutes Falkirk was bored, unless he was huddled in the dark with his mate in a live theatre he didn't enjoy the performance.

If Falkirk knew he was going to be this bored he would have told the driver to take him to his club. The sound of Hudson going to the door was was like music to Falkirk's ears.

Sprinting into the lounge, James calling for Andrew to wait. Falkirk's eyes locked on his son's face. Sporting a bruised cheek and black eye Andrew entered the lounge. James looked guilty and uncomfortable as he cautiously followed Andrew in. James cringing in fear as he said, “We went to a climbing wall, Andrew slipped”

“Tried to break his fall with his face?” Falkirk speculated before adding “Just like daddy dose. Casualty?”

“Yes.” James said. Confirming there had been a trip to Accident&Emergency, were there had been x-rays, paediatrician and even a talk with a social worker. Falkirk was even presented with an accident report from the activity centre. Falkirk holding two conversations. While James spoke, Falkirk was inspecting the damage and giving sympathy while Andrew moaned his little heart out.

Looking to his Alpha with his teasing smile that turning malicious “If it happens again. You will be going to Siberia on a stake out. Nothing but a shack and a pair of binoculars. Not a pub or distraction for hundreds of miles, just endless cold and darkness. Am I clear” Falkirk warned.

“Crystal clear, M” James said, sitting beside his mate and pup, putting his arm around both. “His fingers slipped and one of the grips caught him as he swung against the wall”

“I was really high” Andrew added with enthusiasm.

“You've dangled higher, without a harness” James responded referring to an attempt by Andrew to climb over a baby gate. Swinging his legs over the banister on the third floor in the process.

“When?” Andrew demanded to know when.

“Never you mind” Falkirk answered not wanting to give the child ideas. He could already see James' daring in the boy.
It was pointed out there might be some confusion in the name of Darren and Mallory's son. Colum, is the spelling I chose. It's a derivative of St Columba, an Irish Abbot who brought Christianity to the western isles of Scotland founding the monastery on Iona. Can also be spelt Colm, but not column(as in a pillar).

Thanks for reading, comments and kudos they are much appreciated.

Falkirk watched his Alpha pack. Happy that James was just taking some newbies out for training. Loving that he knew, James would be back in ten days time exactly, something that didn't happen on missions which only ended when they were successful, aborted or the operative died.

Like most young Omegas, Andrew didn't tend to cry, just making a weak mewling sound. James squatted down, to hook his son under the legs and lift him up. “I'll be back soon. How many fingers have you got?”

Andrew showed his dad his hands, palm forward and fingers spaced apart. “That many!”

“That is how many days I will be gone.” James said giving the boy's cheek a kiss.

“Ten days, that's ages.” Andrew wined.

“I'll bring you back something nice.” James tried to appease, wanting Andrew to look forward to his return rather than the departure.

Unhappily Andrew waved his dad goodbye as James disappeared into the night. Taking himself upstairs, his Papa following behind. Pulling himself, awkwardly into his Nestie, the door getting a little small.

Falkirk left Andrew to self comfort with the lingering scent of their Alpha. Making a mental note to either get a bigger Nestie or teach Andrew to make a proper nest as Falkirk returned downstairs.

--

Arriving at work. Darren's desk was empty, a voice message was waiting on Falkirk. Mallory's mother and the nanny she recommended were causing untold friction in the family. It was clear Darren hated the Nanny and wasn't shy on voicing his opinion.

Falkirk was wondering if this would be the day the other omega asked for his help. He would help, but that didn't mean he liked going up against Alphas. And Mallory had always been decent enough.

Darren arrived at work and marched straight into Falkirk's office. “I tried to fire her, the bitch ignored me then She berated me for being ungrateful”
The 'She' Amelia Mallory, Darren's mother in law was a figure Darren only mentioned in anger. She didn't have the decency to attend the civil union between the pair refusing to accept Darren as anything but a subordinate pack member who was standing in the way of Gareth marrying someone more suitable.

Indicating the desk phone “Call Mallory, let me hear.” Falkirk said.

Darren pressed the button for speaker and dialled his Alpha's number. Mallory, greeted, “M?”

“It's me.” the Irish Omega said.

“Darren, this had better be an official call.”

“I'm in charge of our son. I want both those bitches gone.”

“I am not getting between you and mother. And that Nanny is perfectly acceptable. Now no more of this nonsense. And don't call me from M's phone again.”

“Prime...” Falkirk, trailing off as the click from the speaker indicated he was to late.

Darren sank into the chair, his face starting to lose the battle to remain straight. The strange blue hazel eyes starting to glisten. Falkirk was round the desk in a moment and sitting beside the other omega, pulling him close.

Falkirk had considered Darren to be a part of his extended pack and by the way Darren was acting the feelings were mutual. Having given Mallory an opportunity to resolve the situation Falkirk now had no qualms about acting in Darren's interest. Just as Daniel did for him, when Falkirk needed to go up against James.

“Lets sort this.” Falkirk said. The unquestioning support bringing palpable relief to he other Omega.

--

Luckily Mallory's favourite person was home and currently in the MI6 gym. Making a visit to the testosterone and pheromone filled atmosphere that made up the MI6 gym Falkirk singled out his target. Ignoring the sudden change in atmosphere as M walked through the large exercise room.

Approaching the man, his sandy hair darker due to the sweat. “Darren's a little upset. I was hoping you could help with a personal matter?” Falkirk asked pleasantly.

“Of course.” Addison said without thought.

“Very good, Mr Addison. Requisition a gun directly from Q and to make it something visually impressive.”

--

Outside the private town house, owned by Mallory. One of the arguments, Darren wining, that Colum would be raised in their house, not Downing Street. Darren lead Falkirk, Selene, Alec, Addison and Keading up the steps and inside.
Coming down the stairs. The Nanny. An Alpha in her late forties, early fifties wearing a professional uniform from a prestigious college. She looked down on the group unimpressed. In her arms was the precious bundle.

Falkirk held Darren's arm, to stop his rushing in. Darren said, repeating the line he needed to say to the nanny, “I have decided Keading will be my son's babysitter. Your services are no longer necessary and you will be compensated in lieu of notice.”

The Nanny was quite astute and indomitable said, “I am not employed by you. And Mrs Mallory was called, the moment I saw you and your friends arrive.”

Darren lunged, which was why Falkirk had entwined his arm with the other omega's. Darren still tried to go for the Alpha, while Falkirk held him back. Falkirk said, “Then let us await Amelia Mallory. Keading, please take Colum.”

Selene and Keading approached. Falkirk having to give a nudge to Darren. The Irish omega saying, “Hand him over, you stuc...” Darren glared as Falkirk stopped him from telling the bitch what he thought of her.

“You were given an instruction, by Colum's Papa.” Falkirk said. “Hand over the child, as Darren wishes. Or the police will be involved.”

The Nanny handed over the baby to the Omega. Keading brought Colum to Darren before, as the plan dictated, Alec and Keading took the baby to Falkirk's home.

The Nanny sat perfectly poised. Her eyes flicking to the strange people around her. Amelia arrived about five minutes after Keading had left. An Alpha in her late fifties she was elegant and refined, silver hair styled up. An expensive string of pearls and a no doubt designer dress from the best shops of London, New York or Paris. She swanned in as if she owned the house and stopped, seeing the full lounge, then looked behind her where she saw a dark haired Alpha woman with dark and dangerous blue eyes.

Attempting to take charge of the situation Amelia seethed to Darren, “How juvenile. You think this gang is enough to scare me you have another thing coming, dear boi.”

Again Falkirk was holding Darren from attacking the woman personally. He said to her, “Prior to today, I have spoken to Mallory, twice. Where Colum is concerned, Darren's word is law. Are we clear?”

The look the woman sent Falkirk, clearly meant he wasn't being clear enough. In an instant Amelia was pinned to a wall by Selene. While Addison threw the Nanny to the floor. Both Alphas getting guns pressed to their respective heads for good measure.

Calmly Falkirk walked over to the Nanny and squatted down. Placing a sheet of paper down on the floor in her line of sight. “You should have taken Darren's offer. Here's mine. Your letter resignation, forfeiting all entitlements for immediate departure.” Falkirk explained and placed a pen down “Sign it!”

Picking up the paper, after the Nanny made a quick and desperate squiggle. “I hope the shaky signature won't affect the legality, will it?” Falkirk finished in deadly tones.

A distressed,”No!” was all the Nanny could muster. With the nod from Falkirk Addison pulled the
nanny to her feet and threw her out the front door.

Encircled by the friends of her son in law, and despite what she had just witnessed, Amelia was defiant. Only Falkirk and Darren would be able to pick up on the que of her fear. “My Son will not stand for this. He's the Prime Minister!”

“I gave him his position. A what point do you think I fear him.” Falkirk shot, wiping the look off her face. “Gareth Mallory learned not to cross me now so will you. You will never again interfere in Darren's household. You will show him respect, at all times or never cross the threshold again.”

Amelia sneered at Falkirk's demands. A nod to Selene and she yanked the woman she was pinning to the wall, tumbling her to the floor.

Squatting down so he was on eye level with the fallen Alpha. Falkirk said, “I grow weary of your insolence. You will comply or never set foot near Gareth, Darren or Colum again. Choose!”

In typical egotistical Alpha mentality Amelia attempted to regain control of the situation. “My Son is the Prime Minister. You will not get away with this”

Seeing she was putting all her faith in her son Falkirk thought it was time for the man to choose as well. Pulling out his phone Falkirk dialled the Prime Minister.

Moneypenny answered and Falkirk politely asked to speak with Mallory. When Amelia tried to call for help hearing her son's voice Selene clamped a hand over the woman's mouth.

“M?”

“I have persuaded your Nanny to resign. I am now discussing your mother's conduct, with her.” Falkirk informed hearing Mallory's sudden intake of breath

“Don't go to far, please” Mallory pleaded. Nodding to Selene the bodyguard let go of her hold.

“He hit me!” Amelia accused.

“MOTHER, just go! I'll talk to you later.” Mallory ordered.

“No you won't!” Falkirk interrupted. “Not unless she complies with my terms.”

“Yes, Yes, she'll comply” Mallory stated.

Amelia demanding, “How can you be so weak. He's just a bitch, put him in his place.”

“M! Do this and you will face me!” Mallory's voice so loud the speaker of Falkirk's mobile phone crackled.

“So be it.” Falkirk said and nodded to Addison. The Double O giving the refined woman the bums rush, she joined the nanny going out the door as well.

Pulling Darren down to the couch Falkirk leaned against him. “How was that?” he asked with a teasing smile.

“Think the gun was a bit much.” Darren said relaxing against the other Omega.
“An experienced English Nanny, only Double Os have denser hides, anything less and she would have ignored it. And don't tell me you didn't want to see, her, thrown to the floor. You did ask for a kill order.” Falkirk said, earning a snort of amusement.

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Getting called into the Prime Minister's office as if he was a naughty school boy Falkirk looked around the room as he entered. The Prime Minister's cold grey eyes boring into him as he entered.

“Just making sure I shouldn't have come armed” Falkirk said in light, teasing tones. The scent from Mallory was furious and it took all of Falkirk's self will not to react or run from it.

“You were completely out of line” Mallory growled.

“No cognac?” Falkirk stated, taking a seat across from the Alpha attempting to give verbal distance to allow Mallory calm himself. Noticing the way the Alpha's hands curled on the surface of the desk, he was preparing to attack.

“If you were an Alpha I would tare you apart for challenging me” Mallory continued, voice rough with an undercurrent of a lingering growl.

As it was clear Mallory didn't want to calm himself. Falkirk resigned himself to having to confront the furious Alpha.

“The story have it wrong. An Omega needs a pack not an Alpha.” Falkirk started in casual tones, further infuriating the Alpha. “James gives me a sense of purpose and direction. But when we come into conflict, I could never stand against my Alpha. In order to stand up to James I need a champion, Daniel, Alec, Selene only then can I excel. Today I did that for Darren.”

Falkirk, itched for a weapon or to call for an alpha to come protect him. But he stayed the course. Fixing the Alpha with a hard challenging stare Falkirk continued.

"I was on the line when Darren called you.” surging to his feet and slamming his hands on the oak desk Falkirk glared at the Alpha. “WHAT IS UNACCEPTABLE IS HIS KNOTLESS ALPHA COULDN'T PUT...his mate or pub, BEFORE HIS FUCKING STUCK UP MUMMY!”

Mallory surged to his feet and in a sweep faster than Falkirk could track, the Omega was pinned by the neck to the desk. A few half hearted scratches at the restraining hand before the restriction, the furious scent and the continuous growl caused Falkirk to fall still.

Not knowing how long he had been pinned Falkirk could barely think. A continuous mewling emerged from his throat as the distressed scent mingled with the Alpha's furious. Time lost meaning as Falkirk's instincts told him to squirm and press himself lower, subjugating himself to the Alpha.

Slowly Mallory eventually pulled back, releasing the Omega. Falkirk's initial instinct was to drop to to the floor and mewl. It took almost more effort than he thought possible to stand and square his shoulders, looking Mallory directly in the eye.

“Is your ego appeased?” Falkirk shot, voice soft and hissing unable to control his slight speech impediment.
“That is the last mistake you can afford to make.” Falkirk's wavering voice getting stronger with every word, fuelled by righteous anger. “You are now forbidden to have contact with you mother. And if I find out you ever do THAT to Darren. I will end your bond and someone more appropriate will be chosen as his mate. I will then... end... you.”

Knowing he had gone too far but unwilling to give ground. “You go beyond yourself.” Mallory started.

“As far as you are concerned I am Darren's pack Alpha and my word is law. You will comply or end up like your predecessor” Falkirk warned

Mallory took a breath to speak. “ENOUGH!” Falkirk ordered and walked out, slamming the door behind him.

Selene, saw the tremble in the omega she protected. And in his wake she smelled the disturbing ques. Insisted of taking the seat beside the driver, she slipped in beside Falkirk and raised the partition. “What's wrong?” she asked, reaching out to take Falkirk's hand and noticing how he flinched away.

Shaking his head, Falkirk just pulled out his phone. When he heard the phone being answered he ordered, “Double O Five, take Darren to my house. You are authorised to use any means necessary to see him there safely.”

Selene looked on in concern as M then dialled another number. “Alec, Double O Five is on his way round. No one is to remove Colum or Darren unless I am present.” Falkirk ordered then hung up. Falkirk then flipped the switch on the roof to lower the partition and ordered the driver, “Take us to the emergency bunker.”

In the old bunker Falkirk and Selene switched to a nondescript Ford Focus. Leaving by an alternate entrance Falkirk gave Selene the address. Arriving at a small terrace house with a gloss green door Falkirk walked up and knocked. Not getting an answer Falkirk pulled out his watch, it was only half past two.

Arriving at the primary school Falkirk headed for the main entrance and asked for a teacher. Escorted through the building Falkirk and Selene where shown to a class room of Miss Moffat. As the class was packing up for the day they were invited in. The fair haired and pale skinned beta at the head of the class maintaining order stilled at seeing her visitors.

With quick efficiency Mary Morstan regained composure then control of her class. Thanking the office worker the curious woman was clearly disappointed with not getting to find out more about the teacher or her strange guests. The class was lined up at the door and as the bell rang the children ran out.

“What do you want?” Morstan demanded, perching on the edge of her desk.

“A favour. I need to send a message” Falkirk answered. In a gesture reminiscent of the Double Os Morstan looked about her, as if expecting an attack. Going to the window she scanned the skyline before looking back to Falkirk.

“If I don't?” Morstan demanded.
Shaking his head. “If you wanted money you would have stayed in you previous line of work. I
gave you an identity, the only thing you wanted. I will not threaten you. I ask for a favour, a big
one that could possibly expose you” Falkirk beseeched.

“What?”

“Gareth Mallory has crossed me and needs to be reminded of his place.” Falkirk said.

A soft growl emanated from Selene “What did he do?” she demanded.

“Not now.” Falkirk ordered then turned his attention back to Mary, “I will supply you with a
weapon, the one you used before and non lethal round of ammunition. Hit him centre mass and it
will be like a paint ball. Just a message.”

“You’ll owe me.” Morstan demanded and Falkirk agreed.

--

Arriving home Darren and Keading were already there with Addison flirting shamelessly with both
omegas. Only waiting on the arrival of Daniel as Falkirk didn't want to speak multiple times of
what occurred at the PM's office.

After dinner. Falkirk asked Hudson and Addison to take the children upstairs. The Double O
looked a little uncertain but knew he was being sent away so went with the group of children and
butler. When they were alone, Falkirk went through what happened at Mallory's house, for Daniel,
then what occurred at the office for everyone else.

“BASTARD!” Alec shouted. Standing up from the table he pace erratically around the room.

Darren had gone very quiet and dropped his head. Daniel who Falkirk had deliberately placed next
to Darren, casually started stroking the neck and back of the Omega. Giving the Alpha a thankful
smile Falkirk continued.

“Do you trust my judgement?” Falkirk asked Darren. A small squeeze from Daniel drew Darren's
attention to the question. Getting a nod from the Omega Falkirk took a deep breath.

“Know this. I will not harm Gareth but he will be threatened and frightened” Falkirk warned the
Omega getting another nod in answer. “You and Colum will stay until Gareth has rolled over. You
may hear things in the news but you must not contact him. Gareth must come to me first then I
must allow him to approach you.”

Falkirk was talking about old dynamics when the pack Alpha held absolute authority. If a lower
ranked Alpha fell from favour everything would be taken from him until he humbled himself
before the pack and Alpha.

“I should rip the bastards balls off” Alec shot as he still paced about.

“That would be my plan B.” Falkirk informed.

Catching Daniel's eye Falkirk stood. The Alpha following Falkirk to the library, with Alec
following uninvited.
Taking his seat behind the desk Falkirk felt events starting to catch up. He so wanted to pull himself into a nest or better yet James' arms and hide. Forcing out a normal tone he said, “I require that sniper again, the one I asked for, before. This time just a standard training round for it, green if we have it, or pink.”

Both Daniel and Alec knew the training rounds came from a communal store and could easily be traced to MI6. “Laddie, I understand you want to send the Bastard a message. But to use a round that can be traced to us, is...”

“Bat shit crazy.” Alec supplied helpfully.

Falkirk was on the brink of mewling and showing his belly again.

“Hay.” Alec said softly, “We're not criticising.” He reached out and Falkirk flinched away.

Falkirk looked up to Daniel. The alpha nodded, Falkirk could tell he wasn't convinced but supported him. And the support caused a clench of guilt or happiness it was hard to tell. Falkirk explained.

“The truth about the training round will be brushed under the carpet. No one can risk it being known the head of MI6 arranged Urquhart's assassination. Hell if I started throwing accusations about, there were so many plots, what proof is there that I wasn't acting alone. Nor will they risk the damage I would do before they got rid of me. It will be chaos, and in that chaos I will be victorious.”

“How devious.” Alec whispered with a hint of pride.

During the talk, a knock came from the library door. Alec, the closest, answered giving a low menacing growl, he stood back allowing Mycroft to enter.

Indicating the chair Alec had been yo-yoing in and out of through out the discussion. Falkirk said, “Mycroft, have a seat.”

With Falkirk in front of him, Daniel in the chair to his right and Alec standing looking over his shoulder. Mycroft was well and truly surrounded. It was futile but Mycroft said, “Could we have some privacy?”

“Why?” Daniel asked while Alec gave an outright “No!”

Falkirk saying, “I can not say, having the close pack around doesn't bring comfort after being pinned. So I must concur with their protective instincts. No, you may not have a private word, Mycroft.”

“You can not....” Mycroft started before Falkirk interrupted “What can I not?”

Rephrasing “You should not” Mycroft started again getting interrupted “What should I not?”

“Darren needs to be with his mate” Mycroft said, his tone more sympathetic than Falkirk had ever heard it.

Falkirk was not fooled by his brother's attempt at resolving the problem quietly with Mallory saving face.
“Yes, Darren dose need his Alpha. But not until I allow it.” Falkirk stated matter of factly.

“You can not” Mycroft started this time forging on over Falkirk “You can not prevent Mallory from accessing his mate or child”

There was an element of truth in Mycroft's words that brought something to Falkirk's mind and by the sudden stiffening of Daniel he got the realisation as well. But to answer Mycroft Falkirk said, “Watch me!”

Seeing the immovability of his brother Mycroft gave a tight half smile “Perhaps I could arrange for a meeting between yourself and Mallory?”

“Mallory has my direct number and knows where I live” Falkirk reminded.

With Daniel distracted and himself in no better state Falkirk looked to Alec, “Escort my brother out”

A hand landed on the shoulder of the expensive tailored suit. “Move it ponce boy” Alec growled in miss directed anger. Almost giving Mycroft the bums rush out of the library.

Daniel and Falkirk followed. “What the hell are you doing here?” Falkirk demanded, seeing Moneypenny standing in the foyer with Selene glaring at her.

“Remaining silent” Mycroft warned and guided Moneypenny out ahead of him.

With the visitors gone Keading came out of the lounge. “Could we get some blankets?” he asked, the all round stress of the day catching up to him as well. Nodding, Falkirk lead him into the library and pulled out his nesting supplies and returned them to the lounge.

Calling Addison and Hudson back down. In the lounge Falkirk and Andrew sat one side of Darren while Keading and Cody sat the other, with Colum in his Papa's arms. Addison was a little uncomfortable in the pack setting, standing as far away as possible but he was one of Darren’s closest friends so remained.

Letting everyone relax for a while. Again it was catching Daniels' eye they proceed to the next stage. Falkirk said, “Mycroft mentioned something.”

Everyone was curious, none more so than Alec who had no idea what Falkirk was going on about. Daniel stiffened in preparation, further increasing Alec's curiosity.

“If I'm to interferer with Darren's bound status and his Alpha. If Daniel interferes with James or I. Its time to formalise the pack.”

Alec mused, “I don't think they make an appropriate form for our pack”

“Anyone who wishes to be omitted may do so without recrimination” Falkirk said looking to Selene and Keading but both shook their heads.

Leaving the rest to deal with the children and escort Addison out. After changing into soft pyjamas, or soft shorts, the three omegas started building a pile nest. The thick silver fur was put in the corner of the lounge, then blankets and quilts built up around the three omegas, creating a fabric
Walnut Whip shape.

Within the warm folds of the nest, with limbs tangled and rubbing against Keading and Darren. Falkirk finally allowed himself to recall the helpless feeling trapped under the Alpha's grasp.

Knowing Daniel would be there to help him temper Alec was the only way Falkirk was able to tell them what happened. Dreading having to tell James as Falkirk didn't think he could bring himself to temper the irate Alpha or even if he wanted to.

“So you are a normal Omega.” Keading mumbled in the darkness.

“Of course I am.” Falkirk returned a bit too sharply.

Unaffected by Falkirk's tone “Just never seen an Omega recover so quickly. It took me days.” Keading mumbled.

“Actually I think it was Sherlock, he was fascinated with how I reacted when pinned. Because he wasn't angry and did it quite often I learned to recover quickly but...” Falkirk trailed off.

“It still makes you feel helpless” Keading offered but Falkirk couldn't bring himself to acknowledge it.

“Sorry” Darren said softly. In that moment Falkirk realised going up against Mallory was worth it.

Pressing against the Omega Falkirk shushed him, “Gareth is at fault not you” Falkirk insisted and nuzzled the other Omega. During the nuzzle a soft warm lick graced Falkirk's neck in an old gesture of gratitude.

Lying in the nest stroking Darren's neck as Keading did the same for him. The mutually calming gesture drew them all into sleep.

The morning brought an impact onto the nest and a cry of “Papa?” from Andrew. The boy squirmed looking for an entrance.

Worming an arm out, the cold air hitting the flushed skin just before small hand grasped his wrist. Using Falkirk's arm as a guide Andrew wormed his way into the centre of the nest snuggling against the other Omegas, cooing all the way. The enclosed pheromones making Andrew docile and zoning out almost immediately. Some time later a quiet voice with fading American accent called, “Mom?” Duly the young Alpha was pulled in as well.

A throat clearing drew the attention of those in the nest, then there was a strange clunking sound and tinkles of glass and cutlery.

Lifting a corner of the nest. “Ooh, pancakes!” Keading squealed. Quickly the nest opened like the petals of a flower to reveal four Omegas and one pre pubescent Alpha before the offering of food.

Falkirk stretched up, seeing Daniel, still dressed in the pyjamas and dressing gown he left here returning to the table. Alec was seeing to Yulian while Selene had Colum. Falkirk noticed Hudson was not at his usual morning post.

In the remains of the collapsed nest the tea, coffee, bacon, sausage and pancakes with lashings of syrup and butter were consumed. In slightly better spirits, Falkirk and Darren got ready for the day.
of work. The pile session had done wonders for Falkirk's outlook and with a lighter step he headed out with Selene and Darren in tow.

Throughout the day Falkirk saw Addison wandering about E-branch. Never approaching Falkirk's outer office or Darren but always on the periphery. Deciding to deal with it Falkirk went to the break room snagging Addison as he passed.

Quickly dispatching the milling office workers Falkirk set the kettle to boil. “What are your intentions towards Darren?”

Shrugging “I'm just worried about him” Addison insisted.

“No romantic or sexual desires towards him?” Falkirk asked as he went through the process of making his tea.

“No.” Addison said getting a bit flustered with M discussing his sex life so casually.

“Despite the ups and downs with his Alpha. Darren cares for Mallory and wants to return to him.” Falkirk informed sympathetically. The Double O couldn't conceal his disappointment from Falkirk and could only nod stiffly.

“I understand” Addison said.

“Despite you being an irritating, insufferable, egotistical, misogynistic, sex addicted operative. You're a good man Graham” Falkirk said using the Operative's first name.

“Hay, I'm not an addict.” the man said with the infuriating charming smile.

It was a risk but Falkirk thought it was one worth taking. “Be Darren's friend and he will value you more than you can ever imagine.”

“He is my friend.” Addison said adamantly.

Falkirk nodded his thanks and approval then headed back to his office. When Falkirk walked in Daniel was sitting at the small round table near the outer window, looking over some documents. Sitting beside the Alpha, Falkirk pulled over some of the pieces of paper.

'Registration of pack and hierarchy' read the title.

“We're really going to do this.” Falkirk mused.

“The subordinate forms are fine. But how are we going to get round this one?” Daniel asked sliding over one of the forms.

Reading over the form, to be filled on by the 'Alpha' declaring a pack. It used Alpha, both in terms of a sex and as leader of the pack, the standard government registration of a formal pack assumed the pack leader was an Alpha. In the top paragraph, in that complex legalese it said the 'Alpha' declaring the pack would be referred to as 'Primary Pack Alpha'.

Falkirk saying, “It won't do. If I'm the Primary Pack Alpha, Mallory could argue the declaration is null and void because it assumes I would be an Alpha by sex. Unless...”
“No! I'm not being the Pack Alpha. And there's no way in hell I will admit James is dominant to me, even for show, so he's out.” Daniel said.

“We need a lawyer.” Falkirk admitted.
The large office was stereotypical for high class lawyer. Large oak desk with walls covered in leather bound books were the prominent points of the décor.

Behind the ornate desk. A waiflike Alpha with the same name as hung over the door. Phelps. The Alpha bore a striking resemblance to a living skeleton, old, brittle white/blue skin and completely bald. All topped of by a pair of round glasses as thick as the bottom of a glass bottle.

Supported by the Beta male, Rees, who Falkirk had been palmed off on the first time he needed legal assistance. The Beta had risen quite far as Falkirk stuck with the man throughout his all dealings with the law firm over the years.

Despite his age the Alpha still had sharp eyes. The points of law may escape him now but he had clear determination and a calculating air. He kept Falkirk in his gaze, both curious at the Omega and suspicious.

The other lawyer, an Omega. Alesha did most of the talking having been given the brief over the phone. And pack law being her speciality.

Alesha said, “I found two possible precedents where Betas where considered the pack leader but there were no Alphas and no contest to their claim.”

“There is no contest amongst the Alphas. Or there won't be.” Daniel informed.

“You're not his mate.” Phelps said pointing at Daniel. Swinging his gnarled finger to Falkirk he said “And you're the leader.”

“Yes. Do the facts escape you?” Falkirk responded.

The sudden tension in Rees didn't go unnoticed by Phelps as Falkirk spoke. Leaning back with a contemplative look and nodding to himself Phelps fell into silence letting the meeting resume.

The Omega's harsh London accent grated on Falkirk as Alesha informed “We will need a comprehensive pack structure, full identity list and declarations of subordinate status from all Alphas”

“Could you make me up a standard form for the Alphas to fill out.” Falkirk asked looking to the Beta, the person he considered his lawyer.

Nodding “Yes we can draw something up to expedite the process” Rees reassured.

Falkirk explained. “One more thing. There is an Omega, part of the pack. His Alpha must forfeit all
claims to leading the pack and must recognise me and my authority over himself, his bound Omega, and all pups produced.”

After another reassurance the contract would be no problem a request was made for the individuals names involved.

Daniel listed himself, Alec and Yulian. Selene, standing by the door added her own name, Keading and Cody's.

Falkirk started with James, not entirely sure how the Alpha would take it, then Andrew then said, “Gareth Mallory, an Alpha male. Darren Mallory nee Tracey his bound omega, male. And the current child Conrad 'Colum' Mallory, alpha male.”

The old Alpha's eyes got a bit more intense at Falkirk's declaration. The Omega looked sceptical. Rees accustomed to Falkirk and remembering his visit to MI6 to sign the official secrets act, took Falkirk's words in stride.

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At home Darren had fallen vary quiet in the lingering absence of his Alpha at such a delicate time. After Dinner Darren went to bed early and after Andrew was tucked up securely Falkirk picked the plain envelope (the only non bill in the pile) to read first. The envelope was still sealed so it was fully traceable and the green dot of a sticker indicated it had passed the other security measures.

Opening it, a haphazard script scrawled across the small page beginning with 'M'. Quickly figuring it was from G. Falkirk read on as G complained about the lack of technology for personal correspondence (they weren't allowed mobile phones or internet access), moving on the to his first station on H.M.S Dragon, a destroyer patrolling off Australia. There were a few more complaints about food, sleeping quarters and a host other things before G reluctantly admitting he was enjoying himself. Finally there was a hasty uncomfortable apology with a brief explanation 'The mail goes out tomorrow. The other guys are writing and I could only think of you. I didn't want to be the only one not writing home. I hope you don't mind.'

Remembering how Mansfield had described the best operatives of MI6. Lost souls, damaged looking for even a sense of belonging. G still had his Father, in exile but it didn't mean he was not alone. Even as a child he only had a paid nanny and boarding school.

Pulling out a piece of paper Falkirk decided to continue giving the adolescent the sense of someone caring for him. Letting his mind wander as he wrote, only as he reached the bottom of the page did Falkirk reread his letter. Realising he had let his mind wander too much and committed to paper far more than he could allow Falkirk pulled out a lighter from the desk. Igniting the corner he let the paper burn and placed it in the hearth to allow the casual confession to arranging a shooting of Mallory go up in smoke.

The second draft was a littler more stiff and forced than the first. Firstly Falkirk sympathised with G's plight on the ship adding James and Alec bore the same complaints from their time. Keeping the letter to anecdotes and events, mostly surrounding Andrew. Falkirk did touch on the formal declaration of the pack and how he would be the first Omega to have Alphas under him. Finally Falkirk wished G well.

Finding an envelope Falkirk wrote the return address and sealed it. Leaving the envelope on the
hall table where Hudson would stamp and post it Falkirk retired as well.

--

The six days since he went to Mallory’s felt so much longer as they walking along the lake. Andrew grasped a slice of bread he had ever so politely asked Mrs Bridges for. Darren pushed Colum while Falkirk walked beside him. Getting to where the ducks held dominion over the water. Andrew started tearing the bread to pieces and threw it for the ducks to catch.

With the ducks fed the small group moved on to a swing park. Falkirk and Darren sat on a bench looking over the other families while Andrew moved about the slides and swings with ease. The sun was warm enough on the pleasant Saturday afternoon. Everything was wonderful until Falkirk's phone started blaring. Listening to Tanner Falkirk was very unconcerned as Tanner said the Prime Minister had been shot.

In casual relaxed tones, “Please send the car, Tanner.”

“Time to go” Falkirk said to Darren before calling Andrew over.

“What's wrong?” Darren asked as they walked back through the park.

“You are not to worry, I just sent Gareth a message” Falkirk said earning more confusion as Darren nodded.

Falkirk's car was waiting with Selene as they walked down the road home. Falkirk headed up the steps with Darren, calling to Selene and the waiting car, “I just need to get something”

Falkirk entered the library pulling out the document for Mallory to sign from the pile sent over from the lawyer the other day.

“Gareth's been shot!” Darren shouted running into the library.

“Who do you think shot him.” Falkirk returned before adding “If everything goes well the dumb Alpha will be coming back with me.”

Darren nodded, dumbfounded and watched Falkirk go.

The COBRA meeting was in full swing as Falkirk entered, still dressed in his comfortable check trouser and brown cardigan.

“Thank you for finally gracing us with your presence, M.” Mallory said cutting off the Commander of the MET.

“It’s not like you were in real danger, this time.” Falkirk returned casually as he took his seat.

Throughout the meeting Falkirk did a sudoku, headless of everyone trying to sound authoritative. C, of MI5 had taken up as the speaker

“The MO has similarities to the Urquhart assassination. The forensics on the projectile are the same as before, unknown make and model of weapon. Striations on the projectile, show no record of prior use anywhere, but for the Urquhart assassination. The projectile itself, however, is bog standard, we buy thousands of the training rounds for use primarily by intelligence, black ops, and
secret service. It would appearer there is a link between Urquhart, Intelligence Services and your attempted assassination.”

'Bless Smiley' Falkirk thought as C finished up.

Mycroft was now looking to Falkirk suspiciously, always having suspected Falkirk in the death of Urquhart. Casually Falkirk pulled out the declaration from the lawyer and slid it over to Mallory and returned to his puzzle.

“Prime Minister?” Smiley called after a moment.

Looking up Mallory wore the ashen face of shock and fear. “Urquhart? You? Me? The Prime Minister was your friend?” Mallory said in a hollow voice.

Looking to one of the guards milling about the periphery of the room “Leave” Falkirk ordered.

“Go, secure the room.” Mycroft added along with Smiley giving his authorisation.

The guards left the room along with the stenographer and the support staff. With the darkened room on lock down, Falkirk glared at the entire table. “Everyone at this table was working against Urquhart and all you came up with was a plan to humiliate him and monumentally damage the country in the process. I could not allow your ‘war’ against the Prime Minister to continue so I did what you were afraid of and ended it. If anyone has a problem, feel free to take your complaint to the police. Now get out. I have a personal matter to discuss with Gareth.”

Those around the rectangular table stood and filed out. Only Mycroft refused to leave with the rest. Ignoring his brother Falkirk continued to address Mallory.

“Darren trusts me to bring back his Alpha. But Darren is my concern not you. There have already been suitors expressing interest” Falkirk said inflating Addison's interest in the Omega.

Gareth. My patience is the hair, and you are Damocles. Beware the sword about to fall.” And walked out.

On the car ride home Falkirk received a call from the offices of his lawyer. It was the senior partner and not Rees who was on the line. The Old Alpha wheezed, “It has been some time since we were where raided by the government heavies”

“Special Branch?” Falkirk asked and getting a conformation. “They're all bluster. I trust you sent them packing”

“Like the whipped pups they were” Phelps informed.

Thanking the lawyer and saying he would be willing to bare the financial burden of the time wasted Falkirk then fell silent.

“Do you know that Detective from the tabloids?” Falkirk asked and as expected the Lawyer said no. “Sherlock Holmes, make sure your staff are familiar with his image. He may attempt to gain entry. He is very sneaking and brazen, he will most likely try to walk straight in.”

Phelps slowly repeated the name and then said, “We will be ever vigilant, Sir Thomas.” Falkirk then thanked the lawyer while he dreaded seeing the bill that would arrive, and wondered if he
could get Mallory to foot some of it.

Following the hunch Mycroft would turn to Sherlock, Falkirk then called Lestrade. When Lestrade picked up Falkirk said, “This is M, MI6. I believe Sherlock Holmes will be arrested soon. You will inform me, before Mycroft.”

He heard a gulp. Falkirk felt a pang of guilt for putting Lestrade between them. But the man agreed.

There was laughing as Hudson pulled the door open. Walking into the lounge James was sitting with Andrew in his lap. Andrew drawing on the white cast surrounding his dad's wrist and forearm.

“What happened.” Falkirk said softly drawing attention to himself.

“Punched something harder, than it looked.” James teased, scanning his mate up and down. Then hugging Falkirk close as the omega sat beside him.

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That night Falkirk waited until James was relaxed and they where firmly secured to each other. Sitting atop of his Alpha's lap Falkirk nuzzled under James' chin.

“I need to tell you something and please don't go charging off” he beseeched. A reassuring hand started stroking Falkirk's neck and back.

“I know. Daniel flew out to tell me.” James said before hesitantly adding “He also took my fury. Then I heard someone shot the bastard, nice work.”

“Thank you. Did Daniel mention anything else.”

“Yes. I don't mind swearing loyalty to you. My Alpha.” James said.

“My Alpha.” Falkirk said and kissed James' lips.

As sleep started to pull at Falkirk his phone started ringing. Blindly answering.

“He's been arrested” Lestrade informed before giving Falkirk the station.

Quickly James and Falkirk dressed, first informing Hudson then knocking on Darren's door. Getting a moaned grunt in response Falkirk pushed open the door slightly. Andrew's old crib barely distinguishable in the dark.

“I have to go bail out my brother. If we're not back can you take care of Andrew?” Falkirk said to the mound of bedding.

“Aye right” Darren said as an arm waved in Falkirk's general direction. A small noise drew Falkirk's attention back to the crib where Colum was cooing gently and trying to grab his waving feet.

Going out the back door and along the garden to the garage, Falkirk slid open the double doors allowing the Aston to slowly pull out into the lane behind the houses. Driving to the end of the
lane and onto the road James sped up as much as the London night time traffic and road works allowed.

The custody Sargent lead Falkirk and James to the cell where raised voices could be heard. Lestrade was berating the Alpha for his stupidity. “If that little brother...”

“Not Mycroft?” Sherlock demanded.

“No me, because Mycroft is becoming overly predictable” Falkirk interrupted, drawing the attention of both Alphas.

“Of course.” Sherlock said in a tone of self recrimination. “Mycroft wanted something of yours but didn't want to risk anyone else getting it”

“Yes Sherlock” Falkirk answered.

Lestrade dismissed the Sargent before demanding, “What the bloody hell is going on?”

“I am declaring a formal pack” Falkirk said to both Sherlock and Lestrade. “Mycroft wants to know the identities of all those declaring themselves, the full structure and to retrieve a particular declarations. Namely that of Darren Mallory”

“The Prime Minister, Mallory?” Lestrade hissed.

“His omega, but the Prime Minister too if he gives in.”

“Bugger me” Lestrade said with slight awe and shock.

“You didn't ask me.” Sherlock interjected.

’Oh great!’ Falkirk thought, Sherlock looking rather hurt at being overlooked. “I am trying to give support to an Omega whose Alpha, while generally is a nice guy, can also be a complete an utter arsehole with a bitch of a mother that could put Mummy to shame” Falkirk explained a little harshly and loudly for the echoing environment.

Calming down “Do you wish to be part of the pack?” Falkirk asked, getting an Immediate “No!” that he didn't quite believe.

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By Monday Falkirk was a little worried, Mallory had not rolled over. As possibilities were running through his head, Darren came into his office wearing a expression of hope and dread. He handed Falkirk a letter from the office of the Prime Minister. He waited for Falkirk to open it, and stretched his neck to see if he could read it.

“Mallory wishes to be granted a private audience.” Falkirk informed earning a hopeful smile from the other Omega. Writing a response Falkirk sealed it in an envelope and ordered Darren to have it couriered back. With a happy bounce in his step Darren darted out of Falkirk's office to send the letter.

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At home there was another letter by way of the navy. Reading it Falkirk's heart sank, apparently Sherlock wasn't the only one feeling left out. Although G didn't say as much the dejection was palpable from the young man's writing as he talked about pack.

“Something wrong?” James asked, coming into the library.

Handing his mate the letter Falkirk sat back in his chair to await James' opinion.

“I suppose when M recruited me. Before I met you. There was some desire to be recognised.”

James mused handing the letter back.

“But giving recognition is not the same as admittance to a pack. It would mean the king answers to me, officially.”

“It would royally piss off Mycroft.” James shot with a cheeky grin.

Shaking his head Falkirk placed the letter to the side to think about. Looking back to James “Gareth Mallory will be here tomorrow. I have asked Daniel, Alec, Selene and Keading to be here as well” Falkirk informed.

“A show of force?” James mused.

Falkirk nodded, “I saw Daniel today. Did you really break your hand punching him.”

James sank into the chair opposite. “He did stand in the way of me going to tear Mallory to pieces.”

“How are you now?”

James gave a shrug. Looking off to the side, “Still want to kill the bastard. But I won't.”

“Thank you. Darren still loves him.”

James nodded, “I better go see to Andrew's bath.”
Biding Patience: Building a pack part 3

Chapter Notes

Thanks for all the all the support. The comments, kudos, and for reading.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

When Mallory arrived at the tall town house, he was not alone. Mycroft and Moneypenny were following him in. The Butler allowed him in and showed him to the lounge, where Darren was tucked at the back with Keading keeping a calming and reassuring arm round him.

After letting the mated pair see each other Falkirk called Mallory into the library, Daniel followed along with Mycroft. Taking his seat behind the desk Falkirk gave Mallory a cold stare and indicated a spot in front of the fireplace. Standing at a parade rest Mallory waited with his head slightly bowed and neck bared.

“By your stance, are you prepared to capitulate to my terms, Gareth?” Falkirk stated, still using the man's given name when it should be 'Prime Minister'.

“I am” Mallory answered.

“Your Mother must pay homage to me before being allowed to return” Falkirk reminded and got another affirmation. “She will never again interfere or ignore Darren in rearguards to Colum or household?”

“No, M.”

“Your declaration” Falkirk ordered holding out his hand.

Slowly as not to provoke the big Alpha. The black eye and blotchy yellowing bruise covering the left side of Daniel's face, doing nothing to hide the obvious hostility. Sure the big Alpha was willing to break him like a twig, Mallory cautiously pulled a neatly folded piece of paper from his inside pocket. After gently placing the document in Falkirk's hand Mallory retreated to his original position.

Reading over the document Falkirk nodded then handed it to Daniel for his inspection. Placing it with the declarations from Daniel, James, Alec and Selene. Falkirk then turned his attention back to Mallory.

“Good boy” Falkirk said hollowly.

Clearing his throat Mallory waited for permission before speaking. “Eve has been a part of my unofficial pack for some time” Mallory prompted.

Unsurprised, forming a pack was a bit like a corporate take over. Any who recognised Mallory would either have to recognise Falkirk or leave.
Falkirk confirmed, “You're not fucking her?”

“No, M.”

“Is she prepared to declare me as her pack Alpha?” Falkirk asked and this time got an affirmative.

Falkirk nodded to Daniel and the man crossed the room to the door. Returning with Moneypenny. Falkirk indicated a spot in front of Mallory where Moneypenny wouldn't be able to see the man behind her, or rely on him for prompts.

“You are willing to declare me as your pack Alpha?” Falkirk asked casually.

Suppressing the urge to turn and look at Mallory Moneypenny answered curtly, “Yes, M”

“Very well” Falkirk said placing a blank declaration on the far edge of his desk with a pen. “Fill it in” Falkirk ordered. After Moneypenny filled in the form Falkirk checked it over and added it to the growing pile. “Dismissed” Falkirk ordered and Moneypenny took her leave.

Mycroft spoke for the first time, “Before we continue, do you have another one of those forms?”

As luck would have it there was more than Falkirk thought he would need but he was burning through them at an alarming rate. Handing over a form. Falkirk warned, “This is not a game Mycroft. It's not a way for you to get closer to me, or be told things that are not your concern.”

The smile Mycroft gave was not quite as condescending or ingratiating as it usually was. “I am aware of that, Falkirk.”

Leaning back Falkirk interrupted his brother while Mycroft filled the empty spaces with his precise script to ask, “What about Tanner?”

A slight flick to one of the letters would go unnoticed by most but to Falkirk it was a glaring admission of Mycroft’s moment of surprised panic, and he could see the distress the error was causing his brother. Handing over another form, Mycroft gratefully accepted it and started again.

“William may do as he wishes” Mycroft informed, as his perfect neat script filled up the spaces, again.

Daniel caught Falkirk's eye and mouthed 'William?’. The Omega sending the big Alpha a half-hearted glare before accepting the declaration from Mycroft.

With the formalities over Falkirk looked to Mallory. “Would you like to discuss Darren privately?”

“Yes please, M.” Mallory said in a rather subdued voice.

With a warning glare Daniel left. Mallory bowed his head further as the Alpha passed. Mycroft also taking he leave.

“Please, sit down, Gareth.” Falkirk stated as he got up to pour a couple glasses of bourbon.

“I would like to apologise...” Mallory started before Falkirk called a halt to the rest of the apology

“You committed an act of pure stupidity, then cowardice, finishing up with one of anger fuelled
malevolence. For my part you are not forgiven and I will never forget, in that moment you showed your true colours. You are on your only warning, Gareth and I will not hesitate to end your bond if you fail Darren again. In any way.”

The affect on Mallory was vastly different. Not since the fist meeting, when the Alpha was facing arrest, had he ever acted so subdued in Falkirk's presence. And now Falkirk would hold all domestic authority over his pack.

“Yes, M” Mallory said still unable to look Falkirk in the eye. Only as Falkirk took a sip did he notice Mallory reached for his drink.

It was odd to the Omega, James, Daniel, Alec and Selene had not changed around him but Mallory definitely had. Even his scent was slightly different, less oppressive and remembering back Mycroft's scent wasn't either.

“What finally made you capitulate?” Falkirk asked.

“With Mycroft's help I was going to remove you from MI6.” Mallory informed. Taking another fortifying sip before continuing “Anyone capable of going against you refused. Anyone who would, either didn't fully know you or were doing it for the wrong reasons. You were right about Urquhart, we were afraid of him. And I may win against you, but I don't' know what the cost would be.”

Letting Mallory finish his bourbon Falkirk dismissed him, “Go to your mate”. Just as Mallory was out the door Falkirk called “Could you send Mycroft in”

There was a dull thump and grunt from the hall as Mallory exited. Then James' swearing, and Daniel's amused voice added in the mix. By the time Falkirk got to the door, Mallory was being helped up by Eve, with blood dripping from a split lip.

Alec, was inspecting James' left hand and said, “I think it might be broken.” as James winced. Daniel wore a bemused expression that Falkirk thought he himself was wearing too.

Shaking his head, thankfully the children and Darren weren't there to see James' revenge. Falkirk called Mycroft in. Putting Mallory's glass to the side Falkirk poured another for Mycroft.

“I asked Gareth the same question but why are you recognising me as the pack Alpha?” Falkirk demanded a bit sharply. Mallory had been Falkirk's target not Mycroft and when he had asked to be recognised as a subordinate pack member Falkirk couldn't help feeling like he had invited a snake into the nest.

“The secret of the Holmes pack, Mummy was the Alpha and she recognised you were the successor a long time ago. For a long time she thought it would be Sherlock to form the pack. I tried but never quite succeeded and I am tired of losing to you” Mycroft informed solemnly.

Accepting his brother's statement but not fully believing it Falkirk decided to give him the benefit of the doubt.

“Very well, Mycroft. You have your expertise and I could use it on this.” Falkirk acknowledged. Pulling out the letter from G Falkirk held it to his brother “Could I get your opinion?”

The act of using his brother as an advisor seemed to please the Alpha before he even read the
letter. As Mycroft read the letter Falkirk continued “I had originally hoped to keep the pack small but... Sherlock I believe would be interested and Daniel said traditionally servants are part of the pack. There is also Shane and David to consider.”

Falkirk wasn't sure if Mycroft heard him as he wore a perplexed expression before one of surprise.

“The King!” Mycroft blurted brandishing the letter. A moment of confusion passed over Mycroft as he analysed everything.

“Hudson refused Mummy and didn't allow any of the servants to join either. Sherrinford has been in isolation for so long he may not want to be part of a pack, he may not even recognise you as the Pack Alpha. The King is a... the affiliations alone will be complex, he would answer to you before anyone else.... I don't think it is possible” Mycroft verbally flailing at the end

“That is why I want your opinion. G wants a sense of belonging he has never had before and has imprinted on myself”

“May I discuss this with someone?” Mycroft asked indicating the letter. With a warning to keep the letter and it's contents as quiet Falkirk agreed.

More distracted than Falkirk had ever seen his brother, Mycroft followed him out. Catching Hudson as he passed Falkirk said, “Could I see you and Mrs Brides at your convenience”

Entering the lounge. Alec and James had gone. Darren was rubbing up against his Alpha. The man holding an ice pack to his face. Falkirk was sure the pair would be naked and writhing, given even a modicum of privacy. The meal was rather quick due to Mycroft trapped in his own thoughts and Darren wanting to return home.

James was still not back when Falkirk was coming back down the stairs from tucking in Andrew when Hudson stepped out. The old blond man, obviously just waiting for Falkirk to return down stairs.

“Is now convenient, Sir?” the butler asked respectfully. Falkirk nodded and headed for the library, while Hudson went to get Mrs Bridges.

Falkirk pulled down the faux books to reveal the hidden drinks cabinet again. Inviting his guests to sit Falkirk poured a whisky for Hudson and asked Mrs bridges her preference, the old omega accepting a small brandy.

Sitting behind his desk Falkirk looked over the two permanent servants. Mrs Bridges was rather pleased to be invited up and Hudson stood behind her looking a bit awkward holding his glass. Mrs Bridges as always wore old fashioned clothing, a full length skirt and a blouse giving her an appearance of a rounded figure.

“We are officially declaring the Pack with myself at the head” Falkirk explained. “I am formally inviting both of you, under no obligation, to join”

Mrs Bridges, a traditional Omega looked eager as she deferred to Hudson. Looking up at the Alpha with hopeful eyes as she cooed and bounced slightly.

Falkirk could see it was Hudson's opinion that would be the decider.
“You do not have to decide now. Take your time, discuss it, I will answer any questions you have” Falkirk reassured.

Hudson thanked him and made to leave before Falkirk halted him. Seeing they had not finished their drinks Falkirk casually asked Mrs Bridges about her sister. It was like opening the flood gates, Falkirk listened as Mrs Bridges talked about her sister, the B&B she ran, Blackpool where the B&B was. On and on the woman went, her cockney accent so different from the harsh London, and nicer in Falkirk's opinion.

It was Hudson who saved Falkirk from further stories. Taking charge he thanked Falkirk for the drink and promised to consider the offer.

“Next time we must discus you.” Falkirk said lightly to the Butler.

It was the small hours when James returned home. A new bandage and the middle finger in a splint, on the Alpha's left hand. Along the the cast Andrew had been colouring in on his right. Falkirk stripped his Alpha. Careful of the hurt hands. As James sat on the edge of the bed, he cupped the rounded face and gazed into the crystal blue eyes.

“My brave Alpha.” Falkirk whispered giving his mate a kiss. And lick to his neck, before settling in to bed. Touched by the man, defending his honour.

James half heartedly grumbling as he carefully hugged his mate to his chest, “Can't believe it. All those mission, and fights. I go and fractured my wrist on Daniel's thick skull and break my finger on Mallory's chin.”

“Poor, baby.” Falkirk teased and kissed James' jaw.

“At least I can flip people off without getting into trouble.”

--

Genuinely happy, Darren bounce through E branch. Dropping into his seat with a grin that could only be described as dopey the omega popped.

Falkirk watched the omega, through the glass wall. He pressed the intercom and asked Darren to come in. The Omega bounced to his feet, almost skipping into his office.

“So?” Falkirk prompted. The thick Irish accent was fast and the details of the make up were a bit more graphic than they needed to be. But Falkirk was pleased Darren had forgiven his mate. Even where Falkirk himself still held a bit of a grudge. But then again, Falkirk had forgiven James a lot in their time too.

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Arriving at Baker Street, Watson led Falkirk upstairs to Sherlock interrogating a fearful heavyset beta. The Beta male was spewing a whole load of words as Sherlock loomed over him. As if a switch flipped in his brother, Sherlock's demeanour changed from the intense and threatening to calm and indifferent.

“I don't want to be part of your pack” Sherlock pre-empted, cutting through the Beta's confusion at the sudden change.
Rounding on the Beta “Your Wife” Sherlock said loudly and slowly. Grasping the Beta's hand Sherlock curved the man's fingers so he could see the finger nails. “She doesn’t want you, heavy metal, Arsenic most likely” Sherlock informed unsympathetically.

“Sherlock!” Falkirk chastised while Watson calmed the other Beta and called an ambulance.

Falkirk sat beside the hyperventilating Beta while Watson talked on the phone. Sherlock, after flopping down in his chair started plucking the strings of his violin, oblivious to the panic stricken beta, Falkirk trying to comfort him and Watson arranging an ambulance and giving as much detail as he could to the operator.

“You could have been more sympathetic” Falkirk said as Watson accompanied he Beta to the arriving ambulance.

“The evidence was all there. He should have been able to see it for himself” Sherlock answered.

“Sometimes you need to step back from a situation in order to see it” Falkirk challenged.

Making a dismissive noise Sherlock returned to tuning the Violin.

Waiting for Watson to return Falkirk placed two of the declarations down. “I am formally inviting you to join my pack, under no obligation” Falkirk said looking to both Sherlock and Watson in turn. Watson was clearly confused and Sherlock made another dismissive sound.

“Mycroft rolled over” A nasty plinking sound, of a string breaking came from the violin as Falkirk casually mentioned that.

Slumping against the back of the couch Falkirk mused “As has the Prime Minister and the King wants to join as well”

“The King as in the real King” Watson demanded.

“I once joked Mycroft was the Government. You're actually doing it” Sherlock said.

“That's still a stretch” Falkirk said. Adding with a bit of trepidation, “But not far off.”

Without moving his head, as he restrung his violin. Sherlock flicked a steel-grey eye to his brother, as Falkirk sat looking up at the ceiling. Concepts and ideas, problems and threats started to flash before Sherlock's eyes. And they had obviously occurred to his brother too, given Falkirk's subdued silence.

Leaving Sherlock to think it over and to discuss with Watson if they wished to join a pack Falkirk returned home. Finding two new declarations on his desk, Mrs Bridges declaring Hudson as her immediate superior and Falkirk above Hudson. Hudson's declaration had Daniel and Falkirk as his superiors. This reminded Falkirk of the next problem with the pack, the formal hierarchy.

The only thing everyone agreed on was Falkirk was the Pack Alpha. Pulling out a blank piece of paper Falkirk started doodling a pyramid shape, filling in the pack members as he went. Realising it wasn't working out. Someone like Alec should be high, but he acknowledged James, Daniel and Falkirk as superior, which would put him at the same rank as Keading who recognised everyone but the children. Even James, no matter how reluctantly, the heavy ink showing it,
acknowledged Daniel as a superior. Then there was Falkirk himself, he acknowledged James as his mate and Alpha and through him it would mean Falkirk would answer to Daniel. If it was a database design, it would be called a 'circular reference', a big problem. The paper was crumpled up and discarded.

Falkirk drew a tree representation of the pack, but it didn't quite work either and ended up in the bin as well. Giving up Falkirk went to find James, and Andrew completing his masterpiece on his dad's right arm.

Chapter End Notes

Falkirk's threat. You might remember M making the same one of James, when he demanded Falkirk resign from MI6. In a pack, the Alpha is king.
Watching 009 on the satellite feed, he was just on a reconnaissance mission. Maloney was just getting some nice pictures of the bad men who were buying and selling everything from Kalashnikovs to fighter jets. The reason a Double O was on station and an Admiral was beside Falkirk was in case something was discovered that they couldn't let out.

But by the looks of it there were no Electronic, Biological, Chemical or radiological equipment being sold. Nothing that couldn't be dealt with and it gave the intelligence agencies an idea of the strength of some groups. Like a tiny fringe group, that had somehow found the funds to buy a truck with scud missile on the back.

'Birdwatching' Alec had once dubbed this type of mission.

A chest mounted camera showed 009's perspective as he moved through the market. Falkirk had already identified the CIA, Mossad and just needed the Peoples External Security(Chinese) operatives. It was most entertaining aspect to these missions.

“BINGO!” the small round omega called, Sansky Chief of Naval intelligence. The man who had accompanied the Admiral, waved one of the small pieces of paper that had been made up for the game. “CIA, FSB and DGSE. America, Russia and France. A full house.”

“Damn it!” James grumbled, balling up the paper with the three operatives he needed to find. “Just needed Mossad.”

Falkirk screwed up his paper too. “Oh I spotted Ari Haswari, he was pretty easy. I just needed the Chinese.”

“Mr Han was looking at the MiG-35 fighter.” Sansky said. James adding, “Double O Nine passed him at the Puma helicopter too.”

“Rather a poor game.” the admiral grumbled a bit.

Tanner entered, coming up behind his boss and handed him an envelope. Pulling out the two pieces of paper. One was a message from Mycroft requesting a day of his time and a warning that they would be flying. The other was another declaration from Tanner naming Mycroft as his Alpha and Falkirk as his pack Alpha. Giving the Beta a smile Falkirk carefully placed both pieces of paper in his inside pocket.

“ Weird! Never seen a gun like that, looks like swordfish.” The Admiral mused.

“What!” Falkirk snapped. The then looked to the techie in front of a computer and ordered. “Bring it up. The swordfish-gun. Hurry.”

As the feed rewound Falkirk saw what the Admiral had. Pressing the talk button to address 009, Falkirk ordered, “Circle back to the Swordfish gun.”

Maloney took his time as not to draw attention to his actions. When he came back to the crates laid out with guns on top. Under Falkirk's instruction, Maloney inspected the strange gun, with a long barrel, a stubby dorsal fin and two long fin like, heavily reinforced bi-pod hanging down.
“No sights” Maloney mused to the vendor. Falkirk couldn't hear the vendor's reply but ordered Maloney to bring the dorsal hump like structure into view of the camera. Then ordered Maloney, “Inspect a bullet.”

Falkirk watched as 009 was handed a strange bullet, thin given its length. Maloney noticed the spiralling ridges himself, and showed them to the camera on his chest without Falkirk's prompt. Falkirk knowing each ridge indicated where it would separate like a multi stage rocket, giving it a boost after the initial acceleration from the first combustion.

“Is that the gun you and Q developed?” James asked, recognising it finally.

Giving a nod to James, Falkirk then looked to Tanner, “Get Q to do an inventory check” Tanner acknowledging and darting out the theatre like room.

Falkirk asked 009, “Can you buy it?”

They could hear Maloney haggle and watched as a single gold coin passed hands. Maloney picked up the weapon along with the ammunition the vendor had.

“Ask him about more” Falkirk said. Tanner returned, reporting all MI6's 'FarSights' were accounted for.

Maloney whispered, speaking to Falkirk for the first time, “No it was a one off. The vendor got it as part of a job lot. He knew nothing about it.”

“Double O Nine you have two tails, The CIA and Mossad operatives.” James warned.

“Initiate emergency extraction.” Falkirk ordered. With M's words, Maloney ran and what followed was a chase only worthy of a Double O. After his time as Q and now as M these chases were less about excitement and more about a hollow in his stomach.

A disembodied voice from Q branch was giving the Operative directions to the extraction site along with a countdown to extraction.

What got Falkirk, and rang alarm bells. Maloney knew who was chasing him so was careful of the shots he was firing over his shoulder as he sped his motorbike away. The two foreign operatives were also checking their shots while not impeding each other in trying to stop Maloney.

Falkirk felt James come very close, letting him smell the Alpha under the aftershave. “I know why Maloney is not going in for the kill. But if the other two aren't going for the kill it means everyone knows who everyone is. And everyone knows that they are all being watched.”

“It's the evidence they want to destroy. Without adding a dead Double O on top of whatever they have been up to.” Falkirk whispered back.

Finally Maloney got down from the rocky mountain area, to a road cutting through grassy moors. Jumping off the bike, 009 was running across the uneven ground. MI6's commandeered Russian helicopter swooped in to land just as the American and Israeli arrived. Like Maloney, the Mossad operative had to give up his bike on the grass land, while the CIA just took his jeep off road. A few shots were fired but the helicopter was lifting off and Maloney was reporting in.
Falkirk could see the frustration of one of the chasers, most likely the American as it was the jeep that took a fair amount of kicks and punches while the other pursuer walked back to his bike.

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Tanner excelled himself in getting 009 and the gun back before the close of business. In Q branch Falkirk and James walked into the armoury where Johnston (the armoury chief and former Double O Two) along with Daniel were inspecting the recovered weapon.

“What is it?” Maloney asked

“A fake.” Daniel supplied

“A copy of the first weapon Daniel and I created, under the then Q's supervision. A FarSight. You build a precise 3D model of the target structure, a house, bunker whatever. Then using very accurate GPS and telemetrics, you aim the gun. The bullet is like a rocket, after it's fired, another exposition gives it extra trust so it can burrow through walls.” Falkirk answered as he joined Daniel and gently moving Johnston out of the way. The design wasn't quite as refined as Falkirk and Daniel achieved.

“The alloy's different.” Falkirk mused, running his fingers over the grey finish, where whatever Daniel had chosen gave their gun a grained blueish colour.

“Different targeting port.” Daniel added pointing to where the shooter's optical interface connected to the gun.

There was no doubt the weapon was a poor copy of the weapon Falkirk and Daniel had made to shoot someone who was unseen.

Carefully the weapon was examined and de-constructed. Every component was as generic as the technical specifications would allow, and almost untraceable. So far, only Maloney's pursuers gave the only hint to the potential source of the gun.

Peter(R) and Cyber division were heading up the investigation into the network, communication and the electronic components removed from the gun

James arrived, holding a tea and brownie from the coffee shop across the river from MI6. “M?” he said, professionally and holding to the refreshments.

Falkirk stopped his pacing back and forth, giving a grateful smile to the blond alpha and took a sip. Falkirk should leave, for he had MI6 to run not just one of hundreds of investigations. But the thought, ‘Are the networks secure?’, ‘Do we have an unidentified leak?’, ‘Did they reconstruct the concept from witness statements or somewhere else?’ raced through Falkirk's mind. The Americans or the Israelis got their hands on the plans or concepts and produced what could be very kindly called a prototype, somehow.

It wasn't until Pater returned with part of the GPS unit that the speculation and suspicions started to fall into place. R informing, “The GPS uses Stark Industries satellites.”

“I want it” Maloney demanded. Meaning the mission he had stumbled on.

James winding up the Double O, “But I have seniority.”
“Guns aren’t hands free yet, old man.” the blond omega taunted.

James raised his left arm, showing Maloney the back of his hand. Curling his index finger up and down, beside the splint supported middle finger. Switching between, flipping the operative ‘the bird’ and the ‘Two fingers’. “My trigger finer works fine, see.”

“Enough you two. James you're still on down time. Double O Nine, you have a go. No theatrics! With allies as prime suspects, I want this done quietly.”

The blond omega nodded once. Daniel coming over, “Now pay attention, Double O Nine. Tickets to Toronto. You will sneak into the States and make your way over land to Stark Industries. A car, with your preferred Glock will be awaiting your arrival.”

“Goodspeed, Double O Nine.” Falkirk called.

“Thanks, Mother.” the Double O called as he jogged out of Q branch.

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Falkirk really didn't want to do this. James clasped his hand in support as they were about to board a plane to Sydney. James playing bodyguard while Selene and Keading looked after Andrew. Having his Alpha for the flight alleviated a lot of the anxiety of the plane ride and Falkirk was able to comfortably doze against James.

Arriving in Australia Falkirk looked to his mate with a teasing smile, “Well that's you visited all the continents now.”

“Never been to Antarctica.” the alpha teased. But Falkirk was drawn by Mycroft and his brother's even more subdued posture.

The chauffeur driven car brought them to a well manicured estate where a royal standard flew. A movement brought Falkirk's attention to his brother who was fidgeting. Mycroft, tapping then spinning a ring on his right pinky, the strange nervous gesture even more concerning than the quite of the journey.

“You were close?” Falkirk confirmed.

“Yes.” Mycroft replied simply, drawing a line under the conversation.

A short greying Alpha stood at the bottom of the steps leading up to the grand house. The King, forced to abdicate now used the title Duke of Windom and given the ceremonial role as governor of Australia. He now spent most of his time waving at crowds as he open new buildings and generally attempted to paint a positive image of the monarchy in the country. Dressed in light cream colours with a white weave hat he looked like he had just come off the cricket pitch.

Stepping out of the car, the Duke extended his hand to Falkirk and in a gravelly upper class voice greeted, “Hello, I've heard a lot about you.”

“You Grace.” Falkirk returned as he shook the man's hand.

Moving on Falkirk could see the awkwardness between the Duke and his brother as they greeted
each other. Neither quite sure on the level of familiarity they should show in the company.

The Duke looked to James next. Falkirk announced, “My mate, James Bond”

After the first meeting, with a slightly more relaxed attitude the Duke invited them in. Leading his guests through the cool open plan interior of the opulent house to the rear terrace where a tea was being put on. Another Alpha was overseeing the servant as they set everything up.

“My chief of staff, David Croft” The duke introduced. With the not so well concealed awkwardness of introducing his ex to his current boyfriend. The cold look that passed between David and Mycroft, was also politely ignored by everyone else.

“It looks lovely” Falkirk said to the Duke indicating the spread.

Jumping on the opportunity to break the tension. “Yes, it dose rather” the Duke returned pleasantly.

With Mycroft and David sitting as far apart as possible it was down to James, Falkirk and the Duke to keep up the casual conversation. As time passed none seemed to want to discuss the two elephants in the room but Falkirk need to discuss one of them.

“How novel.” Came David's snide musing while looking into his cup of tea.

Pulling out his phone Falkirk found an early flight. “We're leaving now” Falkirk declared sending Tanner the info.

David adding, “At least Urquhart had the grace to smiled at your face as he cut you down.”

“David, not now.” the duke snapped.

“Thank you for coming, Sir Thomas.” the Duke said pleasantly as he walked Falkirk to the front door. “This meeting wasn't about a show of dominance or something like that. I am an exile, I will only return to England in a coffin. The king must reign without interference.”

“You wish me to leave G out of the pack?” Falkirk said to the Duke.

Shaking his head. “To reign without interference is a falsity. There is always interference” at this the Duke gave a subtle indication to Mycroft. “It was thought by some I would be out of Urquhart's reach. So I did something wrong and interfered with government. Mycroft was wrong about Urquhart and I, and now I am paying the price for my crime. Exile.”
The Duke shook his head again to clear the melancholy thoughts as he said “It's not all Mycroft's fault, I am just as liable. I went against Urquhart with full knowledge of my actions. I am, however, very concerned about my son and who he will listen to.”

“This may be hard to believe but I have no political ambition.” Falkirk said.

The Duke looked unconvinced as he said, “Of course not.”

From behind the King and Falkirk, Mycroft admitting, reluctantly. “Since my brother broke from the family home I have held little influence and no control over him. Every confrontation has resulted in his victory or benefit. I have come to the realisation he is the heir to the pack and my other brothers concur”

Mycroft adding when he had the Duke's full attention. “It was Falkirk who ultimately brought down Urquhart. Then when Mallory couldn't rein in his mother's conduct, here we are with Myself, my Alpha brothers, the prime minister all declaring our loyalty to an Omega as our Pack Alpha”

The group had stilled its progress through the house at Mycroft's emphatic defence of his Pack Alpha. Falling silent a moment before he continued “I can say this. If King George is part of my brother's pack no one will succeed in using him. My Brother, My Alpha will defend him tooth and nail.”

The Duke looked Falkirk up and down then asked “Is Mycroft telling the truth? Will you defend my son's interests.”

“No, not his interests, he will have to live his own life. I will defend him, the person, the boy.” Falkirk said.

The Duke advised, “Keep my son's affiliation out of the public. I will give it my quiet support back home.”

In the car Mycroft pulled the ring from his finger and placed it in his pocket. “He wanted to see that I am not the Alpha” Mycroft informed before adding “He no longer trusts my judgement”

“That's always been in question” James shot.

Glaring at his insensitive Alpha before looking back to his brother Falkirk said, “You mentioned brothers, have you spoken to Shane?” The phone conversation Falkirk had with Shane non-committal at best.

“Yes and Sherlock, they are both considering your position. John will follow Sherlock in whatever he dose. But there is another I would like to discuss, Greg Lestrade.”

Falkirk was sceptical about his brother's motivations. “What about Tanner?”

Mycroft shook his head, “Any feelings around the inspector are... unrequited. But Lestrade has been good to Sherlock, Myself, yourself. And has he not played fair in our little games, always siding with the first to call him. And how many times has he been caught between us.”

Falkirk nodded. “I'm going to end up with an army.”
“You have a pack and influence, that will be the envy of London.” Mycroft said. Falkirk thinking he heard a warning in it.

As the car stopped at the entrance to the airport something crossed Falkirk's mind. “How am I going to speak to G without half the Navy finding out and beyond?”

“The Navy is not my area” Mycroft answered as both brothers looked to James.

Shrugging. “I only learned how to smuggle myself on and off ships. The occasional local girl too.” James said with a dreamy smile. Falkirk thumped the man's rock hard stomach. “Only got eyes for cute little megalomaniacs, now.”

“Not a megalomaniac.” Falkirk pouted.

“Not arguing the cute though.” James teased and hugged the omega as they headed for security.

“'am cute.”

--

James was gone again, returning to Macao to meet one of the contacts that would only deal with MI6 through James.

'Hopefully he won't damage my budget by feeding the wildlife again' Falkirk mused as he walked through his club.

Usually when Falkirk came it was for a drink and to discuss something beside work. First crossing Roebuck's path, but it wasn't him Falkirk was looking for and as quickly as etiquette allow moved on. Thankfully Roebuck had confirmed the presence of Falkirk's target and his general location.

In one of the opulent lounge rooms, strewn with plush green lather couches and chairs, Falkirk found his target. The only other Omega member of the club was sitting alone, reading a newspaper by the open fire.

“Captain Sansky” Falkirk said softly gaining the man's attention.

“M” came Sansky's deep gravely voice as he gestured Falkirk towards another chair.

“I must thank you for the Chinese movements” Sansky said referring to some intel Falkirk supplied to the Royal Navy without the usual jurisdictional wrangling. Without missing a beat the little round man accused, “You're calling in the favour?”

Nodding. “I need something smuggled onto, then off of, HMS Dragon. With as few people knowing about it as possible.”

“What and how big?” Sansky demanded.

Putting his had just above his head height “about this big” Falkirk said then moved his hands to shoulder width apart “and about this wide”

“Very amusing” Sansky deadpanned before falling silent for a moment.
“Your best bet is either the next port she makes or the mail helicopter.” Sansky informed, another contemplative silence followed as the man thought. “I'll see what is the more likely”

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Hong Kong. Falkirk and Selene were at the Royal Navy base, that was still allowed to be here, mostly so the Chinese could spy on it with relative ease, and perhaps get some good blackmail material on some of its personnel.

Falkirk poked the black epaulette, on the shoulder of his jumpsuit, adorned with gold stars, sabre and guard, and crown, signifying his honorary rank of Vice Admiral. But it had been a condition of the help, the official record was for a visiting Admiral doing a spot inspection of HMS Dragon. Falkirk suspecting the 'senior service' were wanting to remind him of the long association between MI6 and the Navy.

A rapid beating noise pierced the air, becoming deafening. The grey helicopter landed not far from them, in the middle of the round concrete of the helipad.

“I think I like helicopters less than planes.” Falkirk grumbled as he watched the unacceptably small vehicle without wings being loaded.

Selene made no acknowledge she had heard him, which was possible. Dressed in matching jumpsuits and helmets Falkirk and Selene waited until one of the people loading the Helicopter signalled the them over.

After what felt like an eternity of vibration and deafening noise. A warning from the pilot sounded before they impacted the deck. Before Falkirk disconnected his helmet from the communication socket, the pilot reminded they had a strict forty minute turn around.

“WELCOME ABOARD! I'M COMMANDER GERALD, THE CAPTAIN” a tall square chinned Alpha said coming up to Falkirk, escorting him away from the noisy helicopter and into the hanger like structure at the back of the ship.

“Thank you. M, British... Vice Admiral, Sir Thomas McLair.” Falkirk responded. At least inside the ship Falkirk could hear himself speak and took the helmet off.

“You may use my quarters.” the Capitan said as he lead Falkirk through the ship. “Ensign Windom was told to be there by now.”

“Thank you Commander, I appreciate your assistance and discretion.”

Rounding a grey walled corner and up a grey walled stairs Falkirk knew he would be lost without his guide. Turning a corner, ahead of them, standing ramrod straight was the blond teenager Falkirk was here to see, dressed in the blue jumpsuit with hands behind his back.

In a break with discipline. “M?” G called before snapping to attention in the presence of his captain.

Showing Falkirk into his quarters the captain pulled out a collapsible table and unfolded a chair for Falkirk and left.

The quarters were cramped to say the least, barely enough room for Falkirk to stretch out his arms.
As the captain left there was now enough room for G to enter.

Taking the other folding chair. “What are you doing hear” G asked.

“I don't have much time. I am formalising my pack. From your letter, I got the impression you would be interested in joining.” Falkirk informed before asking “Have you considered the full ramifications of declaring me your Pack Alpha?”

Getting a shrug “I'm not sure how a pack really works” G answered.

Letting G read the document everyone else had to sign Falkirk continued to speak. “There are two more things you should know. One is, one of my names, the other is a pack member you may have a problem with. The name you need to know is Falkirk Bond and my half brother Mycroft Holmes.”

As expected G stopped reading the document to look accusingly at Falkirk.

“My birth name is Thomas McLair. When my Papa died, I went to live with Daddy where I was renamed Falkirk Holmes. It was not a good home and nothing improved until I was bonded to James.”

“Are these the secrets I was never meant to learn, Sir Thomas?” G asked.

“Yes they are. James, Selene, Alec and Daniel will be part of the pack as well. You will not be the only one that has issue with Mycroft, and you should see the arguments Sherlock and he get into. Last Christmas nearly ended in a full blown riot” Falkirk teased. The teenager had been trying to hide his smile, he seemed to think the idea of a family dinner as strange and rather novel.

“I had to speak with your Father. He didn't like the idea of you and Mycroft in the same pack either. But did like the idea of someone looking out for you.” The boy's smile vanished with the mention of G's father.

“Usually I give people time to decide but I can't give you that courtesy. The document you are holding is too sensitive. If you sign it or not, it will be leaving with me” Falkirk informed and checked his watch. “You have five minutes before you have to start filling it in”

“I'll be outside.” Falkirk said patting G's shoulder and manoeuvring himself round the Alpha to get to the door.

“M?” the teenager called, softly and rather unsure. “Do you want me?”

Falkirk smiled. G showing how scared he was and uncertain of his place. Falkirk patted his shoulder. “I faced my fears to get here. I can't say how much a hate those flying metal death-traps. I am here, for you, because I would love to have you as part of my pack.”

Seeing the boy's blue eyes glisten, and how he looked away to hide his face. Falkirk reminded G, he needed to think carefully and should do so in the time he hand. Falkirk then pulled the door open and stepped out, to give G the time to think, alone.

Selene and Commander Gerald were speaking softly when Falkirk stepped out, closing the door behind him.
“Are you really an admiral?” the captain asked.

“It’s an honorary rank for the director of MI6.” Falkirk informed.

“Even for that, aren’t you a little…” the Captain trailed of deciding if he should continue with his thought in the face of the strings that had been pulled to get the fairly young Omega on board.

“Youth, Sex or something else, Commander Gerald?” Falkirk said. As the Captain was curious and being respectful Falkirk didn't put much heat or challenge into his words.

“All of the above.” the Captain teased.

Giving the version of his history fit for the public the Captain looked suitably impressed. It wasn't until Falkirk picked up the changed scent did he realise Cmrd. Gerald was flirting with him. Cursing his obliviousness Falkirk was saved by the cabin door opening and G handing him the signed declaration. Like Mallory and Mycroft, G held his head lower and bared his neck towards Falkirk.

Taking the young Alpha's arm. “Commander, you don't mind if G escorts me back.”

“Yes, of course he can.” Gerald replied.

Leaning closer to the boy who was now as tall as Falkirk. “I do so enjoy getting your letters” Falkirk said giving G a smile. G filled Falkirk in on some of the things he had been doing since the last letter he sent. G did freeze a moment when they passed another ensign who looked on Falkirk with open curiosity then seeing the Captain behind them scuttled off as fast as possible. “Bunk mate?”

“Yeah, a real wind-up merchant.” G informed.

“You survived Alec I'm sure you can handle him.” Falkirk said.

“Oh wonderful” Falkirk lamented as it came time to get his helmet back on and climb back into the helicopter. With one last teasing smile Falkirk looked back to G “Welcome to the strangest pack Britain has to offer”

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Still in Hong Kong, on their way home. For the long hall leg, Falkirk had returned to his brown 70s style suite for going by commercial airline. Passing through the airport. Falkirk was looking for a place that would sell an Earl Grey. But the standard chain restaurants found in an airport looked less than promising, especially as the Strabuck's tea wasn't fit for human consumption.

“M?”

Falkirk had to look back, to Selene. She had stopped a short distance away, in front of a long stand that sold international papers. With a foreboding Falkirk joined her. His eyes drawn to the front of the international USA Today.

'Explosion at Hammer Industries.'

To the side of the main article was a shot from a security camera, looking down on a man with
cropped blond hair, narrow nose and eyes a little too close together. The article listed the man as most likely Alpha, but anyone who knew 009 would know he was an Omega. A hotline under the picture asked anyone who recognised the suspect to contact the FBI.

“Shit shit shit.” Falkirk's favourite phrase when something goes to pot. “I told him to do this quietly.”

Selene cleared her throat to draw M's attention. She jerked her head to the South China Morning Post. Falkirk picked it up too, the front page just had a headline about a foreigner shooting up a casino. The inside page which continued the story, had what Falkirk was dreading. At least it was only James' back, as he stretched out his arm with gun having been pulled form the holster on his back waist band.

Pulling out his phone. When Tanner answered, Falkirk ordered, “I need to get to America. And I take it Q has gone to confront Double O Seven?”

“Q has left for Beijing, M. But why do you need to go to America?”

“Feel free to read USA Today as you change my tickets.”
“Good day, sir. Welcome home.” The mechanical voice came from the speakers, around the glass enclosed, designer foyer of the Malabo cliff top house.

The smell hit Falkirk the moment he was inside. A pungent warning, a marking mix of, Alpha, male, lust, sex. It dominated and almost destroyed the Omega's, male, lust and arousal. It was rather strange how the smell brought comfort when it was James and himself, but in these circumstances was rather unsettling. Even Selene looked a little uncomfortable as she followed him in.

“I believe your target is up the stairs, sir. In the master suite, which will be on your first right.” The mechanical generic British voice announced.

“Thank you.” Falkirk said heading for the spiralling stairs to the side of the foyer. He was relieved that the house was run by the computer and even more relieved that he had hacked the computer when he met the creator years before. The Trojan had sat on the servers, until today when Falkirk had activated it and designated himself 'Root User', the highest level of user and demote the actual owner and creator of the system.

Falkirk opened the wooden doors of the master bedroom. The floor to ceiling windows had a wonderful view of the ocean, and filled the room with light. The large bed was in the middle of the open space.

The dark haired man lunged out of bed, in a full Alpha rage, indicated he had bonded with the omega still in the bed. Falkirk stepped to the side and Selene overtook him. The Alpha was in a rage, but Selene caught the man easily, slamming him face first into the wall then the floor.

“Would Sir wish me to alert the authorities?”

Falkirk was impressed, the alpha still had the higher functions to answer and shout, “YES!”

“I'm sorry Mr Stark. Your user permissions have been revoked. Sir Thomas, should I contact the authorities?”

“No thank you, Jarvis.” Falkirk said and watched as Maloney slowly pushed himself up. While Tony Stark descended into a snarling feral Alpha, easily held in place by the woman with a knee in his back.

“Is this about Hammer?” 009 asked, casually letting the white sheets pool in his lap as he looked up at M standing over him.
“Yes and no.” Falkirk mused. “You must go where the investigation takes you. I just don't like reading about your progress via the morning press.” And threw the paper onto the bed, with Maloney's picture.

The blond omega gave him a cocky smile. “So you haven't heard about Cyrez yet?”

M's mood darkened, he hated it when he wasn't the most informed person in the room. He let his eyes harden until the Double O started talking again.

“Unless you want China getting three full shipping container of the fancy guns. I'll need the playboy over there.”

Falkirk flicked his eyes to Stark, the naked alpha still struggling ineffectively against the woman pinning him against the cold stone floor.

“One more headline, Mr. Maloney and you had better have the brains to defect.” Falkirk threatened and walked out. He heard the gasp of relief from the Double O, the moment his back was turned. It meant Falkirk had sufficiently scared to operative for his actions.

Falkirk heard a scuffle and grunts. Glancing back, Selene was following him. Stark in the bed again, being held back by the far stronger omega. The Alpha still trying to go for the intruders.

Coming down the stairs Falkirk called out, “Jarvis. Begin a 90 second countdown. Wipe all data since to execution of Trojan Protocol and reset all user permission.”

“Of course, Sir. 90,89,88...”

“Silent countdown please.” Falkirk said before pulling open the door and stepping out.

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Arriving at Heathrow, as Falkirk moved through the terminal. A man up ahead was easy to spot, towering above most. Lengthening his stride, Falkirk came to Daniel's side.

“So?” Falkirk prompted.

“The Double O is appropriately chastised.” Daniel said with an evil twinkle lighting his brown eye.

Falkirk took the Alpha's arm as they walked. “I hope you weren't too hard.”

Daniel gave a chuckle. “And how hard were you on Maloney?”

“I was soft as a feather.”

Daniel burst out laughing. “I'll believe that when I see it.”

“So?” Falkirk prompted, “What was it about?”

“Double O Seven's contact was assassinated as they met. James then decided to decorate the place in bullets. But that man has the luck of the Irish, he got a lead on something coming into China from America.”
“From Cyrez?” Falkirk asked, not willing to believe in coincidence. When Daniel nodded. Falkirk shook his head, “Warn James, Double O Nine is the primary on the mission. And I don't like playground squabbles.”

“Oh, I'm so glad I get to tell him.” Daniel said with a bit too much malevolent glee.

Falkirk giving the big Alpha a shoulder bump. “Try not to enjoy it too much.”

--

Home. In the Library. Falkirk and Daniel sat in the middle of the cleared floor. The furniture pushed back to expand the floor space. The names of all the pack members written on pieces of paper. The two moving the names into the appropriate hierarchy. Eventually a spoked wheel appear with Falkirk at the centre. As they worked out each of the relationships within the pack, strings crossed and it became more of a web. Ones like Mallory and Mycroft were simple, they were associated but there was no acknowledgement of dominance in their relationship, so both just branched off from Falkirk. With someone like Daniel being acknowledged by James, Selene, Hudson, the relationship was a bit more complicated. Then there were the ones like Eve and Greg who acknowledged Falkirk via someone else.

“No. Sherlock, acknowledged subordinate status to Alec, so needs to go, there, so we can link them.” Falkirk said moving Sherlock's name from the one O'Clock position to the nine, so it was adjacent to Daniel's name at the eight O'Clock position. Then switching Daniel, at 8 O'clock with Alec at 7. “No this still isn't right, the link between James and Alec now crosses you. And Alec acknowledges James directly...Grrrra!”

Falkirk letting out a frustrated breath and moved the names about some more.

“I notice Mallory's mother isn't here?” Daniel prompted.

Falkirk shaking his head. “Apparently she doesn't like me. No idea why. Darren's not too cut up about it though. Daniel?” only when the big Alpha tore his eyes away from the shifting of names did Falkirk continue, “Mary...”

Daniel shook his head, “Gran knows about the pack. She's loyal to her own pack, even if she is the last one left of it.”

“There is still a place for her.” Falkirk said. Even if the invitation wasn't taken up, it had been made.

The two moving and shifting the names about. The closest members of the pack extended down, with the expended pack members expanding upwards of Falkirk's name.

“No the conventional pyramid” Daniel mused.

“No, more of a wagon wheel... web... thingy!” Falkirk said looking over the laying pieces of paper.

“Inelegant but it will have to do.” Daniel said pushing himself up off the floor with a slight groan of protest.

“Getting old.” Falkirk teased.
“Yer no ta big fer a skelp laddie.” Daniel shot back in an exaggerated accent.

Sitting down in a chair Falkirk started copying out the hierarchy for the lawyer to file. Pouring a couple of drinks Daniel placed the bourbon in front of Falkirk then sat in one of the other chairs with a good measure of James' whisky.

“Well that's it?” Falkirk declared after he placed the pen down. Gathering everything up Falkirk bundled it up and tied the documents with red ribbon. Placing them in a secure box for Hudson to take to the lawyer in the morning. Falkirk allowed himself to slump down in his chair and sipping his bourbon, relaxing.

“You know....” Daniel started.

“Shut up!”

--

Returning home. Dealing with an industrial area of Beijing blowing up, and two Double Os blaming each other and arguing over whose mission it was. Was not fun, for M. As Hudson pulled open the door he mentioned, “There was a delivery from master Mycroft, Sir.”

Thanking the butler. Falkirk entered the library, while Selene went upstairs to tell Keading they were home. Sitting propped up against the settee, a large package. Clearly a picture given the shape, and covered in brown paper.

Untying the string and removing the brown paper Falkirk pulled the large, framed pencil etching from the packaging. Looking carefully at the snowflake Falkirk nudged his glasses down his nose to look over the frames. Barely distinguishable, names were written in the structure of the ice crystal, emerging like an optical illusion.

From a distance the picture looked just like a snow flake in pencil but it was a precise depiction of the pack hierarchy. Everyone who had declared themselves and their progeny were carefully recorded. Just as Daniel and Falkirk had set out.

Selene and Hudson hung the picture above the fireplace in the library. Mrs Bridges beamed at having her name up as part of the pack. Falkirk giving a little grunt as he lifted his son up, so he could see his name.

“That's you.” Falkirk said, pointing to Andrew's name. “Daddy, me, Uncle Daniel, Alec...” Falkirk going through all those represented. He then stood back, so Keading and Cody could have a close look.

--

Falkirk invited all to come see the picture. Lestrade accompanied Sherlock and Watson as they heeded their Alpha's summons. Falkirk trying to put the Inspector at ease. Who was still a little wary of the omega he had sworn loyalty to, even if it was indirectly, through Sherlock and Mycroft. The three inspected the picture.

Lestrade asking, “Why are Sherlock and 'Alexi Trevelyan' linked?”

“No reason.” Sherlock said, until Falkirk gave his brother 'a look'. The detective admitting, “He
helped me out a while ago.”

“Enough help, for you to consider him to out rank you.” Falkirk prompted. Sherlock just giving a quiet nod. Falkirk leaving the rest of Sherlock's time detoxing, to what his brother wanted to tell the other two.

John asked. “Why is the line between Lestrade and Sherlock simple, while Sherlock and my line is decorated?”

“Because no one believes you and Sherlock are not intimate.” Falkirk said from behind the group.

“We're not!” Watson protested and then hissed “We haven't” and made a gesture between himself and Sherlock.

“Very well Doctor. I will accept you are not sexually active but you and Sherlock have bonded to a certain degree, at least” Falkirk said. Now John joined Sherlock in a huff, the doctor crossing his arms petulantly.

--

Mallory and Darren's visit for Sunday brunch passed rather pleasantly. Falkirk did take note, that of all the Alphas Mallory made the biggest change. Even the Alpha's scent ques were more subdued around Falkirk.

The next were Falkirk's brothers. With the biggest change in Mycroft, he had dropped the unspoken competition between them. There were no more hassles over information, telling Falkirk what he wanted or needed to know without subterfuge. Sherlock was a lot calmer around Falkirk now. Shane, they had only talked on the phone so far, but just held a slightly more respectfully tone when he spoke.

The least difference came from the Alphas Falkirk was closest to. Daniel, Alec and Selene didn't seem to change at all. James while outwardly the same, but his ques had muted ever so slightly as well. When discussing the pack with James he seamed happy and didn't act different but even Keading, Darren had mentioned the scent being less intense.

--

As Daniel and Alec looked over the drawing the Scot mused, “I tried to mention it was tradition to have a Pack Tree commissioned. But you told me to shut up.”

Making a humming noise Falkirk was focused on his computer not his guests.

“Something wrong?” Alec asked coming towards the distracted Omega.

“Within a pack hierarchy, conflicting Alphas will subdue when a Pack Alpha takes control.” Falkirk read off the web page and sat back. Realising he was being watched, “Just figuring out why some of the Alphas have a less intense scent.”

The intensity of an Alpha's scent wasn't something other Alphas usually noticed so Daniel looked just as confused as before. Even the ambiguous area Alec existed in didn't help, making him unaware of what Falkirk was talking about.
A squeal sounded just before something impacted the library door. Alec pulled it open and Andrew tumbled in with Cody following. Running to Daniel, Andrew hid behind his legs before running round them and back out, squealing and giggling all the way.

“Outside!” Falkirk called before the anyone could break something.

Coming out of the Library, finding James bouncing an unimpressed Yulian on his knee. Attempting to get the baby to do something other than glare at him. Keading added to Falkirk, guiding the children out of the French doors to run about the garden.

Sitting beside is mate Falkirk brushed his godson's cheek and gave a wide eyed smile. Yulian giving a happy squirm and grin, showing the tip of his emerging tooth.

“Luncheon is served” Hudson called from the door.

--

Falkirk didn't know why he was here. The more cooperative sharing of information from Mycroft had come with a request to meet here and now. While Falkirk went through the security, for the modern glass building across the Thames from MI6. Mycroft was waiting in the foyer beyond the security check point. As Falkirk emerged from the full body scanners, he saw the seal of the Foreign Office on the front of the reception desk, meaning the building was part of the same branch of government as MI6.

"Thank you for coming, M." Mycroft greeted professionally. "We are awaiting a few more. But I would like a moment before we go in, if I may. I would like you to do something, contrary to your nature."

"I will try." Falkirk said. It seemed enough for Mycroft.

"I would like you to sit back, unobtrusively, and draw no attention to yourself."

Falkirk wasn't too happy about that. Too close to the concept of being a good boi, sitting in the corner without disturbing the Alphas and their important conversations.

Mycroft straightened his posture and plastered on the ingratiating smile, that he no loner showed to Falkirk. He greeted the sagging faced man, and the older blond woman following the politician in.

"Foreign Secretary. Lady Smallwood. We are ready, this way if you please."

The woman who interviewed Falkirk for the post of MI6 director cast her eyes up and down the omega, suspiciously. She mused, "Are we all cleared for this meeting, Mycroft."

Mycroft gave a resigned nod. "Yes. M needs to be aware, even if he has no authority on the matter."

Falkirk was getting suspicious and annoyed, made worse when Selene had to remain with the other bodyguards. They entered a dark room. Falkirk was asked to take a chair on the outer edge, shrouding him in darkness. Spotlights only illuminating the table in the centre and a projector lighting the far, end wall.

As Falkirk sat in the darkness, others joined him in the seats for observation. Others, like Mycroft,
Lady Smallwood and the Foreign Secretary were at the table. Falkirk suspecting a small round
man, an Omega, to be captain Sansky of Naval Intelligence. Like himself, Sansky was in the
shadows around the room. An alpha man entered, walking slouching over and cleaning his
glasses as he took a seat at the edge of the room too.

When the door was closed. A woman with black hair stood up, from her place near the bottom of
the table. Her voice was quite light, like a teacher of small children which matched her posture and
smile.

"Ladies and Gentlemen. I remind you this meeting is 'Eyes Only'. You are not allowed to take
notes. Nor are you allowed to discuss, even with those present, what occurred when you leave.
This meeting is protected under the harshest penalties of the official secrets act. I am Angela
Burr..."

Falkirk slouched back a bit. Getting comfortable before the amassed started blowing hot air. In his
experience if a leader didn't seize control quickly, everyone would try to lead and nothing would be
done, but for finding out who could talk the loudest and longest.

At the end of the introduction. Burr then indicated to someone else at the table and the wall behind
the woman showed a picture of a hard faced man, with slight downward tilt to his mouth.

"At this point, it looks like Defence Minister Dmitri Mishkin, will be the new president of the
Russian Federation. We have already highlighted irregularities in his champaign, his opposition,
the ballots and the arrangements for the counting of the votes." Burr said.

The woman rubbed her face as if fortifying herself, "The ones across the river are working from
the point of view, General Leopold Pushkin, current Director of the FSB is trying to influence the
election to his own ends. MI6 is not wrong about Pushkin. But they are failing to see, this man",

The picture on the wall behind Burr changed. A grainy side on image, of a bald man looking
downward and almost away. A man Falkirk and Smiley had met in person.

"Code name, Karla..." Burr started giving a brief description of the spy master. "Our analysis show
Karla and Pushkin are vying for control over the presidency. Our conclusion, Pushkin would be the
more stable influence, on both Russia's domestic stage and in word affairs. Which is opposed by
the ones across the river, whose conduct indicate a preference for Karla. At this point we can rule
out free elections in Russia, there are too many factions wanting power."

Something went cold inside of Falkirk. Mycroft glanced over his shoulder to him. But Falkirk was
having a little trouble, it was like he was so angry that it wasn't the normal fiery emotion but one of
absolute, rational, cool. Falkirk kept his word. He listened throughout the meeting, remaining
silent. But no matter what these people wanted, Pushkin was a dead man walking in Falkirk's
opinion.

When it was over, Falkirk remained in his seat until it was just him and Mycroft. He saw his
brother still standing in the light, from where Falkirk remained in the shadows.

Falkirk's voice was rather soft and musing as he said, "I favour one puppet master. This group
favour another. You fear Karla because he is unknown. I do not."

"After the incident involving Scarlett Papava, Angela Burr was asked to monitor Russia in the way
MI6 should. Because, to be frank brother, you are blinded where Pushkin is concerned. It was for
Ms Burr I spent months in Azerbaijan.” Mycroft said to the darkness, where he though his brother still sat. Coming to a decision he added, “There is a belief that you have not considered Pushkin's hand was forced, just as much as your own, in the death of 001. To drive this wedge between you.”

"And where do you get that belief?"

Mycroft looked to the darkness, from where the soft voice was coming. He shrugged, looking away, not liking he couldn't see his brother. "Someone more brilliant than any, as heartless as you can be and like you can wrap most around their little finger."

"You must introduce us some time.” Falkirk said. Mycroft jumping a bit as his overly calm brother emerged from the darkness into the light and headed for the door.

"I think she would like that.” Mycroft muttered, hoping his brother didn't hear. But Falkirk paused and glanced at him before leaving.

--

In the depths of MI6 Falkirk entered a special set of self contained apartments. Part of the Fallout shelter these room had been retrofitted for a special purposes. A sign on the door declared the apartment off limits to anyone above Beta female, in the ranking of sex and gender.

Inside. An Omega male nurse dressed in casual clothing rather than the scrubs heated something in the small kitchen.

“How is he?” Falkirk asked.

“Reserved.” the nurse said softly.

It was warm and dim in the attached bedroom, to help with the nesting instinct. Soft furnishings had been set up over the practical tile floors, fabric and wood rather that practical glass, leather or plastic.

Moving to the distant corner of the bedroom where a mound of blankets indicating the location of the Double O. Sliding down the wall, Falkirk gently placed his hand on top of the nest.

“I'm not hungry!” Maloney spat from inside.

”I'm not here to feed you.” Falkirk said softly

“He was an insufferable, egotistical... arse” Maloney complained.

“Yes, Mr Maloney. I've had the honour, of having Tony Stark ogling my arse.” Falkirk said earning a snort from the other Omega.

Maloney had tracked down a leak, that wasn't actually there. In the end it had been the same dissertation Falkirk had read that had been the source of the leak. However, as with most Double O assignments it had become bigger.

Stark Industries, Cyrez Corporation and Hammer Industries had been given the concept and proof that MI6 had built a production model of a FarSight. The three companies were then given the remit to produce the weapon with the first to do it getting exclusive production rights for the
American military. In the following scramble, the leader, Stark Industries was making the most progress when industrial espionage resulted Stark's gun tuning up at a black market.

With MI6 protecting the technology from even the British military, the CIA and Mossad tried to hide what they were doing from MI6. The Americans and Israelis, wanting to protect the project, were trying to retrieve the gun when 009 stumbled across it at the arms market.

As it turned out. China's link to the American contractors, Cyrez, was already producing a simple version and shipping them back to China. Which was where James got involved. Cyrez was now being, very quietly, turned inside out with much of its management vanishing. While Hammer had produced a 'piece of crap' according to Stark's expert assessment.

In typical Double O fashion Maloney had well and truly used Tony Stark and was now in the process of breaking the bond with him.

"Job well done, Double O Nine" Falkirk said to the nest and got a grumble in response. “You are a credit to, MI6, the country, and yourself. I am proud of you.”

“I knew you liked me.” The Double O teased.

“If you tell anyone, I'll have you shot.” M snapped and pushed himself up.

“M?” When Falkirk hummed in acknowledgement. Mallory added, “Could you order me a vindaloo, boiled rice, a large garlic nan and a Guinness?”

“You might need to settle for milk rather than beer. But I'm sure I can arrange the rest.”

Chapter End Notes

Something from my production notes. There are spoilers.
Picking the black material up, and clutching it close. Falkirk made a little whine at the back of the throat.

“Are you going to cry?” James whispered.

Falkirk looked at the small pair of black trousers he was holding. Answering a bit defensively, “No.”

James wound his arm around his mate, giving a supportive squeeze. Not convinced, his omega a little emotional.

“He was crawling around not that long ago. Headbutting walls because he wouldn't look where he was going. What happened?” Falkirk begged, hugging the small pair of trousers. “When did my baby become a boy, getting ready to start school.”

An American voice shouting across the shop.

“CODY MATTHEWS! GET YOUR BUTT BACK HERE!”

Falkirk looked to the other part of their shopping trip. Keading glaring as the dark haired boy. Cody plodded up to his Papa, like the condemned, to be yanked towards the dressing rooms. Keading's arms full of trousers, shirts and assorted other clothes for the boy.

James whispering, “Ten quid, Keading’s the sort that rips the changing room curtain open.”

Falkirk shook himself out of his melancholy. “I'm not taking that bet. ANDREW, where are you?”

James jerked his head to the boy. Andrew coming closer, his face dull and head hanging to the side.

“You just don't like shopping. If we do this quickly...ice cream!”

“Strawberry?” the boy bouncing with a wide hopeful smile.

“Chocolate? Pretty please, papa.” James teased, fluttering his eyes.

“As long as I get Turkish delight flavour. Come on, poppet.” Falkirk said. Andrew trotting behind his papa. Headache and sore feet forgotten for the moment.
As Falkirk headed down the aisle of changing rooms. Keading ripped the curtain of one open, pulling Cody closer and started tugging at the new trousers the boy was wearing.

“They fit, Mom!”

“Yes, now. By the time you start school, they will be too short and in another month or two, you won't be able to button them up.” Keading said and stated taking the larger pair off the hanger. “Put these on.”

Falkirk silently giggling at his brother’s manhandling. Falkirk entered the changing room, with Andrew. Like Cody, Falkirk was going for as big as Andrew could get away with.

Once changed, Andrew looked up at his papa. The legs of the trouser completely over his feet. “Too big.”

“You'll grow into them.” Falkirk said. Getting Andrew to sit on the chair Falkirk tucking up the hems. A belt would bring in the waist, Falkirk pinching the waist line for now. He got Andrew to sand and declared them, “Acceptable.”

Some white shirts. Black socks. White polo shirts for gym. Things like jumpers, blazers, tie, gym shorts and sweatshirts were all branded and needed to be ordered through the school.

Falkirk was finished rather quickly. He stepped out of the changing room, to find James casually leaning against the wall near Keading.

Keading ripped open the curtain, on Cody halfway through pulling on his jeans. The boy shrieking and falling over when he tried to covering his underwear.

“MOM!”

Keading started picking up the hangers and putting the clothes back on them. Heedless of his son's bright red face and scowl. “Oh you have nothing we haven't all seen.”

“Well... except for the perverts.” James mused.

“Where!” Keading hissed, his soft brown eyes scanning around the shop. James flinching as they landed on him for a moment.

The alpha a little wary as he muttered, “And I thought Falkirk was the only one who could do that manic look.”

Falkirk punched his mate's muscular arm. “Keading, James is just teasing. And I think in his own way, is trying to stop Cody's embarrassment.”

“What's he got to be embarrassed about?” Keading asked in genuine confusion.

The curtain ripped open, this time the boy on the other side controlling it. “How 'bout suppermom, ripping the curtains open every two seconds.”

“I'm a supermom?” Keading said with a proud and wide smile. Hearing the only thing he wanted

“Come on.” Falkirk said. “I promised ice cream.”
Andrew chanting, “Ice cream...”

“...We all scream for ice cream.” James added in time to Andrew.

“Ice cream...”

“...We all scream for ice cream.”

After paying for the clothes. The group headed out into the mall and towards the kiosk, with the stools that looked like scooter seats. Andrew asking the girl behind the counter, ever so politely for a cone, and happlaly ending up wide pink smear across his lips, cheeks and chin as he dug in. Cody a bit more reserved, asking for a tub of vanilla and a flake. Falkirk was disappointed they didn't have Turkish delight, or rose water(both the same flavour), so joined Keading in a Mint-Choc-Chip. James, on the far side of the kids with his chocolate cone. Falkirk had never seen anyone so dignified while eating a cone, not a single smear of chocolate anywhere.

Falkirk leaned in to Keading. Noticing a bit of green on the other omega's cheek. “Is Selene okay?”

Keading gave a desperate nod, “Just an appointment.”

“Doctor?” Falkirk asked, before he could stop himself.

“Just a check up.” With the awkward answer, Falkirk was going to leave it. Then Keading added, very quietly, “A woman's check up. To make sure everything is... okay.”

Falkirk nodded. Knowing Keading and Selene were wanting to add to their family but it had gone quiet of recent.

“I'm sure everything will work out.” Falkirk encouraged the other omega.

--

Tanner was giving M the latest on the operation due to start that day. As they arrived back at Falkirk's office. Darren caught them, saying, “M, your brother phoned. I gave him an appointment at 2:30.”

Falkirk thanked the omega and headed into his office. Tanner returning to his own.

At the appointed time, Mycroft led Angela Burr and the Foreign Secretary through E-Branch and into Falkirk's office.

Falkirk sat back. Sure he wasn't going to like this too much. Falkirk suspected it was the beta woman that would be the focus of the visit. He was right. Mycroft headed to the curving window to look out at the Thames and set of offices Burr operated out of. His brother was the foot in the door of MI6, so to speak. The Foreign Secretary had been clearly told to keep his mouth shut, here to show this was an instruction from M's boss.

The beta woman spoke in a bit of a bumbling manner with a wide genuine smile, “Well hello... not properly met have we... I'm,”

“Angela Burr, M. M, Angela Burr.” Mycroft said from the other side of the room.
Falkirk indicated the vacant chair in front of his desk, for Burr to take. The Foreign Secretary having helped himself to the other.

“I believe I caught your briefing on... well the the new president now.” Falkirk prompted.

“Oh, yes, I was told you were there. I’d have given you a proper seat if I knew,”

“I was just there to watch. I hate to push, but this appointment was squeezed in a bit.”

“Yes, of course.” Burr said with a bright smile and a bit of a bounce in her movements. Falkirk getting the impression she was the type of person who always needed to move. Made all the more pronounced when Burr tried to still and compose herself. “Well, M. The thing is, we need something... someone actually...”

“A Double O?” Falkirk was on the verge of demanding Mycroft take up the talking, this was like pulling teeth.

“Well, yes actually. Georgia...”

“Mission brief.” Falkirk demanded, holding out his hand. The beta woman jumped and started digging in her bag. He was presented with the manilla folder a moment later. 'Top Secret' printed in big letters across the front.

Falkirk flipped open the file. The target was a Russian agent, posing as a Georgian pro Russian politician. He had gained a lot of influence and his biggest Georgian supports were also hidden Russians. It looked like he was solidifying a power base, to launch his presidency bid. It was a simple assassination and destabilisation mission. Mallory was in place to condemn Russian interference in the area when everything emerged. They just needed someone to be the catalyst for everything to tumble out into the open light of day.

Falkirk had no problem in stopping Russia interfering with Georgia. Which was way they probably felt it safe to come to him on this, rather than outsource it to an independent contractor. Maloney(009) was showing a bunch of Alpha recruits, Omegas aren't so delicate. Stuart Thomas(006), the omega was breaking his bond to an Alpha from his latest mission.

In considering the other Double Os he was stalling, Falkirk bit the bullet. Falkirk closed the folder and handed it back to Burr.

“The only available Double O, is not under my direct command. I'll have you shown to the conference room, where Q and Double O Seven will meet you.”

Mycroft looked at him with well concealed confusion. Where James was concerned, Falkirk still thought of the man as his Alpha, and did not want to be his commander. So it was down to Daniel. Falkirk made the arrangements, Darren showing the guests to the adjacent room.

Falkirk moving through the desks of the communal space to the theatre like room at the back of E-Branch. He was in time for the joint meeting with Jack Ryan of the CIA and Tiger, of Japanese intelligence. The three directors of their respective agencies watched as what should be an American scheduled flight from Japan, dropped Kevin Shepard(002) into the area of China, that bordered North Korea.
James pulled to a stop. Wearing black tie, he straightened his cuffs and collar as he stepped out of the Aston Martin. He came around the classic car and pulled open the passenger door. Falkirk stepped out, looking at the tall tower of glass. Falkirk was in matching black tie. The omega tucking away, in his inside pocket, the program from the Royal Albert hall where they listened to a medley of different show tunes. James straightening his mate's bow-tie before taking the other man's arm and tossed the keys to the valet.

James led them into The Shard and up to the restaurant. James just sauntered in, past the waiting Maitre d'. The Alpha leading them straight to a small table, right beside the floor to ceiling windows. The one with the ice bucket and two glasses, ready and waiting.

“How very romantic.” Falkirk whispered and kissed the Alpha's tanned cheek.

James pulled out the chair and Falkirk sat. James taking the chair across from him. A waitress emerged and poured the two glasses of champagne.

James held up his glass, in silent toast. As the two rims kissed, a ping sounded. They sipped, Falkirk smiling, the wine not as dry or crisp as James liked. A touching thought on the Alpha's part, something lighter and sweeter, to Falkirk's preference.

Falkirk reached across the table to grasp James' strong hand. Gazing into the crystal blue eyes. “So, my Alpha. Is everything planned? Or do I get to see the menu?”

“Do you want control?” James purred, full of sultry promise.

Falkirk gave a slow shrug. “I might like giving up control for a night.”

“Then everything is planed, by your considerate Alpha.” James said, drawing circles on the delicate wrist and skimming up Falkirk's arm, as much as the shirt cuff allowed.

When the stater arrived. Falkirk was glad to see there was no caviar, another thoughtful gesture on his Alpha's part. Canapés of cured salmon on Blini, small pastry cases of crab or lobster. James picked up one of the small pancakes with the thin sliver of Gravlax, Falkirk duly opened his mouth.

Falkirk a little disappointed when the main course arrive. Not because of the beef Wellington. But for the fact he had to break contact with James. The desert allowed them to lean close again. A single chocolate soufflé was placed between them. James taking up the spoon, and Falkirk wrapping his lips around the rich desert it contained. Their hands again clasping and caressing.

After the meal. James stood, tucking his omega under his arm. The two heading out of the restaurant and to the lifts. James pressing the button for a higher floor, whispering, “The night is not yet over.”

Falkirk pressed his lips to James' cheek again as the lift climbed. James already had the key and they breezed past the reception. The hotel room was elegant, the bed against the back wall, looking down to the floor to ceiling windows.

Immediately Falkirk was swept up in strong arms. The alpha giving a dominating kiss. Falkirk circling his arms around the James' strong neck. Falkirk feeling strong fingers pull apart his tie, and
popping the buttons of his shirt. Feeling the cool air hit his back, Falkirk shivered slightly. More kisses, going from chaste to deep. Hands wormed beneath the waistband of Falkirk's trousers and pushed them and his underwear down. James giving a possessive squeeze to the omega's arse, and pulled their bodies flush. Falkirk feeling the scratch of the fabric covered body, against his naked skin.

James pulled back. His hungry eyes taking in the sight of his naked mate. James brushed a red tinged cheek, then skimmed his fingers down to encourage the omega to let his arms hang, rather then try to hide the revealed body.

“Please. It's been so long since we had time to do this properly?” James whispered.

With burning cheeks, under the hungry gaze of his alpha. Falkirk straighten his back, with hands clasped behind him. Standing in the pool of his suit at his feet. Falkirk gave a impish smile. James circling him, making a low appreciative moan.

As James came back round to Falkirk's front, he drew his fingers up the underside of the erection pointing at him. Loving the way Falkirk bit a dark lip, the delicate body giving a shudder and shallow thrust of the hips, wanting more contact. James shifting his own uncomfortable erection, being held down by his underwear and trousers. Diving in, James pressing to the tortured lip, kissing it, rescuing to from Falkirk's sharp little teeth, then delving deep into his mate's mouth. With one hand he caught Falkirk's delicate wrists, keeping the omega's hands behind his back. With the other hand he cradled the hanging testicles and slid behind them to the heat, that grew moist in preparation.

“My beautiful omega.” James whispered.

“Yours.” Falkirk breathed. His eyes rolling back, knees threatening to buckle as he tried to grind down on James' fingers.

“Tell me, what do you want?” James whispered, with a nibble to the omega's earlobe.

“For you to hurry the fuck up!”

James chuckled. “No! No rushing. All night long.”

Falkirk letting out a whine. He didn't know how much more he could take. In pleasure James was a master and looked determined not to let the alpha instincts make the slow torment end quickly.

“Hate you.” Falkirk whined, his hands still held behind him and trying to get the Alpha's finger to do more than just brush his opening.

“Oh, you will curse my existence before I let you see the stars.”

--

“I'll bring you back something nice.” James said and kissed his son's cheek.

James then stood to pull Falkirk into a deep kiss. The Omega still blushing from the wild night a few days go. “I'll bring you back something nice too.”

Falkirk held Andrew's hand as they watched James go down the steps and enter the waiting car.
They waved as the black car pulled away, taking James to the airport.
Hudson knocked on the Library door and opened it, “A, *Karla* to see you, Sir.”

“Give me a moment then let him in and wait by the door.” Falkirk ordered. Pulling his Falcon II from a hidden drawer. Falkirk lay the weapon under a newspaper after checking the bronze coloured gun was ready to fire, and attaching the silencer.

Keeping an eye on his guest as he entered the library Falkirk indicated the chair opposite his desk.

The Russian spy master, the man responsible for teaching the Russian elite agents and placing them them around the world, looked pointedly at the paper concealed gun before sitting down. His posture became serenely still whenever he stopped, like Karla was meditating.

“Will I be graced with your voice or is it charades again?” Falkirk asked lightly. To his knowledge no one had ever heard Karla speak.

A soft smile graced Karla's thin pale lips. He looked to Falkirk's concealed gun again then Hudson who was standing at the ready. Slowly, cautiously, Karla opened his jacket and with two fingers pulled out a bundle of envelopes, placing them on Falkirk's desk.

The first thing Falkirk noticed were the letters were in Russian, so he had no idea what they said or their value.

“I don't Speak Russian let alone read it. May I get a translator?” Falkirk said pleasantly indicating the phone on the desk. Not receiving a denial Falkirk called Daniel's home number. Not receiving an answer Falkirk then tried Alec's and finally Daniel's.

Immediately on answering, Daniel said, “Hudson called, Laddie. We're already on our way.” his voice soft so it wouldn't carry.

For show, Falkirk called loudly and friendly, “Alec! I need something translated. Good!... Right away, if you please.” Falkirk then hung up.

Falkirk and Karla sat looking at each other, the tick of the clock in the hall the only sound. Falkirk studied the Beta male wearing a slightly ill fitting suit that could have been picked up at any chain shop. Karla was the very essence of a slightly over the hill, not as successful as he would have wished, individual. He would go completely unnoticed as part of the tail end of the London commute.

It took time but Falkirk eventually noticed Karla was subtly inspecting the wall behind him. The bald man was not as good as Mycroft or Sherlock but Falkirk did notice Karla was practised at seeing without directly looking. If Falkirk's hunch was right Karla was currently inspecting his
hidden drinks cabinet. The man's grey eyes moving on to the cupboard where Falkirk kept his favourite nesting supplies. All cupboards and storage designed to be indistinguishable from the bookcase and books around them.

Smiley had once told Falkirk of the disastrous attempt to recruit Karla. Karla's silent calmness had lulled the MI5 deputy Director (at the time) into a false sense of security. As Smiley attempted to convince Karla to defect, Smiley had projected his own situation onto the silent man. Eventually, Smiley spilled information about his own wife and her affairs. Karla's mole used the information to became one of the lovers of Smiley's wife and named in the devoice.

Seeing he had been caught looking, Karla started to move his head slightly to take in more of the room. Eventually he turned to the only real change in the room since the last time he was there. Looking behind himself, to the snowflake picture above the fireplace. A scraping against wood brought Karla's attention to the now overt gun, lying on the desk with M's hand resting over it.

“Very rude, ignoring your host.” Falkirk said. An ever so slight twitch of Karla's eye, Falkirk translated as an internal self recrimination.

Falkirk's reaction to Karla's observation of the picture was too much. Confirming the picture was what a lot of people wanted to get a look at. The spy master had not looked carefully enough at the picture when he entered. Returning to his stillness Karla didn't move until Daniel, Alec and Selene came through the front door.

Alec glared at the man sitting in front of the desk, as did Daniel and Selene. Karla's eyes immediately skipped over Alec to study Selene then Daniel.

Alec and Selene started reading through the letters while Falkirk and Daniel watched over Karla. Hudson went to take up guard of Andrew while there was a hostile presence in the house.

Alec was the first to start summarising what he was reading. “Pushkin is opposing the new direction of the President. The government want him out of the picture, but fear he could be more dangerous to them out of office.”

Selene added, “There's a plan to target the Double Os in a coordinated operation. The aim is to provoke a reaction from MI6, more specifically to provoke one of M's scorched earth reactions.”

“He,” Alec said pointing to the silent Beta. “Has proposed they don't need to go that far, and has actually warned provoking M could have 'problematic' consequences. He 'suspects' M is just waiting for an opportunity to strike at Pushkin with the least fall out. Karla has proposed a mission go wrong for the FSB.”

Flipping through more pieces of paper Alec continued the translation, “Georgia. The FSB will fail to prevent a single British operative from damaging Russian interests and the President's plan for the country. The failure and humiliation will result in Pushkin having to step down as director of the FSB. And hopefully once he is out of office, M would put Pushkin out of the picture permanently for them. M would then take the unofficial blame for Pushkin's murder, not the Russians themselves.”

A slight squeak sounded as Falkirk curled his fingers against the desk. An omega's hard nails easily strong enough to leave behind three scratch marks in their wake. Rage and anger building up. At the threat to his Double Os, and the attempt to manipulate him.
“Get out! You have two minutes.” Falkirk said, voice cold and hard.

Karla attempted to get another look at the picture M had been protecting but time wasn't on his side. Selene and Alec helped hasten Karla's foot steps out.

“Warn Double O Seven. Don't extract him.” Falkirk said to Daniel who nodded and left to go fulfil the order.

Falkirk thumbed the desk with all his might making everything on it jump but otherwise unaffected. His skin was crawling and it felt like eyes were on him. The one thing Falkirk was not going to do, was what someone like Karla wanted. He wasn't that stupid, even in his anger at Pushkin. But what?

Daniel flicked his eyes to the door, as the omega slipped into the observation room. James with the MI6 psychologist, Dr Deane on the other side of the two-way mirror. The Alpha woman was trying her best. James would only sit, silently fuming, and glaring out into space. He had come through the mission, only needing a butterfly stitch above his right eyebrow.

“I'd be boiling too.” Daniel admitted and handed over James' report. “All verified.”

Falkirk flipped open James' debriefing. While Falkirk read, Daniel added, “It was a bloodbath. Sixteen executions in...eight hours. Twenty-two kills in total. Four on the street, as the targets sat alfresco. A sniper for two at a dinner party, friends, family... and children saw their fathers die. Double O Seven completed the mission. But there was nothing justifiable or honourable about what happened. Those men, they were lambs to the slaughter.”

Daniel then pressed the intercom button, “Thank you Dr. Deane. That will be all.” James launched up, and walked out of the room in an instant.

The Hispanic woman glared at the mirror that separated them. “Double O Seven needs to talk,” She jumped as the soft and precise tones of M answered her.

“Double O Seven, will talk, Dr. Deane. But not to us. And not before he has let his aggression out and drunk himself into oblivion.”

Falkirk then looked to the big Alpha beside him. Daniel pre-empted the question, “Alec's already planned the night. Underground boxing, pub-crawl, probably bar-room brawling to finish everything off.”

It was no surprise, that when Falkirk got home that night, James had not shown face. Or that Daniel followed him home, to collect Yulian from Keading, when it was usually Alec. Daniel stayed for dinner. Falkirk kept to the normal routine for Andrew, of a bath and story before bedtime.

He was just waiting now. Falkirk gazed into the glass. He swirled the amber liquid, the glass scraping the desk as he made little circles with the tumbler. The sound of the front door caused a knot in Falkirk's stomach, not expecting a visitor.

Hudson opened the library door a moment later, “Master Mycroft, Sir.”
Falkirk nodded and the butler called for Mycroft to come in.

“Can I get you something?” Falkirk said, going to the drinks cabinet. Pulling down the door that looked like books, to reveal the decanters and glasses inside.

“Whatever...”

Falkirk glanced at his brother, “Choose. I have bourbon, whisky or cognac.”

“A cognac.” Mycroft said.

Falkirk pulled out a small snifter glass and poured a measure, then topped up his own drink. Returning to the desk, Falkirk sat. He watched Mycroft cup the glass in the palm of his hand, swirling the drink, taking a smell before taking a sip. Falkirk didn't bother with the proper technique to get the full flavour, he just drank.

Falkirk prompting, “You wished to see me?”

Mycroft nodded. “I heard about James and the set up. My source suspects, given the impeccable intelligence we were working from. Pushkin was set up. With the Director's time now over, it is believed you are about to make your move.”

“You always seem to know things at the most inconvenient of times.” Falkirk mused. He had intended the change of subject to stall the conversation. It did, but not in the way Falkirk thought. Mycroft took on a strange contemplative expression, as he looked into his own drink, much like Falkirk had been doing before his brother arrived.

“Would you like to see my source?” Mycroft said. “You may actually listen to her.”

“I always wanted to be able to listen to you. I could just quite trust you.”

The door opened again. Hudson carrying a large tray. “I assumed you wished your supper at the normal time, Sir.” Falkirk nodded his thanks and indicated the low coffee table, where the late night snack was placed.

Noticing Hudson had brought an extra cup. Falkirk said, “Mycroft, care to join me.” He moved to the seating area in front of the fire. Mycroft wordlessly joining him. Before Falkirk could reach for the pot of tea Mycroft touched the fine bone china.

Mycroft ran his fingers along the dark blue band around the top and the daisies painted on the teapot. He then touched the gold ball of the lid handle, that had been broken off and glued back on at not quite the right angle. There was also a chip out of the spout. “I got you this.”

Falkirk nodded. “A shame. I love it. But this is all that survived after Moran blew up the flat.”

Falkirk said, waving his hand over the pot, two cups and saucers, two side plates.

“I wondered if you had even kept it.” Mycroft mused.

“It was a bonding gift from my brother. I would never throw it away.” Falkirk said and poured the tea, then helped himself to a toasted crumpet with a light smearing of butter. “So who is this person you want me to meet?”
Falkirk's phone interrupted them before Mycroft could answer. Going to his desk, where the device was sitting. The call from a blocked number was what he had been waiting on. Falkirk answered. “M.”

“Sir Thomas McLair?” an authoritative voice said.

Falkirk rubbed his face. “Speaking.” he said, knowing this dance.

“Pack Alpha to, James Bond and...”

“And Alec Trevelyan. Yes. Can we cut to the quick. Which station were they taken to?” Falkirk demanded. When the officer had answered, Falkirk hung up and called for his car. He then looked to Mycroft, “I have to go bail out James and Alec.”

“I'll make arrangements to go see my source.” Mycroft said.
"So Bond!" Daniel snapped. The Double O in front of him with a few more bruises than he returned from the mission with. "Ah... screw it."

Daniel slumped back, the large leather chair squeaking as the man shifted his weight. James looking rather suspicious. Daniel musing, "The mission was a balls-up from start to finish. And I can't be arsed pretending I care about you tearing up a pub."

James gave a one shouldered shrug. Not at all disappointed the Scotsman didn't feel up to a bollocking for the rampage he and Alec went on.

"You can go." Daniel said.

James just about to reach the door in the middle of the glass wall. When R reaching the landing that ran in front of all the offices.

R pushed open the door, in a rush. "Q, M's glasses came on line. No other communication from him or Selene."

Daniel and James were moving, before R had even finished talking. They came down the spiralling staircase to the Main Administration office of Q-Branch.

Daniel bellowing, "I'm in Suite 6!" he then pulled open the door to one of the glass fronted rooms along the back of Q-Branch.

It was only a moment before the screen at the back of the operation support suite showed the feed from Falkirk's HUD glasses. They were looking at a strange girl, with long black hair and dark blue eyes. Around her was what looked like a cell.

Falkirk's voice demanded, "Mycroft, why are we here?"

"Eurus, can deduce almost anything. Her skills are unparalleled. She is incandescent..."

As Mycroft continued to say how great the girl was. Daniel looked to the agitated Alpha beside him.

"Double O Seven, something set M off. Take, 006, 009, Alec and a full tactical squad. Keep it in house, no one else until we know what the Laddie wants us to see."

"My pleasure." James purred dangerously and all but ran from the room.

Daniel turned his attention back to the screen. Ordering R, "Bring Tanner up speed. Get me a map of the island and that prison. Full tactical analyses of the structure," Daniel jumping back as the girl's eyes seemed to flick to him, but it would be Falkirk she was looking at.

The girl's eyes then slid to the person standing beside Falkirk. "How am I meant to persuade brother, when dear Falkirk has already changed his mind. So stupid, so blind, can't even see what is in front of his face, dear simple Mycroft."
Falkirk was working himself up. He had seen many a psychopath. He had seen many an insane person. Now he had been dragged here, by helicopter to see this one.

With absolute contempt, "Mycroft, We are going."

"But..." the words dying in Mycroft's throat.

"Move." Falkirk snapped and pushed the taller man towards the lift.

"Goodbye, dear brothers." the girl called, hollowly.

In the lift Falkirk rounded on his brother. Hissing, quietly and dangerously. "You drag me to this prison. To see, her. I am disappointed, Mycroft. Very disappointed. I have the brains to analyse motivation, myself. I do not need some, mystic... prophesier, living in a dark cave to know Karla is manipulating me."

With every word, Mycroft flinched. Falkirk dared not stop. Not even as he saw the water begin to build up in his brother's eyes. As the doors pinged and opened onto a larger room full of guards and Selene. Falkirk continued, "Mycroft, do not expect to hear the end of this any time soon."

"I will make my own way back." Mycroft said in a wavering voice.

"You do not get to escape me that easily." Falkirk snapped. Hooking his brother's arm and marching them on.

Reaching the checkpoint between the lift foyer to access the cell and the room outside the warden's office. The warden stepped into their path. "Could I have a moment..."

"PILGRIM!" Falkirk shouted as he lunged to the side, tackling his brother to the floor.

Selene pulled out her twin Berettas. The two handguns making a loud stuttering as they released the fully automatic fire. In a twisting pirouette, the guards about Selene fell under the woman's precise aim. With quick efficiency she ejected the empty magazines and reloaded. Tossing one of the guns to M, picking himself up.

Catching the long barrelled gun. Falkirk switched it to the slower and more controlled semi-automatic fire. He then pulled back the slide to chamber the first round.

Mycroft stood. Looking around the dead bodies, including that of the warden. The Alpha woman was taking point and his little brother behind. Falkirk covering their rear with the comically large gun, held in a sure grasp. His brother's words clicked in Mycroft's mind, "I am a pilgrim in an unholy land."

"Yes we are. Now move it." Falkirk said, pushing his brother to follow Selene.

A burst of fire made Mycroft look ahead, to Selene targeting guards coming out of a side corridor. Slower single shots, made him look to Falkirk behind, shooting at the guards trying to follow.

They reached the reception. Selene shooting the guards. Just as they were about to exit, steel shutters slammed down, over the doors.
Selene punched the metal blocking their exit. Falkirk went to a panel by the main entrance, but he had no tools, he had not even gotten his phone back from when he had to surrender it. If it wasn't for his glasses they would have been completely isolated. They were trapped in the dead end.

Words flashed in front of Falkirk's eyes. 'Warden's office. ETA 12 Min.'

Falkirk said to the other two, "Lets try to get to the control room."

They headed back the way they had come.

"What is going on?" Mycroft said.

Falkirk came up beside his brother. He was again covering the rear as they headed back along the low carved out stone corridors.

"I think Eurus saw, that I noticed there was no glass to her cell. Eurus if free." Mycroft snapped his surprised gaze to him.

"Do you remember, Mycroft. When we were in hospital after Moran's attack. A Double O was giving her first debriefing to me."

"Scarlett Papava." Mycroft whispered.

"Sherlock wondered how she could believe the act. Everyone believes the act when it's directed at them, Mycroft. It's one of the skills needed by M. What I said, it was for Eurus, the cameras and guards. I can slap down the most unrepentant of the Double Os with ease. It never actually means I'm truly angry with them."

"Can we have the heart to heart later." Selene snapped.

"How very interesting, little brother." The emotionless voice of the young woman said, echoing from the speakers around them. "You actually care about Mycroft. I find that strange. You played up to the known tensions in the relationship between yourself and Mycroft. But you are right, observing your interaction form the outside let me see it was fake. I will admit, I almost didn't notice. It was the way you steered Mycroft that gave you away dear little brother, you wanted out of here quickly and you made sure Mycroft stayed with you."

They returned to the two story circular room outside the Warden's office. Selene was dealing with the ambush waiting for them. Falkirk pushed Mycroft through the space and into the warden's office. Selene and Falkirk covered the unarmed man as they sought the shelter the office offered. The glass wall protecting them from the gunfire, for the moment.

The two shooting out of the doorway, at the guards pouring into the larger outer room, keeping them back. With a click, Falkirk's gun was empty and the way Selene threw down her gun, she was out too. Falkirk grasped the woman's arm when she tried to lunge out of the room to get a new gun. The glass wall growing webs of cracks, not looking like it was able to withstand many more shots.

"Eurus!" Falkirk shouted out of the door. "You must know you won't get away with this. Too many know I came here." Slowly moving his head, to take in the dozen or so guards that blocked them in, on this level and the upper landing. 'Painting' the targets for the shooter.
The girl with long black hair and dressed in white scrubs emerged. She stood on the landing across from the office. "So limited, Mycroft. The Alpha who hides behind an omega. Never quite as sharp. Never quite as intelligent. Never quite as capable. Just never, quite, in any way."

"I am curious." Falkirk called. "Never me. You provoke Mycroft. You wanted me angry at Mycroft. Were you that scared that I was standing in front of you?"

"Fear. Just a chemical reaction that I am beyond."

"I...don't... think... so." Falkirk now had a timer counting down in his field of vision. "For when I enter the dark places, I do not enter alone."

Eurus gazed down. She couldn't quite see through the glass wall, due to the cloudy spiderweb cracks it now contained. Quite cracks sounded from all about the room. Eurus and the guards noticing the quiet noises but none quite knowing what it was.

Falkirk pushed his brother to the side, coving him against the wall. Then feeling Selene cover both.

Eurus looked around, seeing the blood blooming on some of the uniforms of the guards. All were confused to the red appearing. Eurus realising a sniper had been used, and there were spots of light shining like stars through the very thick and dark walls of the prison. Several guards collapsed as they realised they had been shot and were losing a lot of blood.

A louder bang and smashing glass sounded. People in black tactical armour were breaching the prison, via the warden's office balcony. With another smash, they shattered the internal glass wall of the warden's office. The people in tactical armour, with assault rifles raised to their shoulders started firing. Eurus ducked back into the corridor behind her as the room was swept. The alarm sounded and all the security doors started to close, locking down the whole prison.

Falkirk looked up. The black body-armour clad people were hard to tell apart. Until he saw the crystal blue eyes looking at him from the balaclava covered face. More blue eyes, darker ones belonging to 009, and the baby blue belonging to the other omega Double O, Thomas.

Standing. Falkirk looked over his men. Noticing smiling green eyes. "You are not meant to be armed, Mr Trevelyan."

"Neither is M." Alec shot back. Falkirk still with the comforting weight in his hand, even if the gun was empty.

Falkirk ordered, "All personnel are to be considered compromised. Try to take prisoners, but shoot to kill is authorised. Beware an omega girl, early thirties, black hair. Double O Nine and Six she is your priority. I don't want Alpha sympathy to get in the way." Alphas may discriminate, or even abuse omegas, but most saw killing one as beneath them.

"Yes, M!" the group answered in unison. James went to blow the security doors and sweep the prison.

Falkirk sat behind the warden's desk. Unable to be extracted until the prison was secure. Selene handed him a fresh magazine for the gun.

"Well this is an interesting day. I assume she wasn't lying when she called us brother?" Falkirk
mused, as he made the gun ready to fire again.

Mycroft shook his head, sitting across from his brother. Rather relieved that Selene and two more squaddies took up sentry duty at the wide open entrance to the office.

Mycroft musing, "We did not know she was our sister. Eurus somehow did, she always made digs even as a child. To us, she was just the smart girl who lived near the house. She used to play with Sherlock, until Sherlock got a new friend."

"Somehow I don't think that story ends well."

"They liked to play pirates. Eurus made a riddle for Sherlock. As treasure she used Sherlock’s new friend Victor. In an effort to fix the situation, Daddy and Uncle Rudy made me play with her. Interrogate her. But she never said what she did to Sherlock's friend. Even as a child I knew when I looked into her eyes, I was gazing into something without a soul."

Falkirk not sure he had seen Mycroft truly afraid before.

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Falkirk sat, nursing a bourbon. They were in one of Mycroft's haunts. A set of offices below the streets of London. The large projection on the wall showing the island and prison fort being surrounded, the compromised personnel being marched out. More, MI5 and a few others were now helping MI6 secure and sweep the prison. One of the cameras zoomed in on the black haired girl, being escorted by the two blond omega Double Os.

Lady Smallwood musing, "Could you not get her a place in the village?"

Mycroft spoke in a quiet voice, as if fearing being overheard in the secure room, "Entrance has been denied. She has no value to the country. She dose not need to be protected. The county can be safely protected from Eurus, by her execution. Eurus dose not qualify."

The description caught Falkirk's attention. "I've heard it mentioned. But what is the Village?"

Lady Smallwood answered, "The most secure facility in the UK. Prisoners are conditioned, brainwashed if you will. The information they hold is kept intact. But it's like the person they were becomes a book that they read out of when questioned."

"If I wanted to keep someone, without anyone else knowing about it. Could the Village do it?"

Mycroft contemplated his brother, and something his sister had said. Lady Smallwood again answered, "As Mycroft said, there is strict criteria for a person's entry. I had thought Mycroft to be able to pull a few strings to get Eurus in though."

"Lady Smallwood, could we have a moment." Mycroft said. When they were alone, Mycroft turned to his brother. "Eurus said you changed your mind. About Pushkin?"

Falkirk nodded. "Karla overplayed his hand. He dose not want a favour from me, he wants Pushkin dead without being a suspect himself. So here I am, someone who hates Pushkin enough that none would think twice that I did it."
Falkirk was lying on the bed watching as Andrew stood on a chair in front of his Father, both looking into the mirrored door. James had his hands over Andrews shoulders, tying a full Windsor knot. The school tie had arrived the day before, with a blazer, several polo shirts and jumpers, all in the school colours of maroon and gold.

“Perfect.” James said with a brief nuzzle to his son.

Tuning Andrew round James stood a little straighter so Falkirk could take a quick photo of the pair. Falkirk declaring both, “Handsome.”

In the weeks since the mission. James’ face had healed, all that was left was a small scab over his eyebrow.

Turning back to the mirror Andrew looked at the tie then started pulling at it. Knowing what was to come James showed his son how to pull the knot apart. Then Andrew crossed the tie and brought one end over and through, which was when his memory failed him. The boy looked to his Father. Slowly and patiently James took his son through the process of properly tying the knot.

With determination written in his face and Andrew's blue eyes, and tongue sticking out the side of his mouth. Andrew tried again, to fix the tie on his own. Coming to the end he would look to James for his judgement. If Andrew didn't think his father was right he pulled the tie apart and started again.

James inspected the knot again and nodded. Then with his own tie, James held the narrow end and pushed the knot up and waited for Andrew to do the same. James looked in the mirror and made sure the knot was straight. Andrew copied him but made the knot sit to the side.

Standing behind his son James cupped one of Andrew's hands and brought it to the knot. Guiding his son's fingers James got it to the centre between the wings of the collar. Andrew started again this time neither Falkirk or James couldn't have done better. James declared it, “Perfect.”

From that moment on Andrew wanted to be like his Daddy and Papa. Wanting to wear a shirt and tie at every opportunity. Resulting in a shopping. James and Falkirk sanding close, in the children's formal section. Andrew darting about the displays. Falkirk holding a few shirts, in more than just white used for school.

“I'm glad he inherited my fashion sense.” James dead panned as they watched Andrew picked out a narrow tie for himself in a stylish gunmetal grey.

Gaining his Alpha's approval the young Omega beamed as he quietly asked, “Can I have another, please daddy?” James had no defence against the big pleading eyes so nodded towards the display.
“Thanks daddy!”

Andrew made a high squeaking, “Ohh!” and darted round to the far side of the tie display. Andrew emerged a moment later with a bright green piece of fabric with white polka-dots, that would become a bow-tie.

“Oh really?” Falkirk teased his Alpha.

With the biggest doe eyes Andrew looked for approval, and saw his unimpressed Father. The boy's beaming bright face, fell.

Falkirk swore. Going down on one knee in front of his son. “Poppet, Daddy doesn't need to like it. As long as you do.”

“Don't want it!” Andrew spat. His voice breaking and eyes glistening a bit as he glared at the floor.

“I like it.” James tried to encourage. Even Falkirk tried again. But Andrew was able to read his father's initial reaction for himself. The approval of an Alpha was everything to a young Omega. In the end Andrew replaced the bow-tie, only interested in what his Alpha approved of.

Picking up the bow-tie out of sight of Andrew. Falkirk sent a quick glare to James, but it wasn't the alpha's fault, he was allowed his own opinion too. Falkirk bought the bow-tie. Moving to the adult section, while James kept Andrew occupied. Falkirk then bought two more bow-ties, almost identical to the one Andrew liked.

Arriving home. Falkirk gave Andrew his shopping bags. “Take these up to your room, please.” Andrew nodded and climbed the stairs.

Without looking, Falkirk ordered, “You come back here.” The skulking Alpha stopped his sneaking towards the lounge. With a beckoning finger, Falkirk expected the alpha to follow him upstairs.

Putting his bag on their bed. Falkirk pulled out one of the boxes, the one with a pink bow-tie with silver spots. He then thumped the box against James' chest. “Dress and put it on!”

“Sir, yes, sir.” James grumbled, pulling off his polo shirt and pushing his jeans off. He dressed in a dove grey suit, and as ordered put on the pink bow-tie.

When James looked round, Falkirk was pulling on one of his favourite suits. It was a deep blue, but in strong enough light the green plaid pattern became visible. James was then needed to fix the length of bright red fabric with white stars into a bow at the front of his mate's neck.

The two then headed downstairs. When they were in the foyer, Falkirk looked up and called to the upper landings, “Andrew, come here a moment.”

The two went into the library to await their son. When the small dark head peeked around the door, the boy's big blue eyes went wide, darting from what his dad was wearing, to what his papa was wearing.

Calling his son over, to sit beside him on the settee. Falkirk took a deep breath about to impart the biggest hypocrisy he could. Pulling out the box containing the bow-tie Andrew had admired. Hugging his son and tipping the small chin up so he could look into the dark blue eyes.
“You may not understand this right now. As an omega you will feel you need to do what an alpha wants. But you must not change who you are to make an Alpha happy.” Falkirk insisted then looked to James.

Falkirk could feel the hypocrisy. He was a passive, submissive shadow for his father. For James and M he had become ruthless, a powerhouse, a force of nature to protect and guide MI6 for them. He couldn't deny that he had done some things for himself. Helping his friends. Ensuring Keading didn't end up as another in a long line of omegas like Falkirk's Papa. Or Cody ending up in an orphanage or something.

Andrew looked uncertainly between his Papa and Father.

“Listen to Papa. He is your Pack Alpha.” James said then beckoned Andrew over. Turning Andrew around James then pulled the bow-tie from the box and lay it around the Omega's neck. It was a bit difficult with the polo shirt Andrew was wearing but James managed to work around the soft collar to leave a perfect bow at his son's throat. Falkirk pulled out a small mirror so Andrew could see.

“It doesn’t go with the shirt.” Andrew said looking to his parents in turn.

“No it doesn't.” James agreed then added, “Go put on a proper shirt on and I'll teach you how to tie it.”

With a brilliant smile to his father Andrew ran upstairs to change.

By the time James, Falkirk and Andrew sat down to their evening meal. Andrew was in a pair of dress trousers, white shirt and a green bow-tie with white dots. Falkirk admitted internally that green wasn't Andrew's colour. For now it was more important Andrew develop a sense of self, even if it meant Andrew wearing green.

In MI6 Falkirk didn't go to his normal office, for this meeting. Deep within the building there was the Double O Branch. Made up of a briefing room with nine seats in a semi circle all pointed towards a desk where M chaired the meetings. Connected to the Double O briefing room, suites of offices for the Double Os. Also attached to the section, there was a suite of offices that consisted of M's 'Secure' or 'War Office'.

M's secure office was so unused it had not been updated since first furnished. The ornate oak desk was made from the remains of an old ship and looked small in the cavernous space. An oval oak conference table could easily seat twenty and there was still room to run laps. Oil paintings of Navy ships from the Golden Hind to HMS Ark Royal lined the walls.

Sinking into the old leather wing back desk chair. Falkirk had trouble reaching the top of the desk. Shaking his head Falkirk stood and exchanged the chair for one of the conference table chairs. Hard and upright. James and Alec had teased Falkirk for his taste in desk chairs but he liked them stiff.

Going over to the window, Falkirk knew they were in the centre of the building so their should be no windows. Turing the blinds Falkirk was greeted with a night time view of 90s London, no Shard, Walkie-Talkie building or Gherkin in the cityscape.
With a final glance around the room Falkirk moved to the large table. Inspecting the coffee, tea and cakes it contained. Sitting at the head Falkirk waited for his guests to arrive.

“Ah! Memories.” Smiley said coming into the office, a sense of nostalgia coming over him at the classic decor.

Accompanying Mycroft was not only the requested Smiley and a man Falkirk recently read up on, but the M previous to Mansfield, Admiral Hargreaves.

“So this is where my furniture went.” Hargreaves said looking at the office.

The man Falkirk had never met before was a Beta, completely bald with cold beady eyes. When he spoke his voice was soft and kind but with just a hint of cultured malevolence.

“Good to meet you, I'm Number One.” The beta said from a hunched posture and looking up at Falkirk like a snake ready to strike.

“I don't suppose you have tea?” No.1 asked and walked off, his attention drawn by a painting. “With milk, so uncivilised without.”

Hargreaves said in his permanent low grumble, “Like I do with MI6, I watch over the Village. If you're sending someone to The Village you will need my authorisation.”

Calling the meeting to order Falkirk couldn't help feeling Omegas were getting a bum wrap for odd behaviour. No.1 seemed to be showing a range of oddities for someone who ran the most secure detention facility in British history.

“Has Mycroft briefed you on my recent visitor?” Falkirk asked the group.

Soft and musing, No.1 spoke into his cup as he frowned at it. “Code name Karla. I would have so loved to have source Gerald under my care. Is this Earl Grey?”

'Yes odd is a very apt discretion of the Beta.' Falkirk thought. He said to the No.1, “Yes it's Earl Grey. How would you like Pushkin?”

“Oh yes, lovely.” No.1 said in soft, calm but eager tones with bright eyes. “May I have another of those little tortes, they are excellent.”

Falkirk nodded and waved to the plate of dainty cakes. “Please help yourself.” he said getting a rather strange and pleased smile from the beta.

“Oh, thank you.” No.1 said pleasantly helping himself to the last of the stripy sponges. “How will Pushkin be, acquired?”

“That is still in the planning stage.” Falkirk said. “And we can't move until Pushkin is out of office.”

As the meeting came to a close. The oldest, Hargreaves pulled Falkirk to the side. Whispering, “I am very impressed. To put aside your own feelings shows...” He trailed off, seeing the green eyes behind the heavy framed glasses getting harder and harder.

“I neither seek nor desire an Alpha's approval. Especially yours, Admiral Hargreaves.” Falkirk said
quietly.

Neither saw the pale eyed, bald man glance back and watch them. No.1 wearing a strange and curious look, fascinated by the exchange.

Falkirk then followed the rest out, at a distance. He wasn't seeing them out. He had something he needed to do. No.1 would be leaving by the secured, underground car park, because he didn't technically exist. Hargreaves too would be going by the car park entrance as he was not a regular visitor.

Falkirk saw his brother and Smiley exiting through the main entrance. Both regular visitors, so their presence would not be suspicious. He saw Smiley heading for his waiting car. Mycroft had stopped to talk to a man, in the dull green dress uniform of the Army. Probably one of the many liaisons that came to and from MI6.

Falkirk pulled to a stop in front of the large wall of polished marble that made up the rear of the reception area. More names had been added to the memorial wall since the last time he came.

The last time he came was for Double O Two, Kevin Shepard. Dying in a chase when he pushed his target's car off a gorge road and went over the edge with it. Briony Thorne, a Beta female became 002 when Shepard's body was recovered.

Most of the names Falkirk didn't recognise as he only got involved in the special recruits and senior field operatives. He would have signed the notices of death but Falkirk couldn't really remember them. Addressing the unknown names.

“I'm sorry. I can only keep track of so many people. I hope someone remembers you properly, as a person should be remembered.”

Then Falkirk touched one name reverently.

“I'm sorry. I know I am breaking my word and there is no excuse.” He then walked away. The promise he made to Scarlett Papava weighing heavy on him.

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A Beta who Falkirk knew for more reasons than one approached Darren's desk. “Let him in.” Falkirk ordered before Darren could do much more than greet the man. Mendel, a mid level functionary in logistics, was someone MI6 allowed to exist.

The Beta was as English as the royal family. Educated at Eaton, then Oxford. Moving to the foreign Office then to MI6. But some argued, the royal family were just Germans with an Anglicised name. Where the Royals were German, Mendel was a Russian with an Anglicised name. His Grand father was a wartime liaison who defected after WWII and the family had been integrating ever since.

The only surprise to Falkirk, Karla was willing to burn a generational infiltration network. The tall man stood in front of Falkirk's desk and held out an envelope. Taking the ivory paper. Falkirk gestured the guard into his office and Mendel was duly escorted to the brig.

Picking up the phone. The moment Smiley answered, Falkirk put out an arrest warrant for Mendel's family. He then looked at the message from Karla.
When C arrived with Mycroft. Smiley briefed Falkirk on Mendel's family. Most were already out of the country. A dementia suffering mother and a chronic alcoholic uncle dying of liver disease didn't seem worth it. The few petty criminal cousins were being rounded up though.

Arriving at Falkirk's secure office, deep in the heart of MI6. Captain Sansky of Naval intelligence was waiting with James, Selene, Addison, Alec and Daniel. Sitting around the conference table of the classic office, all eyes fell on Falkirk.

“Gentlemen, operation Mincemeat is a go. We have four days.” Falkirk informed before looking pointedly at Mycroft “You haven't mentioned anything in front of Sherlock?”

Mycroft showed his embarrassment at the reminder of compromising other operations and muttered, “No. The village and Number One are ready for the new arrival.”

Sansky added, “HMS Vanguard is on-station and the cargo Mr Holmes supplied is onboard.”

Mycroft said, “We did find someone suitable. Dentil and medical history will be acceptable. DNA will be a problem though, if a Russian agent gets to the body.”

“A risk we'll have to take.” Falkirk said. “The water is warm enough and wildlife is plentiful. We have a chance.”

Daniel said, “I've briefed Double O Five on his equipment. It's ready for pick up, on location.”

“Double O Five I want you on-station. You will leave now.” Falkirk ordered. “Double O Seven, Alec and Selene will accompany myself.”

There were nods and acknowledgements all round.

“Let's hope that when we meet in a week, all will have gone to plan. Good speed gentlemen.” Falkirk said.

“Godspeed?” Sansky said, with a curious frown.

Falkirk shrugged, “Not religious myself. My Double Os have a range of beliefs. Including superstition like actors and sportsmen, where 'good luck' is a jinx and I will never wish harm even in jest, like 'beak a leg'. So...”

“We are left with Good speed.” Mycroft murmured.

Falkirk looking to Daniel, and in all and deep seriousness, ordered, “If it goes to pot, MI6 is yours. Deny everything!”

As everyone filed out Falkirk called James to wait. He looked at his hands. “I never want to be one of those parents. We're going to miss Andrew's first day.”

“He'll understand. His Papa and Daddy are saving the world.” James reassured.

“In a child's eyes their parents are the world. And Andrew's world will not be there on one of the
scariest days of his life.”

--

Ending the day by going to the brig. Falkirk walked up to Mendel’s cell.

“When am I to be shot?” The man behind the glass demanded.

“You have to be considered a threat to warrant summery execution. You are a postman nothing more.” Falkirk said. Holding up a letter. “For your masters.”

A buzz sounded and the cell door slid to the side.

Unceremoniously Mendel was placed on the first available flight to Russia. Still dressed in his brig jumpsuit and paper shoes.
Patience pays: Cement shoes.

Peeking from around the frame of the bedroom door. The sapphire blue eye watched as his Papa and Dad pack. When upset, scared or otherwise negatively affected Omega's didn't tend to cry. Evolution teaching them to draw as little attention to themselves as possible. As Andrew continued to watch from the doorway he gave off a scent queue of distress and a quiet mewl, barely audible.

Picking up on the sound and growing scent. James' attempts to comfort his son were fruitless. Andrew knew his parents were going somewhere without him. Cody's attempts to engage his nephew were just as fruitless, when they all met up in the foyer.

On the steps of James and Falkirk's home. Selene gave her omega a kiss, she then pulled her stepson close and planting a kiss on his cheek, despite Cody's best efforts to stretch his neck back and avoid his mother. The boy's brown eyes glared at Selene as he wiped his cheek. But he called with well concealed desperation, “See you soon, mum.”

Falkirk had picked Andrew up to kiss his son's cheek. James hugged his arms around both mate and child.

“Be back soon, little man.” James said softly, rubbing Andrew's neck and nuzzled him.

Handing his son over to Keading, Falkirk hating the moment he stepped away. Andrew gave a whine and hid his face in the older omega's neck when he had been transferred. Watching the solemn child as the car pulled away Falkirk was overcome with the desire to pack it all in, again, and to become a stay at home mother. Only James' reassuring arm coming round his shoulder grounded Falkirk to the moment.

“Perhaps I could buy one of those decommissioned ships from the Navy.” Falkirk said. Desperate for something to distract him from the crushing knot in his chest, that leaving Andrew had made. And really not looking forward to boarding the small private jet.

“So when you fire someone you can literally fire them?” Alec said, from his place in the seat across from James.

Selene too tried to get into the spirit, added, “If the ministers causes trouble you could level parliament with one cruise missile”

“Today Great Britain tomorrow, #THE WORLD!” James teased, giving his omega a comforting nuzzle, to help with the queue of distress that the omega was releasing.

The plane ride was the usual for Falkirk. Stressful. With some help from the bourbon supplied by his Alpha, it was passing in a slightly numbing buzz. Falkirk resting his head on James' chest, concentrated on the slow regular thump he could hear with one ear and not the high constant whine of the engines of the other. All the while his Alpha was stroking his neck, using the enforced omega calming gesture. In the end, Falkirk was starting to zone out despite the constant motion, enclosed space and the idea of ending up in a fiery crater as the metal tube plummeted back to earth where it nature said it should have always stayed.

“Moving requires permission from the Pack Alpha.” Alec’s teasing voice said drawing Falkirk and James' attention.
“Who’s moving?” James demanded.

“Keading and I are looking at houses.” Selene supplied turning her malicious glare from Alec.

The omega still with his head resting on his Alpha's chest. Falkirk's slightly out of it, dreamy voice came, “Are you still planning on being the mother?”

Shocked blue eyes snapped to the two cuddling on the seat behind her. Selene demanding, “He told you?”

“Of course Keading told me. What do you think we talk about in a nest.” Falkirk murmured.

Alec and James started demanding more information, on the baby and the house. Falkirk coming round a bit, accusing both men, “My god you two are worse than old biddies!”

Selene informing all, “I'll be carrying the baby. But Keading wants a house not a flat.”

In full Oxbridge, public school voice Alec teased, “I don't approve of these newfangled notions.”

“Come now Old Man, you have to move with the times. It's not like there are Alpha men wanting to get pregnant or anything.” James teased, getting a punch in his arm from Alec before both burst into giggles.

“Quiet both of you.” Falkirk snapped getting a round of, “Yes mother.”

Falkirk moved, shooing Alec away and taking his place beside Selene. James and Alec continued to snigger over Selene's impending pregnancy from an Omega.

Falkirk leaned in close to the dark haired woman. “I'm Keading's friend. He confides in me...”

The Selene nodded, given what Falkirk already knew. She whispered, “Everything is fine. They just warned it can take time. And... not to stress and... to eat healthily, to have fun, sex isn't a chore and a whole list of things.”

Selene then tipped the tablet, so Falkirk could see the image of a 50s style semi detached. Wanting to move on. “What do you think?”

“Looks nice.” Falkirk said.

“Keading likes this one.” Selene informed bringing up a picture of what appeared to be another semi-detached with larger front garden.

“What's wrong?” Selene demanded seeing the pensive look on Falkirk.

“It's an old terrace style. The dividing walls don't always go right up. You'll need to make sure ingress couldn't be gained from the neighbouring roof space.” Falkirk said

Falkirk and Selene continued to discuss the options through the remaining time of the flight.

--
The local station had sent a Ford Ranger, twin cab, pick up. James checked over the vehicle while Alec inspected the tools, tin bath, quick drying ready mixed cement and a small water butt in the open back.

It took hours before they arrived at the small freight port Falkirk had chosen. The lights of the Ford were of little help in the pea soup of a fog and darkness. Getting out, James killed the lights and it became a little easier to see. Within the dark grey, a pool of defused light, silhouetting Karla in front of the lights of a black saloon. The spymaster stood with a couple of henchmen, one of which was Mendel. The unknown, another Beta male who opened the boot for them, revealing the unconscious form of the disgraced and disowned Pushkin, former head of the FSB. Falkirk and James looking over the unconscious man.

A scraping sounded as Alec pulled the tin tub from the back of the pick-up. A bang echoed as the tub hit the concrete ground. Grumbling all the way Alec pulled the tub containing the bag of concrete, water and mixing drill to the end of the industrial concrete pier. His progress only able to be tracked by the sound of his complaining and scraping metal on concrete.

James pulled Pushkin out of the boot and groaned as he hefted the Alpha's bulk over his shoulder. James disappearing into the haze and darkness surrounding them as he moved in the same direction as Alec.

One of the reasons Falkirk chose this place, 80% of the time sight was less than twenty meters. At the high of the cold war the fog, of the port near St Petersburg was used to hide all the ships being loaded to send arms around the world.

A high pitched whine pierced the darkness so Falkirk started walking towards the end of the pier. Where the sound of the straining drill was coming from.

James' quiet hiss came out of the thick shroud. “You're making it too wet!”

“I know what I'm doing!” Alec shot back. “It's not my first time.”

Getting closer, Falkirk saw the two men working at the very edge of the pier. “Gentlemen?” he called interrupting their argument.

“There!” Alec declared pulling the drill out of the tin bath, the end of the long mixing bit covered in wet grey cement. James tied Pushkin's knees together and placed the man's bare feet in the concrete mix.

Inspecting the concrete bag. “Forty five minutes.” Alec read and threw the bag over the end of the pier.

“Littering! Mr Trevelyan.” Falkirk admonished. A sniggering brought Falkirk's attention to Mendel who had followed him down the pier.

“Do you think your friends will be able to defend you?” Falkirk said, his tone going cold.

“Your continued existence is dependant on how much I can ignore you, Mr Mendel.” Falkirk continued, but noticed Mendel's fear was not because of him. The one time MI6 employee's eyes kept flicking to Karla and back to Falkirk.

With a forty-five minute wait. Falkirk gave a glance to Alec and James holding Pushkin's feet in
place, before walking back up the pier.

Joining Selene waiting by the car. “I’ve had more interactions with Karla than anyone else in British, European or American intelligence and he still hasn't spoken a word.”

“His mouth is lined, he rests his index finger atop his middle and he keeps checking his back pocket which is empty.” Selene whispered, without moving her lips. The fact Karla smoked was not a well kept secret or the fact his wife committed suicide or the fact he had spent time in a Siberian prison.

With nothing better Falkirk opened the car and rifled through both James and Alec's jacket. Eventually coming up with the contraband. One of James' deep secrets, when no one was looking he smoked like a chimney pot. While Alec smoking less frequently but more openly.

Requisitioning Alec's pack of camel cigarettes. Tipping one out Falkirk placed it between his lips and brought the lighter to the tip. For the first time Karla wasn't comfortable in his stillness and every time Falkirk drew a breath and the tip flared Karla's eyes flicked to him.

Slowly Karla approached leaving his minders where they were. Falkirk moved forward as well and they met in the space between. Falkirk knocked a cigarette forward and held it out, then offered the lighter. “Don't steal it.” Falkirk teased.

“You're welcome” Falkirk said accepting back the lighter with 'D.C.' and '21st' engraved on it. Falkirk lit another cigarette joining Karla.

“I still don't understand why. Why is Pushkin so out of favour? I mean...” Falkirk mused but fell silent when Karla didn't respond. Falkirk more worried he might fall into the same trap as Smiley, of waffling and spilling too much.

Horse Russian swearing sounded through the mist so Falkirk stamped out the cigarette, hoping the sick feeling it gave him wasn't showing. Karla did the same, stamping out the cigarette before they approached the shouting Pushkin. As the two moved through the darkness and mist, Falkirk didn't see Pushkin until they were very close to the end of the pier.

Half the tin bath was hanging over the edge of the pier and Pushkin had been pulled upright. Every time the older Alpha moved the bath wobbled and threatened to topple over the edge. Seeing Falkirk and Karla approaching Pushkin started shouting at Karla, in Russian, too fast for Falkirk to catch.

“Everyone's time comes to an end.” Falkirk said, drawing Pushkin's attention.

The older Alpha's thin hair was sweat soaked and clinging to the man's scalp. His once tailor made suit was ripped and grimy with spots of dried cement. And even in the open air his fear carried on the wind. Knowing it was useless to beg Pushkin fixed Falkirk with a cold stare. “You are a fool, M.”

Placing a foot on the edge of the tin bath. “Give my regards to Scarlett Papava.” Falkirk said and push the bath enough to over balance it.

A shout came from the falling alpha, followed by a sound of pain and a splash. Looking over the edge Falkirk watched the water settle with Karla beside him. Nothing visible below the black surface.
“Three minutes.” Alec informed, checking his watch. Then as they continued to watch the water, Alec called out, “Five minutes.” then ten, he kept going until half an hour had passed.

“So passes, General Leonid Pushkin.” Falkirk said and pulled out a pressed flower, letting it drop onto the water.

“Lets go home.” Falkirk said to Alec and James.

“I trust I won't be getting any more visits.” Falkirk said to Karla but knowing there was now a favour owed.

Noticing Karla wasn't immediately following them, nor were his minders visible in the fog. Falkirk caught Alec's eye and as they came off the pier and onto the harbour side. Falkirk gave a subtle point to Karla's discarded cigarette butt. A dip, a bit like throwing a bowling ball and a nod from Alec, indicated he had retrieved the item.
James lifted the tiny school blazer, gazing as he held the deep red fabric a moment. Hearing the door and the noise, James knelt to quickly help Andrew get the finishing touches on.

Hudson just looked as one boy shot past, then Keading entered holding Colum. The omega still looked after Yulian and Colum from the secure location of Falkirk's house. Hudson then turned, picking up the briefcase and satchel from behind him to hold them out for Falkirk.

As Falkirk was about to take the school bag, Andrew said, “No, like papa.” Confusing most.

Hudson looking a little bashful as Andrew came up to the butler and held his arms up. James controlled his facial expression as he watched his son seek out another Alpha. Hudson knelt and Andrew put his arms through the straps of his satchel, getting a pat from the Alpha too.

Falkirk smiled and nodded to the older man. Showing there was no offence for Hudson showing Andrew attention. ‘Hell! Hudson's here more often than James.’ Falkirk thought. He did love his alpha but Hudson's presence gave Andrew a stability James could never manage.

Falkirk held out his arm, and calling time to go. Making sure James had to pass him and didn't glare at the butler or anything. When the door behind swung closed and Andrew had climbed into the car. Falkirk casually leaned closer to James, whispering, “Hudson was always good to me. It's good Andrew sees him as more than just a servant.”

James nodded in understanding. Hearing that soft tone, meaning he was being given a subtle order that had to be obeyed or face the wrath of M, a pack Alpha or fanatic omega, whatever force Falkirk decided to bring down on him if he acted on his jealousy against the other Alpha.

Selene as usual was beside the driver, she was looking into the back, where Cody and Andrew were sitting on the bench directly behind her. She was in the process of making sure Andrew was strapped in, when Falkirk and James sat.

“Do you like anyone in your class?” Falkirk asked his son when the car started to move off.

“No!”

Falkirk hoped Andrew wasn't like Cody and the others of Holmes line. “I'm sure, once you get to know your class mates you'll find a friend.”

“I didn't.” Cody said in an even tone of voice.

When they arrived at the school. Cody opened the door and disappeared inside the moment the car
stopped. The boy becoming indistinguishable in the mass of shouting children. Falkirk and James walking around to the side gate, with Andrew holding their hands. What struck Falkirk, apart from the sheer mass of children was the number of nannies dropping off children for the youngest class. James and Falkirk seemed to be the only parents there.

A blond young woman stood outside the high tern-style gate. She crouched down and in a happy voice, “Hello Andrew.” When she stood, she offered the same bright smile to James and Falkirk. “Nice to meet you, Sir Thomas, Mr Bond.”

James spoke to the playground monitor. Falkirk watched his son, as he moved through the spinning cage. Even painted sky blue, with white highlights meant to be clouds. The playground still looked like a prison. But this was the most secure school in London.

Inside the playground Andrew turned back to his parents with a forlorn look and Falkirk waved.

“We'll see you later, poppet.” Falkirk promised. James waved as well. They headed back to the car. Andrew still standing at the bars of the high fence.

--

The new routine continued for several days, until Falkirk got the call he was waiting on. Dropping Andrew and Cody off at school first.

“See you later, poppet.” Falkirk called, sending Andrew through he turnstile gate. Andrew gave a wave, once he was on the other side of the heavy bars. Falkirk glad, a blond boy, an omega most likely came up to Andrew and together they headed deeper into the playground.

The moment Andrew was out of sight, Falkirk's face hardened. Becoming M, to deal with the situation. Falkirk, James and Selene met Sansky, Control and No.1 at London City Airport, with Alec joining as translator.

Flying up to Scotland. Falkirk found himself at the mist covered loch surrounded by mountains. Faslane was the home of the British fleet of submarines. The group waited on the harbour for the tug to guide the grey bulge with conning tower into dock.

The gangways of HMS Vanguard extended and the crew started filing off. Only when the senior officers exited did Falkirk and the rest of his group approach. They stood at the end of the narrow gangway.

With hands cuffed behind him, Pushkin was guided out of the hatch by Addison. The Russian was dressed in a Royal Navy jumpsuit. The double O held the prisoner's shoulder and the handcuffs with the other hand, urging the man on.

“Welcome to Britain, General.” Falkirk said with a malicious smile.

“Do what you will, I will thay nothing.” Pushkin said, some missing teeth making him hiss as he spoke. The tracker tooth, the suicide tooth and probably another from an obvious punch to his face.

“General Pushkin.” No.1 said as he bobbed his head, inspecting the General as if he was a fine statue. “You are to be given into my care.”

The general spat some Russian words at the beta. Alec said, “No direct translation, derogatory term
based on the instability, stereotypical to Betas”

After a trip to Glasgow, where the examination rooms of a hospital had been commandeered. Pushkin was given a thorough going over. Going so far as to have a full body scan and surgery to remove some unidentified objects. A surgical pin and a homing device were added to the teeth.

The items would be sent to Finland. Russia wouldn't be able to officially reclaim the discovered body, they wouldn't dare admit it was Pushkin, but they would try to confirm it was him. The plan hinged on Russia not wanting to draw attention to the death of the ex-leader of the FSB. So MI6 were going to give enough evidence to paint a convincing picture. That the quick drying cement didn’t hold when immersed in the water. That Pushkin's dead body broke free and was pulled out to sea. The Pushkin double would be found washed up in Finland, bloated, fish eaten, and with everything the Russians expected to be on it like tracker tooth, deep tissue embedded tracker, suicide tooth and surgical pins.

With Pushkin recovering but still unconscious he was loaded on to the plane. A North Wales military instillation, the destination of the plane. A small airfield several miles from the facility had an ambulance and two cars waiting. An insignia of a Penny Farthing with a parasol adorned all the vehicles.

The group split between the vehicles. The bald beta opening the door of a classic looking limo and inviting Falkirk in.

“Home sweet Home.” No.1 said with a slightly unhinged smile. As the convoy approached some hills near the coast. The road leading down into a tunnel and deep under the hills.

“Rather dull until we reach the end, I'm afraid to say.” No.1 said as he looked over his shoulder at Falkirk.

Falkirk didn't care, the Beta was scary and he placed his hand on James' thigh. The tenseness in James indicating he was wary of the Beta as well.

“The village is beautiful and at this time of the year the sparrows are in such numbers...” No.1 continued the commentary until the tunnel widened into a massive underground garage. While Pushkin was unloaded from the ambulance No.1 informed, “We just have a few more tests to do on General Pushkin.”

No.1 led the group of visitors up a metal staircase, almost to the roof of the three story garage. Entering through a heavy metal door at the top, into a large darkened room. No.1’s glassy eyes took in the group, as he waved to the open control room full of monitors showing a picturesque village.

“Operations, where we keep everything ticking over.” The Beta informed pleasantly before moving on to what Falkirk assumed was the man's office.

Admiral Hargreaves was already there and sitting at a circular table, watching as one of the Prisoners was tracked, the image being projected on the surface of the table.

“You should recognise him.” No.1 said to Falkirk, indicating the person in the image.

“Double O Seven, Simon Templar?” Falkirk said.

“An unfortunate soul.” Hargreaves said and with a wave of the hand the image of the ex Double O
disappeared. “Number Eighteen, now”

No.1 disappeared through a door. Falkirk and the rest joined Hargreaves. Falkirk watching the images of the village play on the surface of the table. The prisoners wore an odd fashion of one solid colour with a trim of another. The guards were dressed in black with a white belt and shoulder strap of leather. While the medics wore white tunics with red trim.

When No.1 returned, he had removed his pink blazer and white shirt. Now dressed in grey trousers, turtle neck and a jacket. The only colour, the pink trim of the jacket.

No.1 placed a document in front of Falkirk, Smiley, Mycroft, Hargreaves, Sansky and himself.

“In accordance with the admittance system of the Village. Six 'acceptable' individual must unanimously agree to the incarceration of the candidate...” No.1 continued through the technicalities. Ever since a disastrous admittance in the sixties, of someone who wanted to destroy the village a stricter set of guidelines existed.

One of the purposes of No.1 was to keep people out. Hargreaves played devil's advocate along with No.1. While Falkirk, Mycroft, Smiley and Sansky clarified the points of merit. Everything was a given, this was just a matter of the village procedures to get Pushkin admitted. Alec and James wandered off bored, leaving Falkirk to argue the case of Pushkin being entered into the village.

Just when Falkirk was about to lose his rag and issue an ultimatum, the office door burst open. Falkirk jumped up as the first old fashioned wheelchair came in. A rage bubbled up as he saw James slummed, head lolling to the side and drooling. Then Falkirk's eyes slipped to the chair behind and Alec in the exact same situation.

“They nearly entered the village.” said the medic pushing James' chair. But Falkirk didn't hear him.

Falkirk spun from looking at his unconscious alpha. The men at the conference table flinched from Falkirk's glare. Except for, No.1 who gave a strange and fascinated, “Oooo?” his eyes fixed on Falkirk, in wonder.

Mycroft ducked his head and Sansky looked away. Hargreaves tried to say something but the words died in his throat.

“Good day, gentlemen.” Falkirk said, in a tone of finality. None argued that the meeting needed to continue.

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With a grunting, stuttering snore James jerked awake. The Alpha groaned and smacked his lips a few times as he moistened his mouth. Groaning, “My head!”

“Welcome back.” Falkirk said.

James just groaned again. Slowly he realised they were in Falkirk's car, and in the outskirts of London. Alec was still out of it, lying on the seats behind the driver and Selene.

“How long?” James asked, slowly sitting up straight again and rubbing the sleep from his eyes.
“It's been over three hours since we left North Wales. I was not in the mood to fly.”

Selene covered her mouth to stop the laughter. M had not been pleased to say the least.

Arriving home Andrew was sitting forlornly on the bottom of the stairs, dressed the pyjamas covered in batman symbols. The big blue eyes, glistening. The dark red, down turned lips showing how upset he was.

“God he's worse then you.” James whispered feeling the same sense of guilt as Falkirk. Sitting either side of Andrew Falkirk nuzzled his son and gave a quick lick to his neck.

“I'm sorry, poppet. I said I would see you later and...”

“It is later.” James defended, unhelpfully. A harsh glare from Falkirk had James bowing his head.

“Okay, Little Man. We're sorry.” James said and nuzzled his son, also giving a lick of apology.

But Andrew didn't relent. His face was still sagging and unhappy. James scooped up his son to carry him upstairs. Tucking him into bed James stroked the young Omega's neck. Falkirk tried to give a part of their usual routine by reciting a poem. Both parents staying until Andrew drifted off.

Entering their room. James asked, “So is it over, Pushkin?”

“Soon, Pushkin will no longer exist, only Number Nine.” Falkirk answered hollowly. “But I will never forget, nor will I forgive. No matter what name Pushkin goes by.”

“I Know that feeling.” James said and held his omega close.

Chapter End Notes

Slight delay for next update, mid to late next week(slightly over the seven days I aim for).

Got a new fic coming out over the weekend. A seven part Spectre fic, which is the sequel to the first fic I wrote, 'To Protect My Child'. It is fully written. Proof read by 1MissMolly. So the fic will be going up pretty fast over a few days. Hope you like it.

ff_fan
Walking through E branch Alec couldn't help fidgeting slightly. Bypassing Darren, Alec knocked and immediately entered the office of M.

Falkirk looked up at his guest, becoming concerned by his old friend's agitated state. Not helped by Alec refusing a seat, opting for a parade rest stance with a bowed head and exposed neck.

“"I am a Lienz Cossack."" Alec started, Falkirk already knowing that. ""My Grand Parents were betrayed by the British. They were executed by Stalin's death squads. Before my grand parents were repatriated they managed to smuggle my parents out of Austria.”

“I am aware of your history.” Falkirk said solemnly. Not too sure what was going on. He glanced to the communal office beyond the glass wall. Very aware of the glances the office workers were sending them.

“I thought I knew him. I finally recognised the man on the pier. Karla.” Alec informed. Falkirk giving his old friend a questioning look, just waiting for the inevitable hammer to fall. ""He, Karla, came to the orphanage where I was staying. He brought a book from the library, it told of the the deaths of the Cossacks at the hands of Stalin.”

Removing a clipping from his pocket Alec placed it in front of Falkirk. ""He brought me that as well.”

Falkirk read the yellowed newspaper clipping. Reporting a car accident, bearing all the hallmarks of an assassination and cover-up. Falkirk didn't buy the simple accident resulting in the deaths of everyone involved, except for the 6 year old Alexis Trevelyan.

Another clipping was placed down, the byline detailing it was written by 'Grigori Trevelyan' Alec's father. A first hand account of two Omegas children fleeing Austria at the expense of their parents and family. Accounts of the British officers giving false assurances of safety as Cossacks were loaded onto trains to be sent to Russia. The article ended with a promise to not give up the fight until the British and Americas admitted knowing full well what they had signed up to at the Yalta Conference, where Russia demanded the return of the Russian Tsarists and Nazi ally.

Falkirk pulled off his glasses, to rub his face in frustration. He couldn't really slouch against the hard wooden chair, no matter how much Falkirk wanted to.

“"Why? Why this way? OH, SIT DOWN!”" Falkirk not liking having someone loom.

Complying, Alec took the seat. He looked into the green eyes, clear to him without the glass in front of them. But the squint meaning Falkirk couldn't focus on him in return. Alec's eyes then slipped to the stand behind M, holding the issue of 'Detective Comics #66'
Alec admitting, “I’ve got something worth too much to betray it.”

“Family. If this is the way you intend to play this... you know there will be repercussions?” When Alec nodded he understood, Falkirk asked, “Dose Daniel know?”

“I told him this morning. He didn't seem too concerned, but did insist I tell you.”

“James?” Falkirk prompted. Replacing his glasses and bringing Alec's contrite appearance back into focus.

Snorting, “I like my brains inside my skull.” Alec said trying for levity with the rather accurate assessment of James' reaction to betrayal.

“Give me one reason I shouldn't have you dumped in the deepest darkest dungeon in the country?” Falkirk demanded voice going cold and annoyed.

“I'm not going to mention it. But everyone has seen the lengths you have gone to, to prevent the creation of another Raoul Silva.”

Three potential Silvas could emerge. One immediately. One when Alec escaped. And another in years to come. A bubbling rage going from fathers to son and if Yulian became even half as good as his parents he would be monumentally dangerous. Falkirk had hoped that Yulian, Cody and Andrew would become chefs or architects, something else, rather than following in their parents’ foot steps.

“Okay. Why now?” Falkirk demanded. This time a coaster was placed on the desk for 'Neva' a high class casino. “Who's your contact?”

“Unknown.” Alec informed. “We meet at the high stakes Black Jack. Whoever challenges me, I seduce and we go to a hotel.”

“You're suspended. All security privileges, revoked. You are under full surveillance until further notice. You will be arrested if you try anything, and I mean anything. You do not take a walk to the corner shop without telling us first.”

“What about taking a walk to the corner shop, M.”

Falkirk pressing the button for Selene's office. It only took a moment for the dark haired woman to heed the summons. Falkirk ordered her, “Alec is to be taken down stairs. Tag him and organise surveillance team. Then show Alec out of the building. He is not to be left alone for a moment, lethal force is...authorised.”

Selene sent a confused look to Alec but nodded and acknowledged the orders of M.

Before they could leave Falkirk added, “Alec! The house is out of bounds too! Only Daniel will be able to remove Yulian from Keading's care.”

“What about taking a walk to the corner shop, M.”

Falkirk informed Hudson of Alec's changed security status, then warned Keading too. Before Falkirk could replace the receiver Daniel silently entered.
“James' mission will be another week at least” Daniel informed.

“You have a plan to run.” Falkirk accused.

“A bit of an old plan really. It's the one I prepared when this psychotic omega decided to shoot up E-Branch.” Daniel returned.

Falkirk didn't think Daniel would be that predictable but the point was made. When Falkirk became a threat to MI6 Daniel was willing to put the person before the organisation.

Daniel then mused, “You can not expect a person to live double, triple or more lives without courting doubtful allegiances.” Then fixed Falkirk with a hard dominant look, “Do you ever put anything before MI6? The country?”

Hissing, Falkirk broke the staring competition. Looking back down and seeing the yellow paper cuttings still on his desk. “Yes” Falkirk admitted, pulling the one reporting the death of Alec's parents closer again.

“If you were just M, Alec could have kept lying to you. Like he did his mate, and his oldest friend, for so long. The only person he has admitted his deepest, darkest secret to is his Pack Alpha. He has never been activated. Only then would we know what he would do, now Sandy has removed the option by exposing himself.”

Falkirk hit his head on the desk with a dull thump. Talking into the wooden surface, “Stop... he has been activated, that's the problem.”

Daniel's moment of stunned silence ended. “Well that explained why he told us now. Not the guilt finally getting to him. The traitor has chosen his side.” Daniel mused, for the first time sounding a little annoyed by his mate's conduct.

--

Moving through the Casino floor. Skirting the roulette tables, with people cheering or groaning, as, “Red, 12,” was called. The the bells and buzzers of the gaming machines came form all around the room.

The blond man glanced at the low stakes blackjack, poker and Baccarat. Not for a while had the rush of the mission filled him like this. He was again dressed in the tailored suit and looking suave and sophisticated. He spotted the VIP section. Alec, breezing passed the cordon as if he owned the place.

Sitting at the VIP Black Jack table. Alec put down the stack of £1000 denomination plaque like chips. Playing brashly and arrogantly Alec soon whittled his opponents down and they moved off.

In defiance of the smoking ban a tall Alpha female with a long narrow cigar sat down in a vacated place. Black hair, deep brown eyes and dressed in a very masculine trouser suit, she cut a dominant and intimidating picture. She gave Alec a challenging glare as the dealer placed the cards in front of her. Over the next few rounds it was clear she was playing against Alec as much as they were meant to be playing against the house.

Slowly she drawled in Russian, “Janus, Hello.”
“Georgian? How curious.” Alec mused in English referring to her accent. Picking up his chips Alec moved off before the dance was complete.

Before the Alpha woman could get up another person took Alec's place.

“Ms Onatopp,” Falkirk said placing a few chips down.

“Don't move, Ms Onatopp. I would so, regret, having you shot before I learn anything.” Falkirk mused absently to the woman before gazing at the dealer, “Aren't you meant to be putting cards down or something?” The dealer jumped into action and dealt the cards from the shoe.

Onatopp made to get up. Shifting onto her feet, she scanned the room. Predatory eyes of trained and concealed agents glinted out of the crowd of patrons. Grossly out numbered she kept a cool head and sat back down. Another Omega joined the table, a petite mouse brown haired woman in her mid to late twenties.

“Ms Onatopp, please meet one of my best interrogators, Alice. Her reputation is well known and well earned.” Falkirk said casually. “I do hope to find out what I want to know without that, superfluous, annoying, screaming and begging.”

A harsh Russian litany followed and just as Alice was about to translate Falkirk stopped her. “I think we can forgo the insults.”

Placing down a 10 of diamonds, 7 of clubs and a 6 of hearts Falkirk looked to the dealer. “Do I win?”

A frightened shake of the head from the dealer was interrupted by Falkirk's wrist being seized by the the alpha woman. Quicker than he could think Falkirk's arm was wrenched and pulled up behind his back until a pain shot from his shoulder joint. A hissing whimper broke free as Falkirk was spun to look into the centre of the casino floor. The Alpha's arm over his shoulder and across his chest, keeping him up and in front of the woman, as a human shield.

The dozen MI6 operatives along with a several MI5 and a few police all had their weapons trained on Onatopp. Alice who had been knocked to the floor was making space between herself and Onatopp.

Falkirk was trying to breath through the pain and his greying vision. He couldn't get enough air into his lungs and it felt like his ribcage was being crushed by the woman's deceptively strong arm. Something popped, again and Falkirk remembered what a broken rib felt like.

The look of shear determination on Alec's face Falkirk recognised. Suddenly the man was rushing out of the crowd and towards them. The pressure let up as he was released, Falkirk's legs buckled and the floor was coming up to meet him. Alec lunged right over him.

Growling sounded as Alec's flying tackle pushed Onatopp back onto the Black Jack table. The table collapsing under the weight of the two Alphas. Alec's harsh growl sounded when Onatopp managed to wrap her legs round Alec's torso and squeezed. A sound of screaming desire ripped from Onatopp as Alec grunted and tried to break free of the constricting legs.

With Falkirk out of the way and Onatopp clearly unarmed the other operatives moved in. Despite Onatopp's combat skill and deceptive brute strength, under several built Alpha males she was pried
off Alec. Growling her displeasure Onatopp was pulled out, hissing, spitting and screaming her rage.

Falkirk saw Selene's image floating in and out of his blurred vision. The edges remained grey and pulsed in time to Falkirk's heart. The broken rib preventing him from taking more than shallow breaths. His shoulder screaming in pain every time his arm moved.

--

The Alpha Doctor droned on and on. The dislocated arm Falkirk could guess and the resetting was one of the more painfully experiences of his life. The rib was fractured.

“'You'll heal ju-st, fin-e'” the doctor reassured elongating the 'just' and 'fine' as if he was speaking to a child. Most of his diagnosis had been directed to Selene.

Moving to stand, Falkirk careful of the arm in the sling. The Doctor nearly had a panic attack.

“No! You cant go anywhere.”

“Get out of my way!” Falkirk pushing beyond the throb in his body. Moving out of the door, with the doctor still talking in the background.

“You're worse than James.” Selene muttered as they walked down the corridor of he hospital.

On the car ride back to MI6. Radio London was just announcing a raid on a Casino in grater London frequented by the affluent Russian community.

In MI6's brig. Falkirk quietly entered the observation room. Smiley, Mycroft and Daniel stood, looking through the two way mirror, watching Alice conduct the interrogation of the dark haired woman strapped to the chair.

Alice was finding a vain and injected something. When the petite omega pulled off the tourniquet, Onatopp released the strangest sound Falkirk had ever heard. The black haired woman threw her head back, her body writhing and releasing a deep noise from her throat.

“Is she enjoying it?” Smiley asked, with a curious turn to his head.

“I do believe so.” Mycroft observed.

Noticing Falkirk, Perter Guillam of MI5 called everyone's attention to M's arrival.

“How did you know about the casino?” Smiley asked.

Mycroft demanded to know, “Why did you not put the Casino under surveillance?”

Alec's part had not been shared and Falkirk had no intention of telling Smiley that, or Mycroft so said, “Onatopp was our target and it was a one time only opportunity...”

Looking to Guillam, Falkirk demanded, “I take it there's nothing on the owner, employees or clientele?”

“No, nothing as of yet, M. As far as we can tell, the casino is as legitimate as any in London.”
“You were wrong.” Smiley said turning from the mirror to look at Falkirk. He continued in a rebuking tone. “General Arkady Grigorovich Ourumov had been instilled as the head of the FSB, not Karla.”

“Would a puppet by any other name be any more free.” Mycroft mused.

“Still doesn’t bring us closer to Karla” Smiley spat.

“This episode is because one of my Operatives confessed to being an agent of Karla's.” Falkirk informed. “I suspect Karla wants to know about my trip to Scotland then Wales and if it had anything to do with Pushkin. But through it all Karla's strategy is becoming clearer. Karla is a shadows man, his puppets move and how they move indicates how Karla himself is pulling the strings. I would bet, good money, he was in London to see what happened today.”

Amongst the expected demands for information and identity, which Falkirk brushed aside. Smiley demanded, “If this mole can be trusted, why did we arrest his contact? Why did Karla's mole not just report Pushkin was dead?”

“This is the way he wanted to play it.” Falkirk said and called Daniel out into the hall.

Outside of the observation room. Falkirk whispered to Daniel, “I need to speak to James before he returns. I need the full current status of the mission.”

“What's going to happen to the source?” Daniel asked indicating the closed door. Knowing Falkirk had avoided mentioning Alec.

“I am more concerned about his mate and how his child will react in the future.” Falkirk said careful of the open location of the corridor.
“Welcome to Haiti.” Selene said rousing Falkirk.

Sore, exhausted and stressed Falkirk had accepted the sedative for the flight to the Caribbean. Hours of inactivity in a chair had only worsened the pain in Falkirk's shoulder and rib. Barely able to move, Selene helped him out of his seat and into the bright light of the Caribbean sun.

The tactical team was already in place when Falkirk and Selene arrived at the rundown, almost slum houses. The building little more than concrete blocks with corrugated roves. The police, and more importantly the military cordon had been thrown up. Falkirk had to pull in favours and promise more to arrange this.

The leader of the Tactical Squad informed, “Double O Seven arrived twenty minutes ago, restrained.”

“You have a go.” Falkirk ordered.

The tactical team, all dressed in black gear moved out. They surrounded the simple concrete house. The widows were smashed and flash bang and tear gas grenades were thrown in.

Falkirk slowly walked towards the house, identical to the others of the slightly improved area near the slum shacks. By the time he walked in to the small front room, the building was secure. James was still tied to a chair, stripped to the waist. An abandoned machete stabbed into the floor between the Double O's spread legs.

“Just in time.” Falkirk mused, drawing his Mate's attention. Then with a wave of his arm to the three restrained men, “Remove them.”

Once the men in black body armour had dragged the local gangsters out. Leaving Falkirk and James alone in the room. Bare concrete decorated the walls, and only basic wooden chairs and table furnished the room.

“What about me?” James teased with forced cheer while looking over his mate's injuries.

Falkirk closed the door, making sure it was just him and James in the empty room.

“We need to talk.” Falkirk said. Letting out a hiss when his entire torso protested his attempt to move a chair.

“Come here.” James ordered planting his feet firmly on the floor, making his thighs stable and flat.
Taking the offer. Falkirk lowered himself down, sitting side on, across his mate's knees. His rib screaming as he turned to look in James' crystal blue eyes.

“I need to tell you something. Alec has been an agent of Russia since he was a child.”

“Did he?” James growled nodding to Falkirk's injuries.

“No! I ordered Alec to take me to his contact. When Alec made contact with Onatopp I was there. Alec saved me when it went bad. Onatopp...”

As Falkirk briefed James, the Double O's crystal blue eyes started to glaze over. Falkirk had become familiar with how James suppressed the emotions he couldn't deal with. As the Alpha fell back into his old habit, Falkirk couldn't tell if James would ignore, punch or shoot his old friend.

An arm came up to stroke Falkirk's back despite it being tied to the side of the chair a moment ago. “Let's go.” James ordered and the other arm came up as well. First helping his mate to stand then untying his feet James stood as well. Putting a careful arm around his Omega James led him out. Passing Selene, James gave her a quick glare for Falkirk's state before moving on.

Back on the plane Falkirk accepted the comfort his Alpha offered while his next dose of sedatives kicked in.

“Have you decided on what you're going to do?” Falkirk asked. His voice taking on a soft dreamy quality.

“Go see the bastard. Beyond that no idea.” James answered his tone hollow.

“Can you take on his mate?” Falkirk nuzzling into James shoulder.

“He's a year older than me and stuck in an office, going soft.”

“Daniel pinned that Marine who's a candidate for the Double Os.”

“When was that?” James asked but there was only a light snore in response.

James smelled the change in the Omega. The stress was leaving him and the drug induced relaxed scent was robbing James of his suppressed fury.

--

It was decided the first meeting between Alec and James would be at MI6. Guards were on standby, Falkirk made sure James had to pass Daniel for good measure. Daniel for his part posed an intimidating figure, standing over half a foot on James. A soft menacing growl sounded from the bigger alpha as James passed and entered the room.

Moving into the observation room. Falkirk and Daniel could see the interactions but not hear anything going on the other side of the glass. Daniel paced the observation room flicking glances at the men the other side of the mirror.

James lunged at Alec. Falkirk tensed. Letting out a growl, Daniel held himself where he was for the moment. As quickly as the it began it ended, James let go of Alec and walked out the room. Falkirk tried to follow but James was moving too fast for him. James stopped!
Falkirk froze. Falkirk was so thankful for the solid bulk of Daniel, his champion behind him.

James slowly turned and he was in a barely held alpha rage. “You are meant to know everything. Tell me, that you only found out now!”

Falkirk could only shake his head. “There were crossed wires, Tanner, Alec and others thought I knew more than I did, or knew about the secret Archive. Scarlett Papava was the casualty of the affair.”

“That means, M knew. All this time.”

“She recruited him.”

“When?”

“The Navy. Discrepancies were noticed when Alec tried to join. MI6 investigated Alec and found his Scholarship to Eaton was arranged by a know Russian agent. M then...”

“Alec and I have been almost one, since Eaton. Joining the Navy, SBS, MI6... WAS I PART OF M'S PLANS? You were my leash, my assurance of loyalty, was I Alec's?”

“Oh, James... #yes.” Falkirk shook his head. “Until Daniel, you were the only Alpha Alec... #cared for. He is enough of an omega to have followed you to the ends of the earth. Not even Karla understood that.”

“M did.” James whispered.

The blond disappearing round a corner, there was no hope for the injured Omega to follow. All that was left was a lingering trail of rage in the smell of his Alpha. Falkirk leaned against Daniel, suddenly feeling rather small and alone.

--

When Falkirk returned home. Andrew could smell James' scent and demanded to know where his Father was. Getting to the age where Andrew could notice things even if he didn't quite understand, especially when things happened in such a short space of time. First came the day of smelling stress and distress on his Papa's return. Then came the day when his Papa had returned injured. Now his father had not returned at all when Andrew knew he was home.

Sitting Andrew down beside him on the couch. Falkirk looked into the child's eyes as he stroked the side of his neck with his good hand.

“Uncle Alec has done something wrong and Daddy is very angry with him.” Falkirk explained as simply as possible. “When Daddy calms down he will come back home.”

“What did uncle Alec do?” came the soft whine. The big blue eyes begged with a hint of fear.

“I can't tell you what uncle Alec did.” Falkirk answered, then came a slew of other questions to which Falkirk answered simply and accurately as possible. “I don't know when daddy will be back... Yes uncle Alec is still part of the pack... Yes you will still see him, Yulian and Uncle Daniel too...”
The questions seemed endless, Falkirk answering as simply and truthfully as possible. Calling an end to the questions. “Come now! Bath! Then to bed.” Falkirk stated hoping the familiar routine would bring a sense of security to his son.

--

It was two nights after James disappeared when Falkirk was woken from his sleep. Blindly he answered and pressed the phone to his ear.

A Scots voice with an air of authority asked, “Sir Thomas?”

“Speaking?” Falkirk answered the policeman.

“This Sargent Beth, Govan police station. We arrested a 'James Bond' are you his Pack Alpha?”

Falkirk knew it, he could identify an officer a mile off now. Waking up a bit more. “Did you say Govan, as in Glasgow?”

“Yes, Sir. Mr Bond said the southerners were 'too soft'. It's quite a serious situation, sir.” Beth said emphatically.

“I'll come get him.”

“I don't think you quite understand, sir. The situation...”

“Wait! No, I'll send someone.” Falkirk said over the policeman's further protests.

“Mr Bond has...”

Interrupting the policeman again. “Let me guess, Drunk and Disorderly, ABH, GBH, Criminal Damage, Driving offences.” Falkirk said and hung up.

Dialling a number Falkirk waited until the person answered. “I've decided on your punishment. You are to regain James' trust. You can start with getting him from Govan Police Station.” Falkirk ordered.

“Yes, M.” Alec responded. Falkirk able to hear Daniel grumbling in the back ground about being woken.

--

Six nights since James had gone, and the third after Falkirk had dispatched Alec. A beeping woke Falkirk in the early hours. Looking at the control panel by the bedroom door. The small screen flashing a security code, meaning someone was tampering with the lock on the front door. Falkirk was up and armed, meeting Hudson on their way down stairs.

Falkirk stayed on the landing. Suspecting what was happening. He watched Hudson look at the intercom screen in the foyer, then the older Alpha's shoulders slumped and he put the gun away. Falkirk came down the stairs in time to see the butler pull the door open and two men stumble forward and crash to the tiled floor.
Both James and Alec, drunk as skunks had passed out the moment they were horizontal. James’ face looking like he had been through a mincer, face swollen, discoloured and with crusted scabs. Alec in similar condition, his bruises only fresher and still with red running down his face from where he bled slightly.

Letting them sleeping it off, Falkirk instructed, “Oh, just leave them.”

Helping the butler they moved the two men's legs so the door could be closed, but they were otherwise left. The only other thing Falkirk did before going back to bed, was to cast one of his nesting blankets over the heaped pair.

He had gotten to sleep, sort of. It was a place where Falkirk knew he was asleep and even aware of the world but not up to controlling the images playing in his mind or interacting with the world. That was until.

“Papa! Papa! Daddy and Uncle Alec are down stairs.”

Seeing it was still early Falkirk lifted the covers for Andrew to crawl in. “Daddy's just drunk. Let them sleep it off.”

“On the floor?”

“Yes. Now you go to sleep.” Falkirk said pulling Andrew close as possible.

At breakfast Andrew kept stealing glances at the two men still sleeping in front of the door. “Eat” Falkirk ordered drawing his son's attention back to his plate.

Inspecting Andrew in his school uniform of black toruses, white shirt, maroon and yellow school tie with a blazer of maroon and yellow piping. Falkirk nodded his approval before Hudson pulled the door open for the arrived Keading and Selene. Keading carried Colum. Yulian charged in and stopped dead in his tracks.

“Papa?” Yulian called looking at the still unconscious form of his mother.

With an all knowing, “He's drunk.” Andrew told his cousin.

“What's drunk?” Yulian asked looking between the adults.

“A very silly state to get into.” Falkirk informed.

“Could you drag them into the library?” Falkirk asked Hudson and Selene. The two alphas grasped a leg each and unceremoniously dragged the two men across the floor and into the library.

Andrew moved to James and flopped down on his back nuzzling the area between the Alpha's shoulder blades. “Be back soon, daddy.” he informed and stood. A vague mumble emerged from James and he fell silent again.

Yulian looked at his Papa then to Keading. “See Ducks?” he asked with pleading eyes.

“Yes we can go see the ducks.” Keading reassured

Andrew piped up, “I wanna see the ducks!” Keading sending him a look and Andrew amending,
“Please may I go see the ducks, please.”

“School!” Falkirk ordered and got a pout from his son in response. Taking his son's hand Falkirk led him out to the car, accepting the school bag and briefcase from Hudson as he passed.

Cody was waiting patiently in the car for Selene and Falkirk. Reading a book on the life cycle of ladybugs. He was becoming like Sherlock and Mycroft, with an insatiable thirst for facts. Like Sherlock he was developing anti social mannerisms, disliking to associate with other children. Only really interacting with members of his pack.

“We were bug hunting.” Selene said with an affectionate smile.

“I was looking for #specimens. London, however, has a less then average population of Coccinellidae.” Cody absently informed not looking up.

“They look pretty.” Andrew said bowing his head to see the picture on the cover.

Cody's look of contempt was straight out of Mycroft's book of expressions. “They are not pretty. They are a key element in the control of the Aphid population. The impact of the decline of Coccinellidae could have repercussions not yet predicted” The pretentiousness was also out of Mycroft's book.

“Your argument has not disputed the observational, aesthetic, appeal of the Ladybug.” Falkirk challenged, envisioning challenges ahead in Cody's development.

“That means they are pretty.” Falkirk said to Andrew with a smile.

Falkirk's car pulled into the side, when the all the cars of the school run caused a traffic jam. Falkirk opened the door. Falkirk taking Andrew's hand again while Cody refused Selene's as they walked towards the school. Dropping Cody off at the main gate they then went to the side gate where the younger classes entered.

The young Beta woman smiled at Andrew as she said, “Hello!”

Andrew returned the smile with a charming one of his own, to the teaching assistant monitoring the gate and entered. Tuning he waved to Falkirk and Selene before getting lost in the crowd of students running around screaming and shouting.

“He's going to be a heart breaker.” Selene mused.

“He dose seem to have inherited James' smile.” Falkirk responded. He watched Andrew and a few omegas group together. And how Andrew sent a bigger, probably Alpha boy packing when he charged up to the group of omegas.

Falkirk musing, more to himself than Selene at his side. “He seems to be settling in.”

--

Sitting at the dining table. James and Alec barely touched their food. Daniel and Falkirk spoke while Andrew seamed fascinated by the bruises smattering the Alphas. Excited, Andrew and Yulian revelled in James' and Alec's edited description of the fights starting in London then Liverpool, Manchester and up to somewhere near Glasgow.
After dinner, Daniel hefted Alec's weight. Slinging the smaller man over a shoulder. Yulian following his dads to the big Bentley. Falkirk pulled Andrew from the door after waving the family goodbye. Falkirk then looked to James, who like Alec had fallen asleep at the table.

Falkirk took Andrew upstairs for his bath and got him ready for bed. Tucking Andrew in Falkirk read to him for a while before switching off the light.

James had managed to move, under his own power. The Alpha was lying face down on the bed, still dressed when Falkirk entered their room.

“You're not as young as you used to be. You can't throw off these hangovers as you once did.” Falkirk admonished lightly. A pained mumble was Falkirk's answer.

With monumental effort James turned his head to the side. “I thought you would be more pissed.”

Lying down in the bed Falkirk placed a kiss on James' temple. “I am but I'll wait until you can fully appreciate my wrath.” Falkirk said sliding down and switching off the lamp.

A soft snoring started from James almost immediately.

--

Reading over Alice's report, the brown haired woman sitting across from him. Tanner was listening too. Alice's eastern European accent made her voice a little flat as she spoke.

“I believe the subject has deep and extreme masochist and Sadomasochist tendencies, particularly around asphyxiation. When being water-boarded, I think she orgasmed. Reaching the limits of what I could legally do, Xenia Onatopp, was physically aroused throughout the interrogation. No useful intelligence was gained.”

Closing the report, Falkirk leaned back in the chair. Possibilities were running through his head, like trading Onatopp, or trying to use her to trap Karla. All ideas ended in a metaphorical brick wall.

“I think prison for the time being, for Ms Onatopp. Held under the special measures act, no trial, no lawyers, no contact, the whole nine yards for a spy.” Falkirk ordered.

Tanner acknowledged the order. Falkirk saw the fall of brown hair, covering the down cast dark brown eyes. “Is there something else, Alice?”

The head if possible dropped lower. The petite omega whispering, “Anwar Kharral.”

“Who?”

“The Alpha in interrogation when you came to see me. The one letting known terrorists into the country.” Alice reminded before admitting. “I have been talking with his MI6 handler. Kharral's cover wasn't good enough when he infiltrated the Kamar group. They knew he was leaking information. When MI5 and MI6 discovered Kharral's information was worthless they burned him.”

He couldn't help it. Falkirk let out a chuckle. “A torturer with a sense of compassion.” Falkirk
mused shaking his head. “I'll see what I can do for him.”

Falkirk then dismissed the omega and turned his attention to Tanner. Finalising the ordered to transfer Onatopp to an appropriate prison, under espionage legislation so they could keep her there indefinitely. Then ordering, “Find out what's happening with this Kharral. And this Handler Alice was talking to.”

A small snorting laugh emerged from the Beta. “The last time I was given a similar order by M, the person she was referring to became M.”

“How get to it.” Falkirk snapped in good humour. “M, a trained torture, now that's a scary idea.”

--

Alec and James sat in front of Falkirk. Standing behind Falkirk one side was Daniel, the other was Tanner. On Falkirk's desk sat three open folders. The first was James' litany of charges from his cross country rampage as he made his way north. The second was James contribution to the next set of assaults and criminal damages on the route back down. The third was Alec's list as he brought James back.

“Every pub on the way up! And every pub again, on the way down! Compensation! Bribery! And threats! Just to keep you two out of prison!” Falkirk snapped in sharp sentences. Getting twin sets of unrepentant smirks as answer.

“James, you are on secondment to the class room. Field Ethics!” Falkirk ordered. The prospect of shear boredom with military hardened psyches causing the Alpha to growl.

Looking to Alec Falkirk gave a malicious smile. “Satellite E, I think.” Falkirk informed. Satellite E being the Edinburgh office of MI6 with a staff of five including the cleaner and now Alec.

“How long?” both demanded of their servitude.

“Until such time as need forces you back.” Falkirk answered.

Daniel musing, “I'll tell Gran to open up the Edinburgh house. I'm sure she'll want to see to it personally.” Alec swearing under his breath and James chuckling at his friend's plight with the in-laws.

--

Not viewing himself as having done something wrong James shunned his Omega in the hopes Falkirk would show his belly. In the evening James lavished attention on his son all but ignoring his mate.

James' plan failed when his Alpha biology betrayed him. In the early hours of the morning of the third day of James shunning his mate. Before he had even woken, James rutted against the pliant body he was curled around. With a final deep satisfying thrust the Alpha came, his knot tying him the his Omega.

“I knew you couldn't keep up the cold shoulder.” Falkirk mumbled barely awake as well. The instinctual drive and years of practice meant the Alpha and Omega could literally wake up tied. Sometimes their mutual orgasm not even enough to wake them fully. A soft contented growl
sounded in response.
In his office. Falkirk was sitting with his fingers steepled, while glaring the MI5 and MI6 personnel, who coordinated the surveillance, infiltration and ultimately destruction of Muslim extremist cells.

A weak chinned beta with long face and designer, little round glasses. Drawled in snobbish tones, “Anwar Kharral's placement let us get gain access to the Kamar group of extremists.”

“Has he been burned?” M demanded. The two betas flicked their eyes from Falkirk unwilling to admit what they had done. “HOWEVER UNWILLING! Anwar Kharral agreed to help us and you have abandon him!”

Smiley turned to look out the window. Absently cleaning his glasses. Letting the two Analysts face the music for their conduct.

Falkirk looked to the MI5 Analyst. “You are beyond my reach.” Falkirk's head swung to the MI6 Analyst, who fidgeted with his tiny glasses. “You, however, will never authorise so much as the purchase of an office birthday card from now on.”

Falkirk then looked between the two. “As of now, I am taking personal command of this situation. Dismissed!”

The two analysts ran from the room, like the privileged little twats of academics they were. With little to no grasp on the dirty reality.

Falkirk then looked to Tanner and Smiley. To Tanner he ordered, “Make arrangements. I'm going to Afghanistan and I'm bringing Anwar Kharral back.”

Smiley said, “It's the way the game is played. People are sacrificed, for the greater good.”

“I have never played that game, Control. And I never intend to.” Falkirk snapped, he then dismissed Tanner and Smiley both. The line a lie, but he did try to live up to that concept.

--

Falkirk announced at the dinner table that evening. “I have to go to Pakistan.”

“When do we go?” James said

“I go, Selene goes, at six a.m. tomorrow. You, James, have a class to teach and keep Keading company. He'll be staying here tomorrow night... And growling will make no difference, Double O Seven. You're staying!”

It was a bit disappointing that Andrew was barely concerned with his Papa's departure the next morning. As long as the boy had his Alpha the young Omega felt safe. Falkirk just getting a quick kiss and a, “byebye, papa!”

At the airport. Alice, the cause of the excursion was waiting with a Beta Male acting as her personal bodyguard. A plane ride, followed by hours in a convoy to a training camp in the
uncertain area where Pakistan met Afghanistan.

Pulling to a stop, Falkirk exited the banged up Jeep. The mercenary group who operated in the country was waiting for them along with an MI6 tactical squad of a half dozen men.

One of the regional mercenaries handed Falkirk a set of binoculars and pointed to the base of a mountain. With the binoculars the small village blending seamlessly into the surrounding terrain could be seen.

Falkirk watched the groups of men running circuits while another groups sat in the open listening to a heavy robed man speak. Women dressed in black tended communal cooking pots and looked after young children.

“We wait until dark.” the commander of the mercenary group informed.

The light moved from the morning to the afternoon when one of the mercenaries called, “Something’s happening.”

Hunkering down Falkirk lifted the binoculars to his eyes. A man with a camera was jumping into the back up a pick-up along with a few others. Another man with a hood over his head was bundled in as well.

“We need to ambush them!” Falkirk ordered.

The mercenaries and MI6 personnel packed up and started to move out. As Falkirk pulled out his gun and made sure it was ready, a South African voice teased, “What dose he intend to do with that?”

There were more comments and laughs from the mercenaries. Falkirk screwed on a silencer and fired, aiming from the corner of his eye without looking directly at his target.

In the ensuing silence, the only sound was the trickle of water leaking out of the South African Mercenary's canteen. This time it was the MI6 personnel that laughed, others commenting on M's legendary aim. The Merc, lifted the canteen from where it hung on his pack. The last of the water trickled from it. The Merc lifted the canteen up to the light, to see the bullet hole going right through it.

“Okay, the bitch can shoot.” the Merc reluctantly admitted.

Down in the valley floor. A couple of the mercenaries covered the stinger, in the loose sandy road, also covered their tracks. The others were hidden behind the rocks, waiting for the pick-up to come. Luckily the vehicle trail to the village was single and well used.

The rough sound of a barely maintained engine echoed off the rocky walls as the pick-up rattled towards the ambush. Driving over the concealed singer that pierced the tyres, quickly making the pick-up unmovable. Jumping off the pick-up a terrorist looked to see what was wrong with the tyres. The mercenaries moved in. The fight was brief and brutal. Falkirk kept his head down along with Alice.

“Clear!” an American Mercenary's voice called.

Falkirk stepped out. Heading round the rocks and passed the Al-Qaeda corpses. Alice following
Falkirk. One of the mercenaries pulled the hooded figure to sit up, and ripped off the hood covering Kharral's head. The bound and gagged Alpha needed time for his eyes to adjust to the light then looked between the two Omegas who threatened the most horrible future.

“Mr Kharral?” Falkirk greeted.

“Hello.” Alice added.

Kharral seamed younger than Falkirk remembered or perhaps it was his frightened and wary state. Piling the rescued Alpha into one of the jeeps Falkirk left the mercenary group to tidy up the scene while the MI6 team made for the private airfield as fast as possible.

“What happens now?” Kharral demanded as the drove.

“That is purely up to you, Mr Kharral.” Falkirk said then nodded to Alice “If it wasn't for her I would have left you to become a YouTube video.”

Turning to look out the window Kharral watched the country speed by. Falkirk watched the man think, truly wishing he knew what was going through Kharral's head.

“You did as we asked, Mr Kharral. We are willing to give you protection, a whole new life in fact. There will be a price to pay. I price your family is already paying. But there is opportunity.”

--

Arriving back at London. Kharral came to a sudden stop as they stepped off the private jet. On the tarmac, standing beside Tanner was an older man of Pakistani decent. Hair thinning and white, he was clean shaven and impeccably dressed.

Falkirk whispered to the man he had just rescued, “I did have a word with your Father before I left. He and the rest of your family have already been relocated.”

Approaching the man who had been a family doctor, until a month ago “Dr. Kharral.” Falkirk greeted.

“Sir Thomas.” the older man returned respectfully.

“We have to get your son checked out and cleaned up then you can have a private talk.”

--

Falkirk sat in a reception room of MI6 with Anwar Kharral's father. Pouring a cup of tea from Falkirk's best silver teapot into one of the bone china cups. Falkirk was casually talking about the procedures Anwar would be going through. The medical check up, then a debriefing followed by an opportunity to bathe. Coming to an end of the explanation Falkirk offered a plate of dainty cucumber sandwiches.

“How's Inverness?” Falkirk asked, feigning uncertainty of the location the family.

It was all an act. Falkirk was laying on thick, the civility, to give Mr Kharral the impression the angry defiant son he had ordered out of his home had done something good.
“I always feared he would be on the news, in one of those videos. Killing or being killed. I just want my son back” Dr. Kharral admitted.

“When we found him Anwar was working for immigration service. He had been waving through some very dangerous people. I must admit we frightened him, a lot, to get him to work with us.” Falkirk said before hardening his stare on the older Alpha. “But I look after those who work for me even if they are doing so unwillingly”

“So my son has not learned?” Mr Kharral demanded.

“That is yet to be seen. But his friends were about to remove his head so I don't think he sympathises with them as he once did.”

“Or he could be angry at you for forcing him to betray his friends.” A brief argument broke out as old wounds resurface between Dr Kharral and his son.

“Whether he knows it or not Anwar still needs guidance. I believe only his family and pack can give it to him.” Falkirk implored. A knock sounded and Alice led Anwar into the room.

“When you're ready we'll be outside.” Falkirk informed, standing. Leaving parent and child, Falkirk and Alice moved out and into an adjoining room.

Tanner was sitting watching the CCTV feed showing Anwar and his Father were just looking at each other. Falkirk and Alice joined him. “Expertly done, M.”

“Thank you, Tanner. Have they spoken yet?”

“They said hello. Nothing since.”

Nothing much happened. A little stiff conversation about the family and pack, a bit bitter from the Father for having to abandon the life he had spent decades building.

With a sense of hope Falkirk left the Father and son to start the long road to work out their differences. Picking up Anwar Kharral's debriefing Falkirk started to read the raw report as he walked back to E branch. Alice would continue to monitor Anwar and Dr. Kharral and there would be continued support when they returned to their new life.

--

The sound of a ringing phone woke Falkirk. For the first time in a while it wasn't his. James who was currently Falkirk’s pillow jostled the Omega in his effort to retrieve the screeching device.

“This had better be bloody important.” James spat as he came to rest again. Falkirk thought he could hear Alec's muffled voice through the earpiece. A vibration passed through James' chest as he said, “Serves you right” and the vibration got a bit stronger with the suppressed laughter.

“Grand mother in law has paid a royal visit.” James informed the nest of dark hair splayed across his chest. Falkirk murmured in a acknowledgement but otherwise remained unmoving.

“Your funeral.” James said into the phone.

The hair covering Falkirk's ear was reverentially pulled back and the mobile was gently laid to rest
over it.

“Get me out of here.” Alec all but begged.

“Why?” Falkirk mumbled, not really listening to the answer. Alec's deep voice was rather nice to listen to and it was sending Falkirk back to sleep.

“That's nice.” Falkirk said not really sure the phrase was applicable.

Gently plucking the phone from the side of his mate's head James retuned it to his own ear. “He's asleep.” James informed.

“Come on James. You have to convince him to let me come back. It's so boring. Mary has been here every second, 'Can't leave you alone in a strange city.' If I have to listen to one more story from Mary about Mrs La-De-Da or Lady What's-her-name I'm going to snap. And the idiots at Satellite E... God! Nothing happens here, nothing will ever happen here.”

“If it makes you feel any better. Undoing military indoctrination isn't as fun as it sounds.” James added.
“No! No! No!” James shouted.

He cast his eyes over the room, the nearly two dozen intakes sitting at the desks, gazing at him with all the self awareness of a brain-dead cows.

Worse, was the one sitting at the back of the class. The one with laughing green eyes looking at him from behind heavy frames. M enjoying James' punishment far too much.

A wicked idea came to James, to get his point across. He went to the door at the side. Looking out into the hall, he found what he hoped to. “Selene, may I borrow a gun.”

The dark haired woman arched an eyebrow, but opened her jacket showing one of the holsters she wore. She pulled out the gun and handed it to James. Taking the gun, this time Selene stepped into the class with James.

James stood in front of the class. Checking over the weapon.

“Modified Beretta 92FS, with a compensator to increase stability when fired in full-auto mode. The preferred side-arm of the ex-Double O Two, and current bodyguard to our illustrious M.” James said and indicated Falkirk at the back of the room.

James aimed at the computer in the corner of the room. With a bang the monitor shattered. While everyone's ears were still ringing from the shot. James aimed at the nearest recruit, the gun squarey pointed at the man's forehead. “What is stopping me from killing you?”

“The rules of engagement. I am unarmed and not a threat.” the ex-army officer said, controlling his fear as he met James' eyes squarely. Calling on a point of law which he did not realise no longer applied to some.

“WRONG!” James roared.

“You!” James pointed at a younger beta male. “You were SCO19, the police's armed response unit. Under what conditions can you fire?”

The dark haired beta jumped, but focused to answer. “When I can see a firearm and have reasonable suspicion the target has an intent to use it.”

“As a Double O, I am not bound by that, or the rules of engagement. All that stops me pulling a trigger is what's in here.” James said taping his head.

“I could shoot every one of you. The worst that could happen is my Licence to kill is revoked and I'm fired. I'd never, COULD NEVER be prosecuted.” James said. Then pointed to M at the back of the room, “But the more likely thing, M might deem to bitch at me and sentence me to more of these moronic classes! A Licence To Kill is not just some different regulation or guidance it is absolute freedom of judgement...”

Falkirk smiled. When they gave nine people free rein to kill, MI6 had to be careful of who could
become a Double O. They needed to know there wasn't something deeply buried, that would allow one of these recruits to walk into a school or church and start shooting, knowing their actions could never be prosecuted.

While James was still trying to get the class to understand the differences from their previous postings, and what would be needed of them in MI6. A tap came from the door and Tanner stepped in. Suspecting it was for him, Falkirk stood to come down the aisle of desks. Stopping he held out his hand and James duly placed Selene’s gun on it. Falkirk returned the weapon to Selene.

Before leaving Falkirk looked at the class, “Double O Seven is not quite right in my opinion. There have been others. Edward Doone is the one I will tell you about. He got within a hair's breadth of becoming a Double O. When it became obvious he was a clinical psychopath, only interested in his own greatness. I had a charge implanted in his neck. The second Doone escaped us, I ordered his execution. Here, if you betray us, or even if you act in a way unbecoming to MI6. It is true you will not see a trial. Nor will you not see a new dawn. That, I promise.”

Falkirk saw the way his cold voice affected the recruits. They were glancing away from him, unable to meet his eyes. Falkirk exited the class to meet his brother waiting in the hall.

Mycroft looked a bit bemused by the classroom antics. He then mused, “Would you care for afternoon tea? I know this wonderful little, village.”

Falkirk shook his head. His brother never quite realised others could figure out what he was talking about when he was trying to be cryptic.

--

Returning with Mycroft and Peter Guillam to 'The Village'. They were met by Admiral Hargreaves and No.1.

The Beta with the odd staring eyes greeted them pleasantly enough. No.1 looking between Guillam, Mycroft but his gaze lingering on Falkirk. He said, “Number Nine, has adapted well the conditioning. He is now ready for visitors. Have you decide who is going in?”

“I am.” Falkirk answered. He still had the fleeting thought of fulfilling the last request of the lost Double O but Falkirk marshalled his raging emotion.

“Oh good.” No.1 said pleasantly, holding out his arm to a changing room. “While you are in the village you will be referred to as Number Two. Make no reference to accessing the outside world....”

While in the cubical. Falkirk heard No.1 give a whole list of dos and don'ts, as he inspected the supplied clothing. Then changing into black trousers, a forest green turtle neck, black blazer trimmed in the same forest green. When dressed, Falkirk came out of the changing room.

“Oh, yes.” No.1 said looking Falkirk over. Then handing the guest a badge with the Penny Farthing emblem and a ‘2’ on it. No.1 nodded his approval as Falkirk pinned it on.

When Falkirk was handed an umbrella and a long stripy scarf. No.1 informed, “These are the symbols of Number Two. All residents are conditioned to show respect to them. And I’m sorry to say...” No.1 handed over a pare of horn-rimmed glasses. “I assure you, Number Two. You will be safer in the village, than you would the halls of MI6.”
Falkirk replaced his glasses, with the camera and HUD in them with the ones supplied. “I hope you are right, Number One. You could have problems otherwise.”

“Of that, I am aware, Number Two.” The odd beta then guided Falkirk down and into a tunnel.

Sitting on a small monorail car, that ran along a low and very long tunnel. No.1 continued to brief Falkirk on his conduct with in The Village. As they got closer No.1 placed a badge on his left lapel proclaiming him ‘56’.

“I should warn you, Number Two. Number Six, he deliberately provoked the powers that be. Got himself thrown in. Then attempted to bring down The Village from the inside. It was thought he would make a good Number One but there was a complete degradation of the psyche, no longer remembers anything of what he once was and has developed a persecution mentality. All guests are Number Two but he thinks every Number Two is here in an attempt to break him. If he approaches you, ask him why he resigned then let him act defiant and storm off. If you feel up to it, make your interaction interesting, he will enjoy that.”

Coming to the end of the track, Falkirk stepped off the small open top carriage. A very short Alpha walked up. Dressed in butler's livery.

No.1 indicated the short man, “Number Two, this is The Butler, he will see to your needs while in the village. My entrance is that way. Do come for tea, it's the blue and white rondavel”

Falkirk watched No.1 vanish down a connecting tunnel. He then followed The Butler into different tunnel, that ended in circular room with an egg shaped chair in the centre. Following The Butler's instructions Falkirk sat in the awkward chair and The Butler walked to a console and flipped a switch.

The plinth the chair stood on started to raise and rotate around, slowly. Falkirk, coming up through a trap door in the centre of a circular console. The walls of the brightly lit room he emerged in were lined with monitors showing the CCTV feeds of The Village.

The chair came to a stop and Falkirk was looking down on a man now known as No.9. The old alpha with wispy hair and beard stood nervously.

“Number Two?” No.9 greeted curiously as if he was seeing Falkirk for the first time. His eyes squinting slightly but relaxed as if dismissing the sense he should recognise the man in the chair.

“Number Nine.” Falkirk returned and using the umbrella for leverage pulled himself out of the cocooning chair. Flicking the long scarf back over his shoulder and out of the way.

“How have you settled in with us?” Falkirk asked remembering No.1’s advice to speak as if he lived in the village and the house around them. Coming from around the desk Falkirk walked up to No.9 as he listened to the response.

“I have settled in well, Number Two. A wonderful library. I like my books. Ancient Egypt has always been a passion.”

“Good, good. It's such a lovely day lets walk.”

They came out of the house with large green copper dome for a roof. Lots of people moving about,
Falkirk quite liking the bright fashion and the small capes a few wore. Trying to convey familiarity with a place he had never been before was fairly difficult, no matter how much Falkirk had read over the Village map. The sun was bright but the changing air child the exposed skin as Falkirk walked.

“Do you know my name?” Falkirk asked as they walked the narrow, hilly street, down.

“You are Number Two.”

“M of MI6, what is his name?”

“Many names, M has. Officially he uses the name Thomas McLair. Intelligence and surveillance teams report, close family use 'Falkirk'. A nickname believed to have been given by the Duke of Rothsea, we do not get the relevance. It is the name of a Scottish town, but neither Daniel Carrington or M have a link to the town. M has shown a long and strange affiliation with the Holmes brothers, so there is suspicion he is one of the illegitimate children of Siger or Violet Holmes. We know he is bound to James Bond, with whom he has a son. But there is no official record of James Bond having a bound omega.”

“Thank you, that is sufficient.” Falkirk said. His cover holding better then he imagined after all this time.

Falkirk stopped. They were in a central village gardens, beside a low pond and with a small band stand at one end.

“Describe M, if you please.” Falkirk asked. Pushkin answering with an accurate description of M. Falkirk then asked, “Please describe, Number Two's appearance.” Falkirk was then given identical description to the one Pushkin gave for M.

Making sure he was standing directly in front of Pushkin. “Number Nine. Do you see anyone anyone who could fit M's description?”

Pushkin looked around himself. Every time, Falkirk watched Pushkin's brown eyes slide over him, dismissing him as a candidate.

“No, Number Two. I see no one who could match the description of M.”

Falkirk moved on. Sure that in Pushkin's mind, No2 and M were not the same person. No.9 following him. As Falkirk and No.9 passed a small cottage. A deep drawling voice purred, “Hello?”

The voice belonged to a tall Alpha sitting at a metal bistro table. The man sipping a tall drink with plenty of ice. The cream clothes clashed horribly with the orange tan and the bottle bronze hair.

“Number Eighteen.” Falkirk greeted with a condescending half smile.

“So nice to see someone, so youthful about.” the ex-Double O Seven drawled with a leer that made Falkirk's skin crawl. The seventy, nearly eighty year old rattled the glass, “May I invite you in for an aperitif?”

“Number Eighteen your conduct is wholly inappropriate.”
In typical fashion, the hallmark of a Double O on the prowl the old alpha purred, “I'm sure I can earn your forgiveness.”

“No you may not.” Falkirk dismissed and walked off.

Seeing a small, round, house with No.1 pottering about the garden. Falkirk thanked No.9 for his time and they separated. Falkirk then turned to the small house and started walking towards it.

A crescent shaped garden surrounded the rondavel, edged with a low wall. With the bald man pottering about the garden. Falkirk mused, “It's always sad to see the the shrubs loosing their lustre.”

“Quite, but we must remember they will return to full bloom in a few months. Tea?” No.1 said and moved through the stable door without Falkirk even answering.

Falkirk looked around the garden. An inordinate amount of Bird feeders, tables and houses littered the small area. A small notebook lay open on the table, with a highly detailed sketch of a starling done in coloured pencil. Notations on plumage and a precise record of visits accompanied the drawing.

“What do you like Clarice? Get it, Clarice?” No.1 said with a small chuckle. Placing the tray down. “No Earl Grey I'm afraid”

“Quite alright.” Falkirk reassured before indicating the notebook. “Do you mind?” Getting permission from No.1, Falkirk started flicking through the pages. There were years worth of records.

“We get plenty of Seagulls but I prefer the little ones that dart about.” No.1 said using his hand to imitate a bird darting from perch to perch. Handing Falkirk the cup No.1 held up the small jug of milk which Falkirk politely declining.

“I can not bare tea without milk.” No.1 said before noticing what page Falkirk was looking at. “That little fellow was rather vicious. He hasn't been back for the past two seasons.” No.1 showing disappointment and sorrow for the loss of the small bird. Falkirk mentioned the only fact he knew about robins, something about how territorial they were.

After sitting and enjoying the tea for a few moments. Just watching the villagers passing by, going to and from the shop, or the library, or other other activity. Apart to being oblivious to being in a prison, it was like any other picturesque village.

“Hoping not to cause offence.” Falkirk said to the beta beside him. “If I were to use the analogy of 'The lunatics running the asylum.' how accurate would it be?”

Giving his usual pleasant smile. “Quite accurate. Number Two. I would have thought you would know me, it is in your reputation to be oracular?”

“Lovely tea, Number One. An unusual blend.” Falkirk observed and moving on to a safer subject.

“Look sharp.” No.1 whispered, nodding to the old man hobbling up to the house, leaning heavily on a stick.

What would have once been a tall striking Alpha now walked hunched over. His hair, wiry and
wild, the eyes still sharp and fixed on Falkirk. The educated and cultured voice gravelled but still precise.

“I have a name, I am not a number!” No.6 stated.

Falkirk had seen the man's file, he knew the man's name and that he had proposed the idea of the Village. Then had regrets, trying to destroy it. Doubts then built up when No.6 couldn't be sure if it was the British Village or one of the similar ones run by the Russians or other countries, or even one of the dangerous organisations that were around in the 60s.

“Oh really, what is your name?” Falkirk asked innocently. The look of No.6's suspicion was instantaneous.

“Not the usual tact, are you not going to ask why I resigned?”

“You assume I do not know.” Falkirk stated in a dismissive tone and casually asked, “By any chance is there enough for another cup, Number fifty-six?” And pushed his cup closer to the bald beta.

“I will not tell you!” No.6 stated.

“Come now, Number Six, lets all have a nice cup of tea.” No.1, said. Pouring Falkirk's second cup.

“I do not want tea, and certainly not with him.” No.6 said in severe tones and banging his walking stick on the ground.

No.1 had been right. No one in he Village looked past Falkirk's scarf, umbrella or numbered badge, even his Sex and gender were all but ignored.

For the first time someone looked passed the trappings of Number Two to the person beneath. No.6's eyes studying Falkirk, from the dark wild hair to his glasses and even taking a scenting. “I will not be pushed, controlled or manipulated. Even by a boi like you.”

“Oh?” Falkirk said, meeting the man's eyes with a calculating gaze of his own. “But have you not already crossed the entire village, just to find little old me? How long have you been walking? How many have you asked, where I am? Did Number Eighteen tell you of my appeal, or my youth?”

Falkirk dropped the sharper tone of his voice, making it a little sultry and breathy. “Do you wish to tell me something, Number Six?”

The mere hint that he had already been manipulated irked No.6 terribly. With a condensing glare No.6 turned as fast as his age allowed and walked off.

“Be seeing you.” Falkirk called giving a salute. No.6 glancing back, his eyes scanning Falkirk once more before the old man turned the corner and vanished from view.

“I do think he enjoyed that.” No.1 absently mused.

“Freedom frightens him?” Falkirk asked getting a resigned nod in answer.

“Still likes to fight the system though. He dose so like to harass the Number Twos who visit. He gets a little lonely when he hears a new Number Two has come and gone without seeing him.”
Finishing his tea. “Thank you for your hospitality.” Falkirk said, with a gracious smile.

“Oh you must come back. Six and Nine would like to see you again.” No.1 responded.

“I would also enjoy another cup of tea and would hope to see some of those diligently depicted birds.” Falkirk said before giving his final goodbyes.

Returning the the largest house in the centre of the village. The one with the green copper domed roof. A whooshing motor opened the front door. The Butler showed Falkirk back into the central office. Sitting in the egg shaped chair Falkirk used the umbrella to press the descend button. The black cocooning chair started to turn and drop below the floor of the office and the house itself. The images of the Village playing on the walls blinked off, sending the room into darkness.
Got a question about the Village in the last chapter. It's from an old series 'The Prisoner', I've added that to the fandom list as it will be making a couple more appearances throughout Falkirk's time. No.6/The Prisoner(Patrick McGoohan) worked for the government and was imprisoned when he resigned from his job. The show was so strange it has led to lots of speculation and theories about it. Portmeirion, the filming location helped with the surreal nature of the show with its strange architecture.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portmeirion

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Prisoner

There was a remake. Despite Ian McKellen and Jamie Campbell Bower I couldn't get into it and prefer the original.

"Turkish delight." James purred holding out the pink ice cream, with small jelly bits through it.

Thanking the Alpha, Falkirk gave the ice cream a long lick. The sound of children and birds almost enough to cover the noise of London. He smiled, even amongst the high pitched talking and squeals, he could hear Andrew.

Opening his eyes, Falkirk watched James running the gauntlet into the play park. The Double O jumping and twisting to avoid the children running about without looking where they were going. James lifted Andrew, giving the boy his cone and bringing him back to the bench to eat it.

While they sat, Falkirk noticed the poke James gave to Andrew. The boy sending a confused frown to his dad, then remembering something with a jump. Falkirk was then the focus of the big blue eyes, gazing up at him in their full manipulative glory.

"Papa, when is Uncle Alec coming back?"

Falkirk shook his head.

"I'm sure uncle Alec is very sorry." Andrew prompted. Screwing up his face to remember the line.

"Oh, soon, Poppet." Falkirk said. Hugging his son he whispered. "A lost sooner if Daddy stops sending forth his little minion to fight his battles."

"What's a minon?"

"Min-i-on," Falkirk enunciated. "It means his little helper."

"Me?" Andrew asked with a wide smile and face covered in pink ice cream.
Falkirk glanced at the alpha who innocently studied the blue sky. “I deny everything!” James whispered.

"Yes, you Poppet. Why don't you go play." Falkirk said and helped Andrew down and pushed him towards the play ground.

Falkirk slid over, sitting flush against the Alpha. "Your choice of operative has much to be desired, Double O Seven."

James gave a shrug. "Well it's just his first mission. Can't expect much, yet."

"You sent him in un-briefed. He needed oversight and prompt. And worse, Andrew didn't know he needed to deny his mission parameters. But what is unforgivable, Double... O... Seven..." Falkirk emphasising his point by poking the soft bit at the Alpha's side. "You burned your own son! How could you?"

James poked back, Falkirk flinching and giving a surprised yelp.

"I could burn him, because I know all the softest spots on M." James finding the ticklish spot and wriggling his fingers over it.

Amongst his squirming and giggles, Falkirk squealed. "I give in."

"Ha!" James grunted in victory and pulled his mate close. "None prevail against thee James Bond."

"Twat." Falkirk accused and snuggled against his mate, to watch Andrew move from the slide to the roundabout.

A small boy sat down beside them a moment later. The dark brown eyes glanced and them, the almost black hair fanning about as Cody moved his head sharply.

"I take it your Mom and Mum are here?" Falkirk said and got a look out of Mycroft's book of facial expressions. Meaning Falkirk had stated the obvious.

Falkirk looked down the path, he saw the woman and smaller man walking. Selene with her arm around Keadin. They were making casual and unhurried progress towards them. Looking back to his brother, "What was the house like?"

Cody shrugged. "Didn't like it. Too much noise. Couldn't think."

"Remember. New windows will go in, ones like at my house."

"Won't change anything. The house sits on a major bus route, six every hour. All of sufficient mass to cause vibration."

Now close enough and hearing what her stepson was taking about. Selene said, "Cody telling you how he tore apart the house."

"Yes the buses in particular." Falkirk answered.
Darren's voice came over the intercom, "M, you wanted me to remind you about Q-Branch."

Falkirk thanked the man and stood. Coming out of his office, his faithful shadow came out of hers. Like most times, Selene kept a healthy distance so he wasn't too crowded.

Breezing past the checkpoints and into the lift, Selene was right beside him again. The upper building lift only took them to the basement level. Falkirk then made his way to the other lift, that would take him to the bunker that Q-Branch was part of.

Before reaching the bunker lift. Passing a corridor, something caught Falkirk's eye. He back-stepped and saw the back of Daniel heading away, in a different direction. Falkirk followed. He was meant to be meeting Daniel in Q-Branch but they were heading to the 00-branch.

Falkirk moved past the receptionist, Mrs Ponsonby barely glancing it him. Falkirk pulled to a stop in the briefing room with the nine chairs angled towards the desk at the front of the room. Looking to the following woman who was as curious as himself, "Selene, wait here."

Falkirk then moved through a door, into his secure office.

Daniel was in a strange pose. He was sitting on Falkirk's desk, one knee drawn up and tossing a coin in his right hand, catching it, and tossed again in a continuous pattern.

"How's Alec? I'm planing to tell him he can come back." Falkirk said, knowing the Alpha had gone up to see the man over the weekend.

"Alec might not be in the best mind." Daniel purred dangerously. With a flick of Daniel's thumb he sent the coin spinning through the air for Falkirk to catch.

Looking to the coin. Embossed on the heavy piece of gold, was a man with a face on the front and back of his head. Falkirk's insides clenching and going cold.

Daniel said, "Yulian was given that by his playschool teacher. He was told to give it to his Papa. Sandy took one look at the coin... he was agitated."

"I was scared of this. Why couldn't Alec have just played along?" Falkirk said coming to sit behind the desk. "What now?"

"I think we should keep Alec out the way for the moment." Daniel admitted, moving to a chair.

Falkirk nodded. “Harder to compromise him, if he is out of the loop? That just leaves Karla.”

--

Falkirk crossed the river. MI6 looming and intimidating on the opposite bank. Falkirk entered the older style building. Going through the security and up to the reception.

"M, I have an appointment with Miss Burr." he said to the receptionist. Falkirk was handed a badge, identifying him as a visitor.

He was then lead through the building, made up of a mix of departments attached to the Foreign Office. In a basement, was a full room. Desks and boxes packed every inch. The small beta woman
with wide smile, leapt from her desk and came to meet Falkirk.

"A little insecure?" Falkirk mused glancing over the office.

"Oh, we get by." Burr said rather cheerfully.

"I believe you are still motoring Russia. I'd like to get a look at your files?"

"Oh, yes of course." Burr said leading Falkirk through the obstacle course of boxes and desks. Burr called to a man, to bring the files Falkirk wanted.

Seeing the man start to look through boxes. Falkirk snapped, "I knew it! I take it, the hard copies are to stop me from just hacking them? Mycroft's idea?

"So that was why we were told to keep everything off-line." the woman said with a cheery smile.

A large box was dumped on Burr's desk. Falkirk lifted the lid, his heart sinking at all the paper inside.

"Back to the olden days." Falkirk lamented. "Miss Burr, could I have these brought to MI6."

"No!"

Falkirk snapped his attention to the woman then saw she was just waiting.

"I could have them copied though. And the copies could be taken across the river. But..."

"But?" Falkirk prompted.

"Richard Onslow Roper, has come to our attention."

Falkirk sighed. "I am aware of his more, problematic transactions. But he has use to us, because we know he cannot be trusted. He leads us to whoever he sells his arms to."

"So you're going to let him get away with his crimes!"

Falkirk shook his head. "That's why I like you. You are an idealist. I wish I could hold to that sense of justice. When Roper's time comes, it will be a Double O that judges him."

"So Roper gets to kill kids until he sells to someone you don't want getting arms, at which point he'll just be murdered?"

"I will cooperate." Falkirk said. "But I warn you, there are a lot of powerful people Roper has made rich. And weapons dealers are like mosquitoes. Kill one and a thousand come to the funeral."

"Mycroft has already tried to stop our investigation."

"If you get the files to us, before the close of business. I might be persuaded to rein in Mycroft for you too." Falkirk offered and saw the woman's surprise.

"Can you really do that, get Mycroft to back down?"
Falkirk moved away, calling over his shoulder. "Get the files to me, and see for yourself."

--

Falkirk fisted his hair. He was on the verge of tearing it out. On his library desk, his laptop had been added to the desktop that already sat on the desk. He was pouring over the files from Burr. He was paying the price for not being more suspicious of Karla. He was everywhere and nowhere. Political fires were spreading through the old eastern block counties, and Falkirk saw Karla pulling the stings in all of them.

“Should have shot the bastard when he was in front of me.” Falkirk hissed at himself.

A tap came from the door before James entered. Falkirk jerked his head to the book case, “I could be doing with a drink.”

James went to the cabinet and lowered the door. He poured the two glasses and placed Falkirk’s on the desk. “I thought you were going to let Alec come back.”

Falkirk pulled off his glasses to rub his face. “Something has come up. Alec isn't in the best frame of mind. And Daniel agrees with me on this, Alec should be kept apart for now.”

James nodded and watched Falkirk sip the straight bourbon. At moments, Falkirk was not the omega he found. He wore a mantle, the same mantle the omega’s predecessor had worn. He wasn't a little old woman but he was M, in James' eyes.

“Is Alec a danger?” James asked.

“I do not know.”

James musing, “You once said, 'I do not know' with a 'but' is spy speak for I trust. Is there a but?”

Falkirk shrugged. James nodded silently.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading, comments and kudos.
Smiley looked smaller to Falkirk's eyes. He sat hunched as he spoke of Karla. Cleaning his glasses, with an obsession that bordered on a compulsion. “He was named after the Karla Cell, a group operating in the poorer European countries, wanting to destabilise the emerging European Union....”

Smiley spoke to no one, gazing into the middle distance. “...In one of the purges, to stop the KGB getting too powerful. Karla was arrested on a trumped up charge and spent time in Prison. While incarcerated his wife killed herself. It appeared he was just as devoted to mother Russia after his time as he was before. He returned to the KGB. That was when Karla sought to create his own independent apparatus inside Moscow Centre, believing that his personal agents were too important to leave to others.”

“Anything on him now?” Falkirk asked, he needed to get beyond the past. That he could figure out for himself. He needed, something.

Smiley shook his head. “You, for a moment were the closest link to him. Now that opportunity is gone.”

“Back, so soon?” No.1 said. “Not that I'm unhappy to see you.”

“I have a real question to ask, this time.”

No.1 frowned and studied Falkirk. “Yes, you do seem to walk with purpose. Well you know the way, Number Two.”

Falkirk followed the preparations just like he did last time. This time, Falkirk was cold and hard, without curiosity when the chair raised up behind the console. No.2's control room around the cocooning chair.

Pushkin waiting for him, just like last time. Standing in the lower area, between the console and the door. A little like a naughty schoolboy, before the headmaster's desk.

“Number Nine, I would like you to tell me about the man known to the British as Karla?”

As No.9 spoke it became clear the man knew as little about Karla as anyone else. Most of what No.9 said was deductions and suspicions that Falkirk and Smiley had cobbled together for themselves. Falkirk was just thinking it was a wast of time when No.9 said.
“He is not loyal, in any way. Karla has wanted to see Russia burn since his wife and child's death. And does not care how he achieves it. He blames them.

It wasn’t his plan, but the war between America and Britain was all his doing. His real plan was to get Russia and America fighting. Russia knows the Americans got that submarine. They are still at peace, because everyone chooses to agreed that the boat at the bottom of the sea is Red October.

The President is now one of Karla’s disciples. Pushkin was only removed, when Karla could be assured one of his would replace the general. Ko, it is not known if he is just sympathetic or a full blown disciple of Karla’s.

Karla played the Iron-Bitch. He knows M is a fanatic at heart and if pushed right will burn the world. Karla regrets helping Moran in the way he did, it drew M’s focus away from the NSA and the shooting war Karla wanted to start. But Karla is not stupid, he will not go for the bitch’s Alpha. If he does that M would turn his insane eye to Karla and Karla alone.

Karla played General Pushkin too. If he had known Karla was behind it, he would have left that Double O, Papava, alone. M’s reaction was predictable. The Iron-Bitch would not turn over an operative to an enemy and he would hold a grudge against Pushkin until the end of time and beyond.”

“Very good, Number Nine.” Falkirk said a little tartly. Parts screaming out at him. The unknowns. Ko, very high in the people's external security force, the Chinese. A child, that was dead. Karla, being revenge driven. Even the slight tinge of regret when he spoke of Papava left Falkirk a little hollow and not the rage that usually bubbled up.

Once No.9 was gone. Falkirk pulled himself out of the chair. He moved through the Village, coming on the rondavel he was looking for. It was a relief to see the bald man waiting in the garden. Already a tray was on the small metal table, with a teapot under a cosy to keep it warm.

“Did you find what you were looking for?” No.1 asked. Having prepared his own tea. Inviting Falkirk to sit with a wave of his hand.

“Not what I was looking for but something came out of my visit.” Falkirk answered.

“Not up for talking?”

Falkirk shook his head. “Keep calm and have a cup of tea.”

“I do enjoy your visits.”

Falkirk gave a shrug, “Well, I come to enjoy your company too.”

No.1 gave a wide smile, that didn't really affect his cold eyes. “You are an interesting character, Number Two. To count someone like Francis Urquhart as a friend. To have someone like Olivia Mansfield open her home to you, her heart as well I believe. James Bond, the lone wolf who you have tamed, if not quite domesticated. Alec Trevelyan, Selene Corvin, Daniel Carrington. Even friendly, loud, larger than life, Jack Wade. He's a CIA Agent, a veteran of black ops going back to the 60s. He is as dark and dangerous as any amongst us. You ran rings around Moriarty, and saw through Eurus in moments. And me, you are cautious but you have overcome the fear of me that many still hold. You see the most dangerous people and you bend them to your will. It was believed Eurus was the epoch defining moment. I side with your Uncle Rudy, you might not be a genius like Mycroft or Eurus, but you had a gift that could make you the more dangerous. Some still debate, whether you are worth the risk. Are you more dangerous to the good, or the bad. But then again good and bad are just points of view.”
Falkirk looked at the beta beside him. “What happened to Spectre?”

No.1 gave a strange, wishful smile. “The same that happened to the IRA and other criminal organisations. The ones who didn't want to face arrest, became legitimate. The ones who wanted power remained illegal and often lived short brutal lives.”

“Why were you stealing space capsules?”

“To use the parlance. At the time, space exploration was the biggest dick measuring contest around. I thought it would be fun, to provoke the two biggest bullies on the playground.”

--

In the secure office Falkirk inspected the paintings of the old ships waiting for Control and his brother. After Falkirk's visit to the Village he had been tight lipped. Peter Guillam then Control had been particularly annoyed with Falkirk's silence. MI6 had been investigating Pushkin's climes about Karla. As far as MI6 could ascertain Pushkin had been correct. Darren buzzed Control in and the older Alpha entered a moment later.

“Control?” Falkirk greeted. As the Alpha made his way to the conference table Falkirk continued to pace. Hearing the man help himself to coffee from the thermal jug Falkirk looked to him. “I apologise, I didn't take Karla as the threat you saw.”

“No one dose. I didn't take him for a threat when I first met him either.” Smiley admitted giving Falkirk a shallow nod.

“So are you going to tell me what happened with Pushkin?” Smiley asked.

“I would rather wait so I only have to say it once.”

When Darren buzzed through to say the American contingent had arrived, Falkirk called for them to enter.

The lager than life Alpha entered, dressed in a loud Hawaiian shirt. Clapping his hands “Kiddo!” Wade greeted bringing a smile to Falkirk's face. Falkirk's shocked green eyes slipped over Wade who had been rather round since they first met, to another round Alpha with sagging chin.

“Dear god! You got fat!” Falkirk said to the once trim and muscled Jack Ryan, following Wade in. “Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean...”

“It's all those partisan dinners. Someone's got ambitions to be president.” Wade teased. Patting the man's rounded stomach and Ryan batting the teasing man's hand away.

Falkirk then shook hands with the last of the Americans to enter. Frank Mosses, now retired but once having been the equivalent to a Double O. He hadn't changed much, still bald with round face and grizzled jaw, perhaps with greyer stubble since they last met.

Finally Mycroft arrived looking rundown. Wade, in the nicest possible terms said, “You look like crap.”

Mycroft responded with one his placating and condescending smile, his go-to expression when dealing with someone he didn't want to offend.
“So what's the hoopla, Kiddo?” Wade asked poring himself a coffee.

“The man known as Karla...”

“A ghost created for the British.” Ryan dismissed.

A short argument broke out between Control and Ryan over the existence of Karla. Falkirk pulled out a grainy, green hued image. Taken by Falkirk's glasses on the pier months ago.

“Mr Mosses, this is why I asked for your attendance. Can you identify this man?”

Moses' strong thick fingers pulled the photo closer. Very softly Mosses said, with anger, “It's him. The one who shot me. The one speaking to Mr Blond. When it was all kicking off between the UK and US.”

Falkirk informed, cutting thorough the raising tension, “Pushkin believes Karla wants to see Russia burn. He believed Karla wanted to provoke a war between the UK, US and even get Russia involved. Moran just happened to be in the right place at the right time for himself and Karla's plan.”

“Where are you getting this? Pushkin's dead. I saw the intel myself.” Wade interjected.

“Like Captain Ramius, death may be a problem Pushkin is not afflicted with.” Falkirk said, knowing full well the length the Americans went to to capture the experimental submarine and its defecting officers.

Placing the files down Falkirk glanced at Control. A look of sympathy passed over his face.

“Dossier on President Mishkin and General Ourumov. Both are disciples of Karla.” Falkirk informed.

As the group weighed Falkirk's words and studied the file in front of them. Wade the most gun-ho all but ignored the file. “You're telling me Mishkin is wanting to start a war?”

Falkirk nodded. Moses leaned forward, “I might be just a dumb grunt. But if Mishkin wants to blow up everything, why not just launch Russia's missiles?”

“You don't think we've had a... president. Who wanted to press the big red button?” Wade said. “The president signs the order. He doesn't get to decide to give it. Russia is the same.”

Mycroft the first to finish scanning the file said, with a hit of annoyed self recrimination, “I should have seen it before. I put the President's conduct down to ego and empire building not revenge. And certainly not someone else's revenge.”

Falkirk said. “I was blinded by revenge. I hated Pushkin. I didn't even question why the master of spies was playing the part of unnamed henchman.”

Falkirk looked round the table, “We must make a coordinated attack on Russia,” Falkirk said and getting interrupted by Wade.

“Now hold on! We can't start a war, you might, you would but...”
“I believe my brother was talking figuratively, this time.” Mycroft interjected.

“Should we approach the Chinese?” Ryan said. “Generally they ally themselves with Russia but they like a prosperous country and that means selling things to the west. A rouge president might threaten their trade.”

Falkirk answered, “Yes, we talk to the Chinese. I am going personally and was hoping Ryan would come with. We need to speak with Director Lin directly and very covertly. Elements of the people's external security force are compromised.”

Ryan agreed to accompany Falkirk to meet Lin.

“And who thought the cold war was over. What about Ourumov?” Control said.

Moses answered, “Ourumov may be Karla's but I'm willing to bet the rest of their service is not. I might know someone in Russian intelligence, if we need him.”

Mycroft summarised. “We humiliate them. No Russian cell survives, No operation succeeds. We make Ourumov's position as FSB Director untenable. Sanctions can be brought to bare on Russia, the President and prominent business leaders.”

“All well and good. What about Karla himself?” Ryan demanded.

Falkirk said, “I have an idea. But that is 'Need to Know' for the time.”

Wade snorting a laugh. “That's all she wrote!”

“I want someone with your man on this.” Control demanded of Falkirk.

“Guillam?” Falkirk said getting a nod of agreement from Control.

Falkirk handed over a file to Ryan. “We're going to Japan.”

“Oh, now?”

Falkirk nodded. “Director Lin has agreed to meet us and Tiger Tanaka of the Japanese Secret Service in Tokyo.”

Chapter End Notes

Thats it. No.1 is based on Donald Pleasence as Blofeld. One of the reasons I skipped over Spectre in this time line.
Selene and Keading had settled on a house not far from Falkirk and James. A smaller town house with a paved front garden and a long narrow strip of grass at the back. A sizeable front room for a lounge with a connecting dining room at the rear of the property. The kitchen was on the ground level. The property didn't have a basement. Four bedrooms on the first floor ranging from a large master to a narrow single.

Keading thrilled in showing Falkirk every nook and cranny of his new home.

“What's bugging James?” Keading said. Leading them down from the attic, with its basic conversion, but the windows were small making it dark.

Knocking the dust from his cardigan. “Oh he's been in a mood since I went to Japan without him.” Falkirk then saw the other omega bite his lip nervously. “Keading? Did something happen?”

Keading nodded. “When you and Selene were away. James went up north for a few days. When he came back he was...”

Falkirk nodded. Changing subject he asked, “So when dose the baby come?”

With a slightly embarrassed smile Keading shrugged still uncomfortable with being a father with an Alpha for the mother.

Coming round the upper landing, Falkirk and Keading found Cody in the smallest single room. The boy was looking out the window, over the patch of grass.

“Staking a claim?” Falkirk asked coming up behind his brother.

Cody nodded. Falkirk saw there were small squares of tape on the floor, the boy having marks out where his furniture was to go.

Congratulating Keading and Selene on their new home again Falkirk waved to the family and got into his car. Returning home Hudson informed Falkirk, “Mr Bond and Master Andrew are still at the Snow Centre.”

“Oh good. Another activity I can't do with them.” Falkirk returned lightly. Not really upset. It was good James was sharing interest, just the two of them. James did the sporty stuff while Falkirk did the academic.

Sitting at his desk in the library, Falkirk gave the wooden wheel on the window ledge a smile. Fondly remembering when he and Andrew built the perpetual motion machine. Even now, it gently turned, powered by the shifting weight of the ball-bearings. Andrew was very disappointment when he didn't get to use the power tools. Andrew loved showing the device with pride to anyone who he could, telling them about the measurements and jobs he did in its construction.

Flicking through some photos James had taken, and left out for him. For a strange Alpha, Andrew had taken to Wade on his visit. Coming to an image of the big Alpha on his knees with Andrew in the circle of Wade's arms, the two holding a small baseball bat. The baseball bat now lived in the garage, a toy for use in the park. Luckily the neighbour's window Andrew and Wade sent a ball
through was in the employ of Wade (CIA technically) so there wasn't too much offence caused.

Finished sticking the newest photos into the album. Falkirk glanced at the window. The afternoon was nice so called for tea on the terrace. Moving to the small table outside that looked down on the garden, Falkirk enjoying the warm sun.

Hearing the bell, Falkirk knew Hudson would get the door, as much for security reasons as protocol. Daniel stepped out onto the terrace that ran the width of the house a moment later.

Sitting opposite Falkirk, Daniel's posture, stiff and very controlled. Hudson arrived with the tray, even the older Alpha sent a curious look to Daniel. Falkirk could see, Hudson was reluctant to go. A flick of Falkirk's head, the butler taking the silent order for privacy.

Daniel looked to the open door, his head tilted so he could hear the butler leave. Once he was sure there was no eavesdropper, said, “Sandy's feeling isolated.” Using his nickname for Alec.

“I've known Alec since I was Fifteen, that's nearly twenty years. James since he was eighteen, closer to thirty years. He kept the secret for all that time.” Falkirk argued quietly and adamantly.

“Time flies.” Daniel observed and in a fit of frustration, Falkirk sent his cup through the air, for it to smash on the wrought-iron railing.

“There is just something! I'm not sure I can trust him again.” Falkirk admitted looking to the Alpha. “I cannot give Alec more than I have. Not, yet.”

Nodding, Daniel placed his untouched tea down and stood. Showing his friend out, Falkirk then went down to the kitchen to get a cloth and a dustpan and brush to clean up his mess.

When they came back, Falkirk listened to James and Andrew tell him of the skiing lesson. It was hard for Falkirk to tell who was the more excited.

At bed time, James promised a real ski trip when Andrew got a bit better. Then came Falkirk and James' bed time.

After a bout of lovemaking, when Falkirk was at his most relaxed, James tensed slightly in preparation. Falkirk cut him off.

“Yes, you can go back on the active duty roster. No, you can't know of other aspects of MI6 operations.” Falkirk said over his shoulder. A deferential kiss and nuzzle was placed on his neck.

“Alec?” James prompted.

“I don't, I can't have him here, not yet.” Falkirk pleaded. Another kiss was placed on his neck and James dropped the subject.

“I went to see him.” James admitted. “He didn't take it well, that you weren't bringing him back.”

“MI6 is aware of Alec's mental state.”
The mobile on the night stand blared to life ripping Falkirk and James from their sleep. Falkirk blindly reached for the device on the night stand. Absently noting 'Alec' on the display as he brought the device to his ear.

“It's two thirty!” Falkirk said by way of greeting.

“'m comin' back!” Alec demanded

“Have you been drinking?”

Alec ignored Falkirk's accusation. “'m comin' back or you can have my res-gnation, Danny's too. You'll never see us again.”

“You may speak to me at a decent time and when you are sober.” Falkirk ordered and hung up.

The phone rang again almost instantly. Falkirk answered, switching to speaker phone. Alec started sounding off.

“I treated you like a brother! I tortured! Maimed! KILLED FOR YOU!” Alec was shouting now and getting into his stride.

“That is enough, Mr Trevelyan.” M said coldly and quietly. “Alexis Trevelyan! You could have told me at any time in the passed twenty years, for James in the passed thirty. You waited until you had no choice. You are a traitor. Be thankful you are not in a cell.”

His Alpha's arm around Falkirk's waist was tight an reassuring and the caress of his neck comforting in the stressful situation.

A softly spoken phrase in Russian floated over Falkirk's shoulder from James. Alec fell silent. James reached over and disconnected the call. Pulling Falkirk to lay on his chest James stroked the distressed omega's neck and down his back.

“It'll work out.” James reassured.

It took hours before mental and emotional exhaustion pulled Falkirk back into sleep. Faster than he would have liked the alarm of Falkirk's phone roused him for the start of the day.

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Tanner knocked and entered Falkirk's office. In a rush he said, “Report from Satellite E. Trevelyan failed to show for work this morning.”

“He was quite drunk last night.” Falkirk informed interrupting his Chief of Staff.

“They found blood and Trevelyan's tracker in his flat. It had been cut out and left, along with his mobile phone. His car was also there.” Tanner informed before going through the standard procedures being carried out to track Alec.

“Get Keading safe.” Falkirk ordered. Calling up Daniel Falkirk informed him of Alec's disappearance.
After the phone calls, Falkirk went to the tactical suite. The information on Alec had already been set up by the technicians and covered the large screen.

A technician, noticing the arrival of M, informed. “Police Scotland reported a stolen car from a street close to Trevelyan's flat. It was dumped sixty miles south, where another car was stolen within two hundred yard.”

“Identities?” Falkirk asked.

Someone else started rattling off, “Stopped all known Passports, Credit Cards, bank accounts. All know aliases are being divulged. Arrest warrant has been issued, with alerts going to all traffic police.”

Darren was a mass of nerves beside Falkirk until Selene appeared. She informed, “Keading and the kids are on their way here.”

Getting a weak smile from the other Omega. “Why don't you go meet them.” Falkirk ordered. The Irish omega darted out to await the arrival of Keading and the kids.

James appeared in E branch. Only those who knew him would see beyond the calm exterior.

“You heard?” Falkirk asked quietly as they walked back to Falkirk's office.

“When did it kick off?” James asked.

Pulling out his watch and opening it. “Forty-fifty minuets. But we're assuming Alec went AWOL after the phone call, this morning.” Falkirk said realising the speed of gossip in the heart of the intelligence agency.

It was chaos, memories of Silva started to resurface amongst the staff. Everyone was professional enough but people were on edge and it didn't help M, 007 and Q were chief among them. 009 had been called in and was playing babysitter with Keading and Darren, downstairs. Cody and Andrew had also been retrieved from school and brought in.

By the time Falkirk would usually be heading home they had tracked Alec to London. Going deep into the building Falkirk entered the Double O Section where Andrew, Cody and Yulian seemed to be playing a sort of musical chairs in the Double O briefing room.

Having dinner, a pick-nick set up in the middle of the circular room. After which, Yulian stalked Maloney wanting to get as close as possible without drawing the omega's attention. When the blond Double O turned sharply, Yulian blushed and giggled, and ran away to hide behind one of the chairs. The dark haired boy then peeked out from behind his hiding place, to smiled bashfully and wave at the man.

Andrew pounced on his dad's back and attempted to wrestle the much larger Alpha down. In good humour James fell forward allowing Andrew to climb all over him.

Cody, a bit older was more able to read the room and knew something was up. Along with Alec, the Alpha he could most easily approach not present adding to Cody's stress. Keading, Falkirk and Selene tried to engage him but he retreated to one of the Double O chairs. The boy curling up to read his book quietly.
Having been sitting cross-legged everyone noticed Daniel leaning to the side to pull out his phone. Looking to the screen he then nodding at Falkirk. Everyone but Keading stood. After saying goodbye to their children the others left.

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On the waste ground Daniel pulled the collar of his coat up to prevent the early autumn chill from biting. Alec had chosen his spot perfectly, little CCTV coverage and without direct views from the road or paths. Walking deeper, passing a few people exercising their dogs. Daniel paced in circuits, waiting for Alec to appear.

Further away than he would have liked Falkirk released a small matt black balloon. The flying saucer with propellers floated up, trailing a thin wire back to the power and computes it was connected to. The drone was completely silent and at night would be almost invisible. The hatchback had its fifth door open and two laptops were casting an eerie glow, one was used to control the drone while the other controlled its camera.

Selene and a few others milled about Falkirk and the car, making sure they were ready. James and Maloney were closer to Daniel's location, in place if Alec refused to cooperate.

Stabilising the drone. Falkirk then fixed the camera on Daniel's position. Daniel stood stark in the thermal image, a bright orange colour. James and Maloney didn't register on the image even though Falkirk knew exactly where they were, about twenty meters from the Scotsman.

Falkirk watched as something, someone, who barely cast a thermal image approached Daniel. Pressing comm button, “Alec sighted. He's approaching from North East, range one-hundred and fifty meters from Q.” There would be no answer, James, Maloney and Daniel could not afford to be heard speaking into a comm link.

Daniel started walking towards Alec. His image obscured by trees and other things blocking Daniel from the drone's view. Falkirk gave a commentary until the two men came to a stop a short distance from each other. Falkirk fell silent so he and the two active Double Os could hear through Daniel's wire.


“Safe.” Daniel answered neutrally before going on, “You are acting irrationally. You have put MI6 on high alert. We need to calm the situation down.”

“NO! You're...you can't side with them over me. WHERE'S MY SON!”

“You need to come in... SANDY, N...”

A bright thermal flash of sudden brief heat blanked the screen. A moment of lag then Falkirk heard the distant crack of the gunshot with his own ears.

“Q's down! Alec moving, south and west, pursue!” Falkirk shouted into the comm. He then left the drone to the technician and ran towards one of the Land Rover. By the time Falkirk was inside, he was hearing James and Maloney describing the pursuit of the fleeing Alec. The car bounced and shook as it raced over the waste ground.

Drawing to a stop. A medic was running from the other 4x4, ahead of Falkirk. The moment the
paramedic's hands touched Daniel's black coat, the white gloves turned crimson. The tall Scotsman was lying face down and unnaturally still. After a few moments of frantic work, one of the medics looked to Falkirk and shook his head.

Selene pulled the omega close, tucking him under her chin. Falkirk squeezing his stinging eyes shut. Lifting her wrist, where the microphone was Selene reported, “Q, Status: KIA.”
#66: For the greater good.

Chapter Notes

Thanks for all the comments. Hope everyone continues to like the story.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The omega lay in the bed, his face blotchy, blood still clung to the short blond hairs, and the left eye swollen shut. The smarmy git of a doctor, in a long white coat over his bespoke Savile Row suit, inspected the monitors and the charts.

The doctor, turned and looked to Falkirk and in the soft reassuring voice said, “Your friend will be just fine.”

Falkirk flicked his eyes to the doctor so fast, the toff of an Alpha took an frightened step back.

“Get Out!” Falkirk said with enough quiet force to make the man flee. The day and now night had been a disaster from start to finish, and he couldn't deal with a twat with a self seeking god complex, who thought he or Maloney were just delicate Omegas.

Falkirk grasped the Double O's lax hand. A blue eye cracked open, the other eye a swollen bulge of blues and purples.

“M? I lost...”

“Hush, Double O Nine. You need to rest, to heal, do so, that's an order.”

Falkirk watched the single eye close. Maloney finally stopped fighting the sedatives. Falkirk, continued to watch over his Double O, until the door clicked open.

“M?” Selene whispered. “Tanner called. James is on his way back to MI6. He lost Alec too.”

Falkirk nodded, patting Maloney's hand. “I'll be back.” He said to the sleeping Double O and reluctantly left him.

--

James was currently in a rage destroying the communal part of the Executive Branch. Falkirk calmly perched on Darren's desk watching him. Green eyes tracked a desk as with an absent toss, James sent it to splinter off a wall. Tanner cowered behind M, while trying not to look like he was terrified. Selene stood to the side of the room, ready to physically restrain the raging Alpha if need be.

To say James was angry he lost Alec was an understatement. Not helped by MI6 and the police losing the fugitive too. The only good of the night, Maloney surviving after getting too close to Alec and being thrown from a footbridge.
In the centre of the upturned desks James dropped to the floor, staring out blankly. Taking the alpha's crash as his cue Falkirk approaching his mate. Squatting in front on James Falkirk reached out, brushing the short hair on the side of his alpha's head. Suddenly James wrapped his arms around Falkirk and pulling him into his lap.

Automatically and silently James started stroking his omega in an attempt to calm himself. Resting his head in the crook of the Alpha's neck Falkirk was bathed in the intense pheromones of James' anger, fear and stress. Not knowing how long it took Falkirk closed his eyes letting James' scent and gentle touched cause the loss of awareness and begin to bliss. Which in turned further calmed the Alpha.

When James' scent normalised, indicating the Alpha was again under control. Falkirk was loathed to bring him back to the subject but time wasn't on their side. With intense effort Falkirk pulled himself out of his head space to focus. “Double O Five...”

“If you don't send me. I'll go on my own.”

Falkirk had suspected James' demand would come and only offered him an alternative. “You have a go, Double O Seven.”

James started rattling off the bolt holes of Alec's that Falkirk and MI6 didn't know of. James spoke to no one in particular but Tanner took careful note.

Taking a breath. “There is one target Alec will risk everything to get.” Falkirk said into James' neck.

“NO! He no longer has that right.” James stated.

In a commanding tone. “We need to get him and we have the bait.” Falkirk could feel the shiver going through James

“And I thought M was a cold, heartless, bitch.”

“I am M.” Falkirk stated and started to push himself up from James' lap.

“I will need Keading to be brave.” Falkirk said to Selene

“NO!”

“No.” Selene repeated more calmly and with weakening conviction. The instinct of the Double O was stronger than the instinct of the Alpha. She understood, if they didn't control the threat, the threat would control them.

Falkirk, James, Selene and Tanner pulled up the plan to lure in Alec.

An Alpha who had run out of E-Branch when James kicked off returned. Inspecting the devastation around him the Alpha male picked his way through the debris.

“M! HMP Slade was attacked by a single, male, believed to be an Alpha. His description matched that of Alec Trevelyan. Xenia Onatopp has escaped and whereabouts are unknown.”

Like a light bulb, thoughts flashed in the mind of M. Falkirk called his Alpha into his office. Sitting
behind his desk, it had been a long time since James had stood in front of him as a Double O addressing M.

“I know your feelings on Alec, I feel them too. But if Alec has rescued Onatopp... he could be of use.”

“In leading us to his master?” the Double O said. Able to think tactically, after the rush of the hunt.

“Alec will pay. But we have an opportunity. Do we wish to give it up?”

James shook his head, “No, M.”

--

Against most people's opinion, Falkirk strapped the bulletproof vest on and inspected the Falcon Daniel had made him. The bronzed finish and black handle gave the weapon a steam punk look, it was truly a piece of artwork from the hands of a master.

“M?” a tall Alpha with shaggy blond hair said.

“Mr Brayan.” Falkirk returned, greeting his relief bodyguard.

“What are you doing here?” Selene demanded rather harshly. Since the start of the operation she had been on edge. Having lost one Omega she was loathed to place Keading in danger.

“I asked him.” Falkirk said. “You have Keading to concentrate on,” Instead of the show of defiance, the relief Selene showed was uncharacteristically clear. “You stand relived of your duties as my personal bodyguard, Ms Corvin.”

Giving a smile and a nod Selene stepped back to continue her preparations. Adding two sub-machine guns to her arsenal. The Heckler & Koch MP5K, she could fire one handed and she was an expert in duel welding weapons.

“M?” another voice called over the ruckus of the tactical teams preparing in Q branch.

“R?” Falkirk said before shaking his head to clear his thoughts and corrected himself, “Q!”

Peter looked uncomfortable with the change of designation but MI6 couldn't afford sentiment with a rogue Operative and a Russian agent on the loose. The newly appointed Q informed, “Amphibious team are in place, as is the helicopter and aerial assault team.”

--

Hyde park was the place and Falkirk hoped Alec would appear. Alec would undoubtedly know it was a trap but he would also know it was the best place to regain his son. Secured in a van, a mobile command centre had been established. Falkirk, Brayan and two technicians crammed into the space. Computer screens fixed to the internal wall and a narrow bench, acted as workstations for the concealed occupants.

The roof-rack and the pipes on the nondescript Ford Transit, disguised the cameras, radar and communications equipment
Falkirk fixed his gaze on the image from a camera showing the front door of his house. On schedule the door opened and Keading appeared. Hudson carried the push chair to the bottom of the steps while Keading carried Colum and secured him in the buggy. Yulian waited patiently at the top of the steps until Keading held out his hand. Coming down the steps Yulian took Keading's hand. With a brief pat on the shoulder from Hudson, Keading started walking down the street.

The moment Hudson touched Keading Falkirk's stomach clenched. “That's out of character.” Falkirk worried in annoyance. If Alec had been watching it would have confirmed something was up.

Falkirk's phone started ringing and he answered it automatically. Tanner snapped, “Cody has been removed from school by an unknown Alpha male.”

“FUCK!” Falkirk bellowed. “Tell Selene, then tell her to stick with Keading. It may be a diversion.”

“Target sighted, north entrance.” one of the technicians said, pointing to a screen. Looking, Falkirk saw Alec striding into the park holding Cody's hand.

“RELOCATE NORTH ENTRANCE!” Falkirk shouted at the driver who was pretending to read the paper while on a break.

A bumpy journey later, the van stopped throwing Falkirk into Brayan. Picking himself up Falkirk flung open the back door and stepped out. Brayan was trying to get him to go back to the van but Falkirk kept following Alec's path into the park.

Following the path Alec took, Falkirk ended up at the serpentine lake where Alec sat with Cody beside him. Alec fixed Falkirk with a cocky smile while Cody looked impassive. Closing in Falkirk sat on the bench as well and Cody moved closer to him.

“Was this completely necessary?” Falkirk asked neutrally, playing it calm and indicating the child between them.

“Just wanted to see my little pack mate.” Alec returned just as friendly, tousling Cody's hair, adding “Why don't we have Yulian join us.”

Falkirk issued the order, into the microphone attached to his wrist. It was done in the same casual tone as everything had been said in so far. Selene arrived with Keading and Yulian.

Keading sent Yulian forward towards his Papa. Seeking Alec's approval Falkirk told Cody, “On you go.”

The two boys passing each other along the path. Keading pulled Cody close and Selene sending them on their away. Keading keeping his pace normal, and a firm grip on his usually independent son's hand. Selene remained. It was obvious she was packing and had armour on under her long coat.

Reaching forward Alec placed a hand on Yulian's shoulder and pulled him closer, giving a kiss and a cuddle to the squirming child. Noticing something, shifting his son's head to the side Alec pulled off the small plaster where the boy's shoulder and neck met. The enraged parent turned his glare from the small inflamed wound to Falkirk.

“Он умрет в твоих руках(He will die in your arms)” Falkirk said. Alec was familiar with the
small charge designed to shred the jugular.

“Daddy?” Yulian said looking between his Papa and god Father.

“Вы должны жить с выбором, что вы делаете.(You must live with the choices you make.)” Falkirk said calmly and rather pleasantly.

Tuning his attention to Yulian and making his tone lighter and calmer Alec said, “I have to go now, I will come back. I love you.” Alec promised then hugged his son and pressed his lips to the boy's brow.

Looking to Falkirk “I will be back!” he swore. He then transferred Yulian to Falkirk's lap.

Falkirk held Yulian as he cried, watching one dad go and demanded his other dad who he had not seen for days. Alec didn't look back as he walked away. Falkirk picked the young and struggling Alpha up and walked towards Selene.

Falkirk gave a nod, in silent ordered. Before they were in earshot, Selene said something into the microphone on her wrist. Through his earpiece, Falkirk heard the woman, “All units go. Remember, capture, pursue, eliminate, in that order."

Falkirk then walked back to the house with Keading and Selene. Brayan kept a safe but respectful distance as they returned.

Hudson almost ripped the door open when Falkirk placed his foot in the top step. Seeing Falkirk and Keading the old Alpha relaxed. Colum ran up to Falkirk and Keading after the excitement.

Falkirk carried Yulian into the library and sat with the child on his lap. Yulian demanding his parents in a scared whine because of the strangeness over what was happening. Looking to the picture Mycroft had commissioned, Daniel and Alec still recorded but no longer present. Falkirk whispered, “Everything is going to be okay, I promise. Your dads just have to go away for a while.”

Sniffling Yulian clung to his god father, inconsolable.

“It'll be alright.” Falkirk reassured again. Licking a finger Falkirk rubbed the boy's neck, over the small wound, until the cosmetic make up pealed off. Not even he could really harm a child, thankful the bluff paid off.

Tanner knocked on the library door. Quietly entering so he didn't disturb Yulian.

“Could you wait please?” Falkirk asked his chief of Staff. Sending off a text, added, “We're just waiting on Sherlock.”

Falkirk continued to comfort Yulian until he cried himself to exhaustion. Going up stairs Falkirk absently noted the weight difference. Andrew at the same age was considerably lighter than the young Alpha.

Entering the room beside Andrew's on the third floor. Yulian's clothing and possession had been moved from his home already. The young Alpha just needed to make the territory his own now to feel comfortable. The main problem he did not consider the room his territory. Yulian's territory was several miles away in a home he couldn't return to.
Tucking Yulian in Falkirk placed a kiss on his temple and pulled the curtains slightly to block some of the afternoon light.

Coming down stairs Falkirk could hear a new voice and sense the raising tension in the lounge. Cody was discussing his experience in a matter of fact fashion with Sherlock and Sherlock was teaching him how to draw conclusions from his observations, resulting in Cody asking his Papa “Was I kidnapped?”

“Yes.” Falkirk answered coming into the lounge. Everyone seemed to freeze but all Cody did was to shrug and follow Andrew out into the back garden.

Calling Tanner, Sherlock and Watson into the library Falkirk took his position behind the desk. Falkirk started by bringing Sherlock up to speed on Alec.

When Falkirk fell silent. “Sherlock?” John asked, concerned.

In a nonchalant gesture Falkirk didn't believe Sherlock flopped down in one of the chairs. Sherlock had always held Alec in a strange place, which Falkirk suspected even Sherlock might not be able to identify.

“This is very uncomfortable.” Sherlock stated, wiggling a bit in the wooden Macintosh chair.

“I need your help.” Falkirk said looking to Sherlock then John who was still giving Sherlock concerned glances. “I am implementing two operations. One Tanner will head, 'Grand Slam'. He will make public arrests of all known Russian agents at MI6. I would like the two of you to head up Hopkins-Stearne”

“Civil War era witch finders. You want us to conduct a hunt.” Sherlock deduced.

“I am sure there are Agents I am not aware of. You will inform me of any Agent you find. The Russian ones will be arrested immediately.” Falkirk informed. As Sherlock was muling over the demand Falkirk offered, “You will have complete access to all MI6 personnel.”

The moment Sherlock's right cheek twitched Falkirk knew he was hooked and a hunt would keep him occupied from Alec's betrayal.

“Well we have work to do. Let's get started.” Falkirk stated.

--

James had his legs spread wide, stabilising the motorbike between his thighs while he waited. The mirrored windows at the end of the street, let James see around the corner where the tall woman stood by the dark grey Audi.

Hearing Selene order, “All units go. Remember, capture, pursue, eliminate, in that order.” James put his foot on the clutch and turned the ignition key. The bike roared to life, but even over the sound of the engine James could hear the sound of the helicopters trying to find Alec.

It was a little while before James saw a man run past the end of the busy road. Alec taking his life in his hands, dodging the traffic and not bothering to wait for the lights. James lowered the front of the helmet. He waited until he saw the two get into the Audi saloon before pulling away. People
shouting and swearing at James when he went through the pedestrian crossing, while pedestrians were on it.

Chapter End Notes

I was asked about the ages as it seems strange that I said Falkirk had known Alec for 20 years (closer to 18) and James for 30 (Alec and James meeting about 16). These were approximate but close enough. There is a semblance of a time line but given the size and times I'm spanning it is not precise. I've included a table with the approximate ages and spans of time involved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Time spanned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At first the infant</td>
<td>0 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Then, the whining schoolboy</td>
<td>4 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And then, the lover</td>
<td>7 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Then a Soldier</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And then the Justice</td>
<td>5-6 years so far</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Base age(Falkirk as reference at the start: Age 15)</th>
<th>Age as of Chapter 51</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Falkirk</td>
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<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James&amp;Alec</td>
<td>+14</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>+15</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherlock</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mycroft</td>
<td>+8</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cody*</td>
<td>-22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selene</td>
<td>+7</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keading</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darren</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td>-28</td>
<td>5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yulian</td>
<td>-29</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colum</td>
<td>-30</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Cody. In the story, Falkirk was about 18-19 when he met Keading. With Cody introduced 9 months later. So he should be about 13 but I am writing him as about 11.
#66: Witch Hunts & Planning for the worst.

Chapter Summary

What happens in the days following Alec's betrayal.

Chapter Notes

Thanks for following and the wonderful comments.

In the long locker room. The group of dozen alphas, what was left of the recruits dressed for the up coming session.

Pulling on the blue tracksuit trousers, one of the recruits then sat to tie the laces of his white trainers. He looked to one of the others, who stood in front of a mirror. He warned, “You're an idiot!”

The other recruit, the one being spoken to scraped out more of the concealer. “By the time they know, they'll see how good I am.” He turned so his muscled biceps was clearly reflected and started to smear the make up on it.

“You've seen the guards! Their trigger fingers are all twitching, their eyes too. The head of internal affairs just turned out to be a traitor. He then murdered someone. Beat the crap out one of those Double Os. Is lying a good idea right now?”

With a dismissive snort, the recruit finished hiding the image, of a Royal Marine dagger on his upper arm. “It's just a tattoo. What's the worst that could happen?”

“I don't know, they could think one little lie means there could be a big lie somewhere and make you disappear. That Bond bloke's the type to just kill you. That bitch in charge, on the other hand is really scary. M, he would... I don't know what he's do but...” the recruit ended in a shudder. Remembering the dead eyes when M talked about setting off bombs implanted in peoples' necks. Absently the recruit reached for his own neck to make sure there wasn't a new scar or something there. Looking at the other recruit pulling on the white vest that showed off his upper arm, where a shading difference coving the tattoo could just be seen.

The group of a dozen recruits came out of the locker room and stood in the centre of the large training area. The instructors were waiting for them, dressed in the red version of the trousers the recruits wore.

The head of the instructors, Drysdale looked so pleased. His thick golden moustache twitched as he smiled. When he roared, it was loud and shrill like an air-raid siren. He started the recruits running hard, giving them no time for a warm up. In the field, no one would give time for nice gentle jog and some stretches to prepare. He was pushing the limits of the recruits' existing training. They hated him and he loved that.
Drysdale jogged to a group setting a comfortable pace. He screeched so loud his voice echoed off the distant walls, “Move those legs bois and girls!” He kept screaming at them until the recruits started to push themselves.

Drysdale let the recruits run on, while he returned to the centre of the room. Which was when he noticed the atmosphere suddenly change. Beyond the track he was pushing the recruit on, the operatives, agents, guards and office workers making use of the facilities were the first to go strangely still. It was a sign that M had entered the room, but Drysdale knew he had left this morning.

Looking to the entrance, Drysdale saw in a dozen guards dressed in black tactical armour and in the centre of the group, the Chief of Staff. All looking at him. The Tactical squad fanned out and paring off, one with an assault rifle raised, the other with a taser at the ready.

Drysdale glanced to the archway that led to the changing rooms and pool beyond. More guards appeared, cutting off that exit.

Tanner called, “Philip Drysdale, you are under arrest for espionage.”

The barrel shaped man lowered his head, preparing for the fight. Before Drysdale could lunge for the unarmed Tanner, he was hit by the barbs of a taser. The large Alpha's whole body screamed and jerked in pain. The second he hit the floor, Drysdale was pounced on. The Alpha struggled, but felt the bite of handcuffs go around a wrists and his arm pulled behind his back for the other wrist to be cuffed too. With a hood going over his head, Drysdale's world went black.

Six guards struggled with the wriggling mass of flab covered muscle that made up Drysdale.

Behind one of the other instructors, who held his arms wide to stop the recruits from approaching the arrest. One of the recruits held his own arm, self conscious of something that might be showing through. The recruit wanted to be an operative, but for operatives, tattoos were banned. So the recruit lied about having one and covered it up. Now he was watching what did happen in a spy agency. One little thing and you could be trussed up and hauled out like an old carpet, and no one would stop him from disappearing.

--

A short, round faced alpha. He rushed through the narrow and low metal corridors of his ship. Buttoning up his dark blue jacket as he went.

"OUT THE WAY!" Commander Gerald bellowed to the the crew dressed in their casual clothing, blocking his path. Spotting the wavy blond ensign. Cmdr. Gerald, shouted, "Windom, with me!"

The teenager jumped to follow the ship's captain. Gerald looked over the floral print shirt and knee length denim shorts the ensign was wearing. "We're going to be cutting into your shore leave, ensign."

G nodded, "Understood, sir."

Cmdr. Gerald then bellowed, "Anyone on this ship in thirty seconds gets their shore leave cancelled. Chief Petty officer, get them off now!"
There were sniggers from the crew, Gerald regretting his choice of words. Another voice, belonging to a man in an 'MP' helmet started shouting. More MPs started pushing the mass of crew members off the ship, then followed the crew down to the dockside and getting the crew to disperse.

Gerald continued down the gangplank. The lights of Bangkok shining in the distance. He then pulled to a stop to straighten his cap, checked over his uniform, and stand ramrod straight. He saw the black car making its way carefully through the dawdling crew members.

"Look sharp!" Gerald snapped to the ensign at his side.

The two stood at attention as the car pulled to a stop. The back door opened and Gerald raised an eyebrow in surprise. The emerging omega was in the dress uniform of a vice Admiral, and pulling on the white peaked cap.

Gerald snapping a salute. "Admiral Sir Thomas, welcome."

Falkirk returning the salute. G could just standing at attention, unable to salute because he couldn't without a hat on.

"Thank you, Commander Gerald." Falkirk said and then moved to the blond teenager. "Hello."

"Hi!" G said with a small smile.

Falkirk took G's arm. From behind them Gerald ordered, "Please escort the Admiral to the wardroom, ensign."

"Yes, Sir." G responded and led them up the gangplank.

Falkirk was pleased to see the ship's First Officer awaiting them, in the room with long table running down the centre of it. Falkirk let go of G's arm, so he could look at the boy and the two senior officers.

"In my position," Falkirk announced. "We must wrap intention in intentions, have plans within plans, and have reasons surrounding reasons. Officially, Admiral Sir Thomas McLair is here to meet with Commander Gerald, Captain of HMS Dragon. Unofficially, I am again abusing my contacts to see G. This is so secret that none of you can speak of this, I am here for a very important task."

Falkirk reached into his pocket and pulled out a sealed envelope and handed it to Commander Gerald.

Gerald inspected the sealed order. Thoughts were racing, official orders were no longer sent like this. But there was nothing to say ordered couldn't still be written and couriered. He was about to open the orders from the admiralty. Form the office of the First Sea Lord herself, as indicated by the seal.

"Cmdr. Gerald, wait!" Falkirk said, stopping the man from breaking the seal. "You are not allowed to open the orders, yet. If they are not executed they are to be returned, unopened. Which is why I am dressed like this, Commander. As part of the chain of command, I am giving you an order as a Vice Admiral of the fleet."
Gerald nodded he understood. M, a civilian, had no authority. As a vice admiral of the fleet, the omega did.

"Commander Gerald. From this moment on, HMS Dragon is required to maintain at all times, enough fuel, supplies and provisions for a single direct journey to Cape Town, South Africa. You will be the only commander in the South China area copied into a 'Tier:1' MI6 briefing. We will be using chess pieces for code names. Ignore all black pieces and white pawns. Should one of the named white pieces fall or be captured, no matter your other orders or duties you will break off and make for Cape Town with all haste, under radio silence and EMP hardened conditions."

Falkirk then focused on the Commander, “What will you do if, White Queen's Knight falls?”

“Make for South Africa, maintain radio silence and prepare all shipboard electronics for the... the Electromagnetic Pulse of a nuclear strike. Sir.”

“White Queen?” Falkirk asked got the same answer repeated. The captain knew what he had to do. Falkirk looked around the three. He then focused on Commander Gerald again. He decided the captain deserved to know the why. "If these measures are enacted, you might hold one of the last branches of government. Stay out of the northern hemisphere, avoid China too. You are ordered to protect King, Commander!"

The Commander nodded silently. Then snapped to attention, "Aye aye, Sir."

Falkirk looked at the teenager. Who looked a bit shaken by the seriousness. "I hate to spoil your shore leave. But precautions must be taken." Falkirk then pulled out a photo. "If the worst happens, this is John Watson. He and another will meet you in Cape Town. You can trust him."

"What about you?" G asked.

"Eh," Falkirk hesitated. He settled on, "I will be doing my duty. As you must do yours."

G glanced away, unable to look at Falkirk as he said, “What's your codename?”

“White King is the United Kingdom itself, you are King's Pawn. White Queen is the government, Mallory is Queen's pawn. I fall under MI6 which is Queen's Knight. The Royal Navy is King's Bishop.”

Falkirk patted the boy on the arm. “I must go. Good luck, G.”

--

The black haired omega girl looked up when someone sat on her desk. “Can I help you?”

She couldn't help the blush when the steel blue eyes of the strange Alpha focused on her. The Alpha was rather handsome, with wild black hair and a really nice smile.

“I don't really need help. I just wanted to talk to you. That's an interesting picture.” Sherlock said, nodding to a small frame on the desk.

“Oh, Papa Love.” she said, sending a wishful smile to the picture. Sherlock studying the minute facial expression and what they meant.
“Strange,” Sherlock mused. “He is not an omega, yet you use the term papa. More likely a grandfather. Love? That too is rather strange.”

“Orlov, we called him Papa Love.”

Sherlock studied the young omega. “Not grandfather, but you hold deep respect and love for him. At least you gave his name without too much effort. And 'we called him.' so that means there are more trained by, Papa Love.”

The girl looked around. Everyone was watching them. She stood. The door opened and the guards in tactical armour were coming in and towards her.

Hal, the beta in charge of MI6’s cyber warfare division looked away. The mainly omega hackers and programmers of the department Falkirk had once run were in tears, others looking away. The omega's screams bouncing around the room as she was dragged out under Sherlock's orders.

--

Falkirk entered the school. The children were out in the playground. He was escorted to the empty class room, where the blond teacher was having a quiet coffee alone.

The teacher's light blue eyes snapped to him, "What the hell do you want? Wait, I don't care. I'm not doing any more favours. And I don't care how big and pretty your eyes are."

Falkirk pulled a letter from his inside breast pocket. "Mary Morstan, it is my duty to inform you. You have been conscripted to His Majesty’s Secret Service. Effective immediately."

Mary ripped the paper from Falkirk's outstretched hand. She read the words on the order. "Oh, hell no!"

"Hell, yes, I'm afraid to say. You are to maintain the cover of Jo Moffat." Falkirk placed down a device, looking like an old pager. "When you are notified. You will drop everything. You are ordered to retrieve Dr John Watson and make for Heathrow Airport, where a plane will be awaiting you. When you and Dr. Watson arrive at your destination, you will await HMS Dragon, where you and Dr Watson will take up your duty as bodyguards to the King."

"What about Sherlock?"

Falkirk shook his head. "I think Sherlock will be needed elsewhere. And he will only focus if John is safe."

The woman nodded and put the small black device in her pocket.

"Good day, Miss Morstan."

--

The few days were fast and hectic in the wake of Alec's betrayal and Daniel's death. The moment Falkirk returned to the MI6, he sensed the atmosphere. The guards had an alertness, that could only exist once something had already gone wrong.

Tanner, met and walked with Falkirk. He began reporting, “There was an omega this morning, in
Cyber Division. Drysdale was arrested yesterday, when you were in Thailand.” Dropping his voice very low, “There are two more known agents. A Beta Female in Accounting. Another Beta, a male, in Analysis. I'll arrest the one in Accounting this afternoon. The one form Analysis, I'll arrest when he leaves for the day. A public spectacle as you wished, M.”

Falkirk nodded his approval. “The Omega in Cyber Division?”

“Evelyn Salt,”

“I don't know her.” Falkirk said with a bit of relief. Tanner gave the omega's work history. She had been hired after Falkirk became Q, so he would have met her but not enough to know her.

They entered E-Branch. Falkirk taking his messages from Darren, and noticing the red haired man in the waiting area beside the PA's desk.

Sherlock charged in, demanding Falkirk and Tanner follow him into M's office. Sherlock started rattling off a monumental amount of words. The gist, Sherlock suspected several more employees of being Russian agents.

“I gave you authority, Sherlock. Go get some guards AND ARREST THEM! Tanner hang the scheduled. Start sweeping the building.” The two men acknowledged and fled Falkirk's office, quickly.

Falkirk called for his guest to enter. Tankful Darren had put Walters' file on his desk. Sitting, Falkirk scanned the file while the operative took a seat. It didn't hurt to keep a person waiting on M, as part of a dominance display.

“Good, Mr Walters. You've impressed you superiors through the half dozen missions undertaken. But I warn you, as a senior operative I am now beginning to take notice of you and my standards are far higher.”

“Understood, M.”

While the two continued to talk. Tanner returned to the Executive Branch with his hit squad of body armoured guards. The target, an Alpha male in the the middle of the communal office. The target broke first, making a run for the emergence exit, to be met with one of Selene's Berettas staring him down.

Falkirk didn't even break his briefing with the Senior Operative and Double O prospective.

"Congratulations Mr Walters. You will be on liaison with Station A,” Falkirk said. The Operative nodded dumbly while watching as an office worker was carted passed Falkirk's internal window.

"Just a little in house cleaning.” Falkirk reassured. “Nothing to worry about, unless you're a Russian Agent?”

The man gulped and shook his head.

By the end of the work day there were more arrests and everyone suspected everyone else. Four people resigned, none senior enough to presented their resignations to Falkirk but all were known to him. He let the French, followed by a Saudi, German and then an Israeli agent go. They were not his targets.
Arriving home. Keading had the first piece of *good news*. The omega said, “Yulian's playschool teacher wants to see his guardian.”

“Tomorrow?”

Keading nodded. Falkirk thanked the omega and saw him out.

Once the three had eaten, and Falkirk saw to Yulian and Andrew's bath and bed. Falkirk hoped he could have a few moments. Retiring to the library, Falkirk lowered the door to the drinks cabinet, to poured himself a bourbon. A tap came from the library door, before Falkirk could even sit down.

The door was pushed open and Hudson announced, “Master Mycroft, sir.” Falkirk nodded to the butler, to have Mycroft shown in.

Falkirk offered his brother drink and went through all the other civilities before they could get down to business.

Mycroft reported, “Whitehall is screaming along with the MPs and Civil Servants. Control is going through them. Mallory is even getting flack for letting police enter the House Of Commons, to take two MPs from the floor.”

“I take it, Control is enjoying himself, going after Karla's?”

“It would appear so. What we want out in the public is being leaked to the news.”

“Good.” Falkirk said.
Falkirk made time for this summons. At the same playschool, Cody, then Andrew and now Yulian attended. The teacher's message for a meeting, conveyed through Keading was an opportunity he couldn't let pass by. He was shown to the classroom, by the woman from the playschool's reception office.

The teacher stood from her desk. She was rather young, with long blond hair in a ponytail and wore cheery bright red and narrow glasses. When the omega spoke it was with a high squeaky voice.

The teacher greeting very pleasantly with wide smile, “Hello, I'm Miss Burn. Oh, silly me, we've met before. Andrew's Papa?”

“Sir Thomas McLair.” Falkirk returned softly.

He was guided into one of the students' uncomfortable and sturdy, tiny, green chair. The teacher taking an identical one. With knees almost up to their chin, the nice quiet and informal chat started.

Miss Burn starting by asking about Yulian's home-life. The preschool knowing about a sudden and drastic change in Yulian's circumstances. Falkirk answering in a way he could, carefully. It took several moments, Falkirk knowing the woman was skirting the reason for the visit. But Miss Burn couldn't delay forever.

“I noticed,” Miss Burn said, cautiously. “Yulian, he had a strange wound on his neck?”

Falkirk smiled softly. With that little admission he could now get rid of the woman. Stretching out his legs and crossing his ankles. Control seeping out of every pour of Falkirk.

“Curious.” Falkirk mused, Selene was on alert with the sudden changed tone of voice. “I have been keeping the wound covered. So I must surmise you have either being giving inappropriate physical examinations. Or, in this very dangerous time I am concerned you might have prior knowledge of the wound.”

Selene slipped one of the Berettas from her shoulder holster and took aim with the large gun at the omega teacher. The click of the hammer being pulled back made the teacher's blue eyes flick beyond Falkirk to the gun being aimed at her.

Falkirk called the teacher's name to draw her attention again then explained, “Imagine. A tiny charge, oh lets call it what it is. A bomb. To irreparably damage a person's jugular you don't need a big bang. Just a little pop. A, popper if you will.”

Falkirk had held the woman's gaze while he spoke. He saw the woman's horror in the concept but Miss Burn wasn't surprised. She knew what was meant to be in Yulian's neck. Sitting straight again, Falkirk looked around. Something not fitting right. There was a full sized chair behind the teacher's desk and another in the corner.

'So why are we sitting here?' Q mused to himself. Then saw the teacher's phone propped up on the desk, the lens of its camera towards them.

Pulling out his own phone and snatching Miss Burn's. Selene wrestling the omega to the ground
when she tried to stop Falkirk.

Falkirk hated I-phones, he couldn't just rip out the battery to disable it. The power button was just a suggestion to the smartphone, it could be overridden with a virus, proper programming or modifications.

Falkirk called Tanner, and told him that Miss Burn was an agent and her family should be arrested. Hanging up with his chief of staff, Falkirk then looked into the lens of the woman's phone.

“I truly hope someone is still watching. Because I am coming for you and you will never know mercy.”

--

Sitting in his lounge, with his legs curled up under him. A glass of bourbon on the table at the end of the couch. Falkirk flicked through the second interrogation of Miss Burn's father, conducted by Sherlock. The first being done by the MI5 interrogators. The third would be carried out by Alice, MI6's rising star in the field of torture.

Moving on the the summary of evidence. Miss Burn's phone had been broadcasting their meeting to her father at his house. MI5 and MI6 were now tracking who had been at the house with Mr Burn. They were also tracing any calls made to and from the house while Falkirk was talking with Miss Burn. Flicking over a photograph of a receipt found at the house, showing an order for a coin depicting the Roman god Janus.

The panel that controlled the main light and the security system beeped. Flicking his eyes to the small touch screen, where a code number from the guard on the door flashed. It announced a unrecognised car pulling up at the house. The doorbell rang a moment later.

Falkirk waited with baited breath. His eyes flicked to the small metal box, with a biometric lock. As M he wasn't meant to carry a gun, but for the moment Falkirk did. And like now when he didn't, it was because there was one within easy reach.

Hudson pushed open the lounge door. Falkirk, concerned with the man's well concealed glum look.

The butler announced, “Lady Mary Carrington.”

Falkirk smacked his face with his hands. Falkirk still silently cursing himself. The soft voice ripped a gaping hole in Falkirk's chest which promptly filled it with guilt.

“Where is my grandson?”

Standing. Falkirk didn't think he could speak, but forced the words through the knot in his heart, the lump in his throat and the bile in his mouth. “Please, you might want to sit down.”

The little round omega's hard, brown eyes conveyed someone who had the facts and was beyond livid that she had to find them out on her own.

“Alec.” Falkirk said, again having to force his mouth to work. “He confessed to being a double agent. After initially showing regret and remorse, he then decided to act against us. When Daniel refused to side with him, he shot and...and...”

“Murdered.” the little old woman prompted, with no display of emotion what so ever. It was a tell
Daniel had, it meant the man was at his most dangerous. “My great Grandson? Where is he?”

“Here, asleep upstairs. I threatened Alec, the only way Yulian would be safe was if he left him. Alec then escaped. James is looking into old contacts and bolt holes.”

The tartan and tweed dressed woman showed the tactician she could have been, deducing, “A mother would only leave their child if you threatened that child.”

Falkirk nodded, unable to actually say what he promised to do. “Daniel's house isn't secure. You should stay here until things are settled.”

“I shall do just that!” Mary turned. From the hall, Falkirk could hear her say, “My bags if you please, Hudson.” Then came the sound of the hard low heeled shoes going up the stairs.

Falkirk slumped back into the seat. Berating himself for not calling the woman before now. To forget to call Daniel's grandmother, to tell her of the death of her eldest grand child was unforgivably.

--

Just over a week, after everything went to hell. Falkirk was given enough time to deal with something other than Alec, and Karla who couldn't be found anywhere. It meant he needed to deal with Daniel.

Mary scowled but the choice had been Daniel's, he bought the plot after all. So the Scotsman was not taken north to his ancestral home. The service being held in Highgate Cemetery. She also didn't like there was no priest, but Daniel had made it clear he and the Catholic church, along with religion in general went their separate way a long time ago.

The cemetery was rather peaceful island within London. Falkirk rather liked the wild flowers and trees. The alleyways of tombs and vaults, making up the West part were truly spectacular.

It was only Mary, Daniel's half sister and step mother, Falkirk, Selene, Tanner, Peter(Q) and Keading in attendance, around the open grave. Daniel's brother unable to come right away, so was still in America.

The MI6 Chaplin, although Church of England, in his duty he saw to all of MI6's represented faiths. On this day he wore a good but normal suit, no dog-collar or mark of Christianity to be seen. He made no mention of religious ideology, only speaking of a man who died in the line of duty, leaving behind a son.

After the coffin had been lowered into the ground. The journey home was in a numb blur to Falkirk, guided by Keading who held his arm. In the car, Selene turned, to look over the seats, to the omegas in the back. She took a sharp breath, “M?”

Falkirk slipped dull eyes to the woman beside the driver. A movement at his side, made Falkirk look to Keading. Not up to dealing with much more today, and with neither Selene or Keading continuing allowed Falkirk retreat back into his own thoughts.

Arriving home. Darren was organising lunch, trying to coral four children and not quite succeeding. Keading quickly brought order to the children. While everyone was distracted, Falkirk slipped into his library, making sure to lock the door behind him. Opening the low cupboard and
pulling out the furs, pillows and blankets. The omega retreated to a solitary nest, building up the fabric cocoon in the corner.

--

Falkirk looked over the information in front of him. It had been building ever since Mary arrived. Mary was in regular communication with Douglas, Daniel's younger brother. That wasn't suspicious. There was something concerning though. The army Carrington Institute lawyers were mobilising. The lobby groups were out in force, both in the UK and the USA, The Carrington Institute a major military contractor to both. Slowly the Institute was putting pressure on the governments, preparing to ask or pull in favours. In short, Mary was positioning her pieces before she declared open warfare for Yulian.

Over the past several days, Selene who Falkirk had trusted for years had been acting oddly. Doubts crept into his mind when she knocked on his office door with an unreadable expression. Falkirk waved the dark haired woman in while he slipped his other hand under the desk to the concealed weapon.

Sitting directly across from Falkirk Selene hesitated as she spoke, with a blank look. "You know Keading and I were trying for a baby," Selene reminded. Falkirk's initial instinct was to relax but with Selene still on edge so was he. "Well when this all started I returned to taking my contraceptives... but I'm pregnant."

"Is that it?" Falkirk asked sceptically, while his eyes darted round looking for when the attack would come.

"Yes! That's it!"

"No! Sorry! I didn't mean it like that. Congratulation." Falkirk said, sagging. Giving an apologetic look to the woman.

"Did you think I was going to attack you?"

"I'm sorry. I'm just paranoid.. Sorry." Falkirk said not quite understanding his own mind fully.

"Everyone's on edge." Selene reassured with a smile. Also beginning to calm and see where Falkirk was coming from.

"I am happy for you." Falkirk said then reluctantly added, "You will have to give up,"

Falkirk was interrupted

"I know. I will reaming as head of your personal security. Brayan will take over my duties as your bodyguard."

Relieved she had thought about her position. Falkirk gave a smile and a nod. "Champagne? Well for Keading and I. You now get the wonderful joy of fizzy apple juice in a fancy glass."

They continued to talk for a few minutes before Selene needed to go back to her office. As the woman left, Falkirk waited, with his finger poised over the intercom button. Buzzing Darren while Selene was just passing his PA's desk.
"Put me down for an Alpha girl!" Falkirk said. Getting a curious look from the curly haired omega, and a half hearted glare from Selene. The Alpha turned from the internal glass wall, to look at the PA.

The moment a smile broke on Darren's face and he started bouncing with excitement Falkirk knew Selene had told him. A look of shock came over the omega's face, his mouth even dropping open when learned it was the Alpha who was pregnant. The Omega's bouncing returned in earnest with excited questions, punctuated with waving arms. Selene had a bashful smile as she answered.

It was nice to have something to celebrate. Hesitantly the E branch staff added to the pool when they found out about Selene. Over the day, Darren's chart filled. Each combination of sex and gender running long the top of a piece of paper. The names were filled in underneath as the bets were made and the winners would share the prize.

The day finished rather normally for M. Double O Two, Briony Thorne entered Falkirk's office. Going over the mission she would be the first Double O to go up against a Russian XX agent since the official end of the cold war. There was a problem though. Where 00 designations were random. The Russians ranked their most elite, XXI being the newest and lowest, while XXX was their best.

“Double O Two, you have a kill order for Double X-I. Be careful, agent Triple X is also in the country, avoid him at all costs. This is delicate!”

The woman nodded and snapped, “Understood, M.”

"I can't under emphasise the importance of this mission. Good speed, Double O Two." Falkirk said attempting to impress on her the gravity of the first direct conflict between the FSB and MI6.
Tanner burst into Falkirk's office. "Valentin Dmitrovich Zukovsky is in reception demanding to speak with the 'Bitch in charge'," the man almost out of breath in the rush to speak.

"How could I refuse. Show him up." Falkirk ordered. Tanner running off to see to the guest.

Zukovsky, being ex-KGB, from when it was still the KGB. Now he was a gangster. For the most part he had been a valuable contact for many MI6 operatives. He even had Falkirk's predecessor going to him from time to time.

Falkirk musing to himself, “If he was willing to face arrest entering the UK something has to be up.”

The massive man swaggered into E Branch as if he owned it. Black hair slicked back, broad shoulders and broader stomach, and over six foot. He was like a moving mountain shrouded in an expensive three-piece suit.

The smaller Beta male at Zukovsky's side, Falkirk didn't think he knew. A black man, with shaved head. He cast unsure glances around the room. When he smiled nervously the light gleamed off his gold teeth.

“Ah! Mr Bullion, I presume.” Falkirk muttered to himself. A few operatives had mentioned a lackey of Zukovsky's, with golden teeth.

"Mr Zukovsky?" Falkirk greeted pleasantly, coming out of his office.

"Not there!" Zukovsky said nodding Falkirk's office. He jerked his head behind himself, "I'm aware of the security requirements."

Falkirk nodded his consent, for Tanner to see the guest to M's other office. Zukovsky was led away, to go through security screening.

Falkirk took the direct route to his secure office. Not knowing what his guest preferred and not willing to make him too comfortable, Falkirk poured out two bourbons. Falkirk sat behind the large oak desk, and waited.

The leather padded oak door banged open. "That was more humiliating than I remember. Was the internal examination necessary?" Zukovsky complained, shifting uncomfortably as he walked.

"We can't have you smuggling something in."

"I want to make a complaint. Your Operative is stealing all my customers!" The large man complained, dropping into the chair opposite and wincing.

"My Operative?"

"Well, there was a rumour the Cossack was never completely yours. Never trust those bastards!"

“Alec?” Falkirk said, curiously.
“Janus, now. Is it true Karla is back?” When Falkirk confirmed, Zukovsky muttered a few choice curses in Russian.

"What about Ourumov?” Zukovsky asked and again Falkirk nodded. Then Zukovsky asked "Mishkin?” Falkirk nodded and Zukovsky let out a growling hiss of angry Russian.

Falkirk studied the Alpha. Nowhere near as good as Sherlock or Mycroft at making deduction. But as an Omega Falkirk picked up on the Alpha's ques. The scent speaking of the alpha's anger and fear to the omega. But one thing Falkirk could deduce, Zukovsky was here to get accurate intelligence on Russia, the FSB and who was involved. It meant Zukovsky wasn't in the loop, even with his contacts in Russian intelligence.

After several moment of silent thought, Zukovsky asked, "I saw your newspapers. You are openly hunting FSB agents and disrupting Operation. Is it that bad?"

"Very. The last talk I had with Pushkin, he warned me about Karla and his need for revenge." Falkirk informed getting more Russian expletives.

Taking a swig of his drink on the desk, Zukovsky grimaced before forcing himself to swallow. "You have something better than this piss?"

Swivelling round, Falkirk pulled a bottle from the tray behind him. "It's not cold," and placed the Vodka on the far side of the desk.

Pulling the top off with his teeth Zukovsky spat the lid to the floor and poured a healthy glass. Chugging the clear liquid and swirling it round his mouth Zukovsky swallowed. Pouring himself another and held it up. "To one step forward and two back."

Falkirk lifted his own glass and sipped in salute.

"First a woman now a..." Zukovsky said gesturing to Falkirk.

"An Omega?" Falkirk supplied the politically correct term.

"An Omega."

Looking back to Falkirk Zukovsky took a deep breath. "Others, like me who have become comfortable in our retirement asked that I come. Karl, he used to operate out of camps in Latvia and Estonia."

Falkirk was then given a small piece of paper with a string of number, coordinates in longitude and latitude.

“So, M. Do I get to leave?”

Falkirk nodded. If Zukovsky was risking arrest, it meant there could be allies in Russia who would be willing to see and end to Karla. Zukovsky was a good middle man and Falkirk was willing to let the Russian stay to be one.
While the boys in Q Branch, Analyses and Surveillance checked up on the locations Zukovsky gave, Falkirk had his own line of enquiry.

Arriving at the rather nice house. The silver haired woman in the garden looked up as Falkirk's car pulled to a stop.

Stepping out of the car. “Victoria!” Falkirk said to the approaching woman.

“What can I do for M?” the alpha asked, perching the hand with the secateurs on her hip.

“I need corroboration. You were, close, to Ivan Simonov in the old days. Could he be trusted?”

The woman gave a shrug, “Hard to tell. But he did ask the same question of you.”

Falkirk frowned. “When was that?”

“About a week ago.”

“That would be just before Zukovsky came to MI6.” Falkirk mused.

“Zukovsky? He was Ivan's protégée. But Valentin was always a fat, greedy, young man. Now he's a fat, greedy, not so young man.” The silver haired woman mused. Falkirk getting the impression she knew more than she was letting on.

“So, Victoria. Estonia? Or Latvia?”

Victoria smiled, in a way M needed to be able to see right through. Her voice was as poised and perfect as ever when she said, “I have no idea what that means.” Falkirk did not believe her.

“Unfortunately without corroboration. Zukovsky can’t be trusted. Nor can Simonov. Given all that is happening, perhaps it’s time someone finished what you started with Simonov, all those years ago.”

Falkirk saw the small, sharp breath in, the older woman took. It spoke of her fear and concern for the man. On the wind, Falkirk picked up the que in her scent.

“Ivan loves his country. As I do mine. That you can count on, M. Zukovsky loves his money and comfortable life, that you can count on too.” Victoria admitted.

That Falkirk believed. “Then they might be of use. Make contact with Ivan Simonov. I may wish to meet him.”

Victoria nodded, with a smile that was perfect. No longer a hint of concern or worry in her posture, scent or expression.

--

Arriving back at MI6 from Victoria's. The moment Falkirk sat behind his desk. Sherlock burst in and slouched into the chair opposite. Falkirk sparing his brother an annoyed glance, few had been given the right to enter his office without knocking, a few more were allowed to get away with barging in. Sherlock had not yet earned either privilege.
"Hit a dry spell?" Falkirk asked. It being several days since a suspected agent had been identified and carted off by Sherlock.

Making a dismissive snort Sherlock gave a shrug and slouched further down in the chair. Almost lying in it, with his legs spread wide and his hands clasped on his chest.

"This is a place of business, not your front room." Falkirk mused, as he logged in to his computer.

"I suspect this is for you."

A postcard fluttered and skidded across his desk. Falkirk turned the card right side up to see the picture of a classical white marble statue. A bearded man was depicted, with long curly hair, holding a long sceptre in his left hand and an orb in his right. Falkirk turned over the card, finding only Sherlock's address and no message. Only the stamp and postmark indicated the origin, Hong Kong.

Sherlock looked up at the ceiling, but made sure he could see his brother out the corner of his eye. He prodded, "Zeus, I would have expected The Fighting Temeraire..."

"I hate to be the Mycroft in this conversation. Roman, Sherlock, not Greek."

Sherlock sat up sharply. Snatching the postcard back to study the statue. "Jupiter, curious?"

Falkirk sat back, his turn to slouching a bit. "You are not completely wrong, Sherlock. You, like Guillam, aren't watched as closely as others. So they can disappear without much notice. You are so erratic, finding the pattern in your general chaos isn't usually worth the effort. You have swanned in and out my office so much in the few weeks you've been here, that the people have stopped noticing. And if you didn't come to work one day, I would be angry and it would be in character with your flighty and selfish nature. Who would look into it?"

"Ah." Sherlock said, catching on. "If I were to wander off, what happens to John?"

"Do you want him to go with you? Or he could stay on staff, we always need a good doctor that doesn't scare easily?"

"Or?" Sherlock prompted.

"There is another plan. John could be in South Africa until this is all over."

Sherlock nodded in agreement. Not quite able to look his brother in the eye. Falkirk could see Sherlock cared for John, in a way that didn't look like it was reciprocated. A part of Falkirk wondered if he should try another talk. But every time the subject was raised, John would shout he wasn't gay then storm off or go in a huff.

Falkirk said, "The arrangements are in place. John will go the moment you are need elsewhere."

--

When Falkirk returned home that evening. Mary had a guest, the Countess Violet of Grantham. The woman a little older than Falkirk, was giving her sympathy to the old omega. Falkirk excuse himself and Darren, as quickly and politely as possible.
They found Keading hiding the Library, overseeing the homework being done around the low coffee table. Darren took Colum and left, quickly, all but running when there were toffs about. Keading too, Falkirk said his goodbye to him and Cody so they could run from the upper classes that now visited the house.

At Mary's invitation, the Countess joined them for dinner. Falkirk focusing on Yulian, Andrew now old enough to feed himself without too much trouble. Over the dinner Mary casually informed, “Douglas will be arriving tomorrow.”

A knot forming in Falkirk's heart. Not only for the opening salvo but for how Falkirk had decided to deal with the upcoming conflict. Falkirk gave a tight smile, reminiscent of the ones Mycroft usually used, to avoid having to say something.

The relationship between the two omegas was still strained. Neither Andrew or Yulian picked up on it. The poised Countess, was a master in noticing and not commenting. She attempted to keep the conversation light. "Your man is very good, Sir Thomas.”

Hudson standing, stony faced in the corner, ready to jump to any need of the dining group.

The countess continued, “In this day and age, it's so hard to find good servants. My husband and I, have had such trouble finding someone good and trust worthy. I must say a good Butler is worth their weight in gold...”

There was no doubt in Falkirk's mind she was trying to poach Hudson. He glanced at the Alpha, ever attentive Hudson looked back in turn waiting for an instruction. Falkirk just sent him a smile and thankful nod.

--

Making sure he was home when Daniel's brother arrive and the children weren't. Falkirk didn't want them to see anything that could upset them, so Selene and Keading took them to McDonald's for a treat.

Mary greeted her grandson first, then it was Falkirk's turn. Douglas was furious to say the least. Both with the loss of his brother and how Falkirk had claimed his nephew.

Falkirk held his arm out, inviting the lean and very tall Alpha into the library. Falkirk taking his usual place behind the desk. Douglas deciding to stand.

From his inside pocket, Douglas started to pull out an envelope. “I will get straight to the point, Yulian will be going back to America with me.”

Picking up the tablet off his desk, Falkirk woke it and held it out to the other man. “This is what happened the night Daniel was killed.” Falkirk warned as they exchanged tablet for writ.

Falkirk tried to shut out the voices, while reading the document demanding the return of Yulian Trevelyan-Carrington to his biological Uncle. But at the gun shot that killed Daniel, Falkirk flinched along with Douglas.

Putting the document down, Falkirk informed, "If Yulian stays with me. The might of Britain and every force at my command can and will protect him. The same cannot be said if Mary or even you take him."
"What... How could this happen?" Douglas demanded. Gesturing to the tablet.

"Alec is and always has been a deep cover Agent. When he was activated he told Daniel and I. With the doubt over his allegiances Alec was put out to the Edinburgh office while he was observed. After a threat was made against Yulian and my continued refusal to allow him back, Alec became increasingly unstable, until..." Falkirk trailed off, with a nod to the screen that showed the death of Daniel.

"Where is he?" Douglas demanded.

"Exact location unknown. He is operating with Russia to his back. Supplying and moving Russian armaments for the FSB. He's been spotted, from Estonia to Turkey." Falkirk informed. "There is a rumour he is using an old missile train as a base, but we haven't been able to confirm this."

Falkirk then pulled out papers from his drawer and handed them to the Alpha. Wondering what was going through the other man's head, now Douglas had gone strangely calm. Falkirk spoke carefully,

“I do not want this to descend into anger and fights.

I know this might look like I'm stealing Yulian. I am not. I don't want his family to be alien to him. But he does need protection, that not even the Carrington Institute can offer.

Should this come down to a fight. I am the pack Alpha, as named by both Daniel and Alec. I'm named by both Daniel and Alec as a godfather and guardian for Yulian in case of tragedy.

A custody battle will be a difficult thing for you fight. Which you know and the reason why you are also bringing political pressure. Your custody battle will not even start when I cite National Security concerns. It won't matter how many lawyers you have. Every politician who helps you, I will have arrested for endangering national security. So don't expect their help for long."

The tall, lean man flipped through the documents. Confirming the legal status of the omega as leader of the pack and guardian to his nephew. Very reluctantly Douglas had to agree with Falkirk's conclusions. “What about visitation and access?

Falkirk sat back. Relieved the custody battle Mary was pushing for was falling away when the only Alpha able to challenge Falkirk over Yulian stood down. “The last thing I want is to cut Yulian off from his family. I am not just offering, I want Mary to stay for as long as possible, as often as she can. This house will be open to her at all times. Yulian can go up north, with the appropriate security in place.”

Douglas sat down. They spoke, long and in depth on Yulian. Much of it around where Yulian could go, when, how and who with.

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After showing Douglas out, Falkirk went upstairs. Knocking on Mary's bedroom door. Falkirk waited for her to call enter. The old Omega's eyes glistened in the lamp light as she looked to Falkirk.

"Douglas is not going to challenge you over Yulian." Mary said. When Falkirk shook his head. Mary pushed herself up and opened the cupboard to pull out her bag. "Well that's that."

"I invite you to stay for as long as you want when you want." Falkirk reassured before adding, "My
priority is Yulian. I will keep him safe with everything I have."

Stepping out of the way of Mary, who moved about the room to pack her bag.

"I would prefer Yulian to have a link to his past rather than be an orphan." was Falkirk's final word before leaving Mary to her packing.

--

Hours later a tapping sounded on the door to the library. Knowing Hudson would just enter and only when called. Andrew and Yulian were in bed so it wouldn't be them. Falkirk stood to open the door and invited the expected Mary in.

Pulling out a chair slightly. "Could I get you something?" Falkirk offered, indicating the open drinks cupboard.

A polite, "No thank you" and a shake of the head was Falkirk's answer. Her tone, in private, far less abrupt or cold than it had been.

Sitting down, Falkirk took the seat opposite Mary. The coffee table between them. It took Mary a moment before she said, "I have decided to accept your offer to stay."

Giving the woman a relieved smile, "Thank you."

In the ensuing silence both cast about for something to break the oppressiveness. Mary's eyes fixed on the picture hanging above the fireplace.

"The Pack Tree," Falkirk informed absently. Letting Mary have a closer look Falkirk took the picture down from the wall.

"You're the head." Mary mused. Tapping the centre of the Snowflake picture, where Falkirk's names were etched into the crystal structure. Then her finger followed one of the branches coming to 'Daniel Carrington' then 'Alexis Trevelyan' with 'Yulian Trevelyan-Carrington' below them.

"A pack tree is meant to be current. You have not removed their names?" Mary mused.

“I'm not ready to do that.” Falkirk said. But the omega's comment reminded him of something.

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Watching the smith work to inscribed Daniel's name on the manorial wall. Falkirk didn't want to go through the ritual as it had a finality that brought a tear to the omega. Others had noticed Falkirk had not authorised the addition of the name so his procrastination had to end. When the smith had finished, Falkirk wiped his cheek and stepped forward to brush his fingers over the engraving.

Really not wanting the go back to E-Branch yet. Falkirk went to the Physical Training Branch. In the largest of the underground rooms that made up the PT Branch. The Alpha overseeing the assessment of the recruits was a Royal Marine and new to MI6. He hadn't quite grasped the concept of an Omega in charge and only showed Falkirk a professional curtsey rather than respect.

Standing at the Gym's entrance. Falkirk watched Miller run the recruits through their paces. An Alpha in the lead was Miller's clear favourite. The recruits were all dressed in skimpy shorts only,
as was the style of the Royal Marines when training in doors.

"I'm going to have to break you of some habits." Falkirk mused to himself, on Miller. The lead runner passed Falkirk, shortly followed by the rest of the group.

Crossing the track into the centre Falkirk stopped by Miller. After several more laps the recruits stopped as they crossed the marker on the floor. Miller calling out congratulations to the Alpha male who won. Listening to the two, it confirmed Falkirk's suspicions the Alpha was also a ex-royal marine.

Clearing his thoughts. Falkirk first approached an winning Alpha male. "Recruit! Do you wish to be a security guard, bodyguard, agent or an operative?"

“Operative, Sir!”

Falkirk nodded then looked to the instructor. "Do you think the recruit could be an Operative?"

"Yes Sir." Miller answered.

Falkirk touched the recruit's flushed and sweat glistening skin. Running his hand up the rippling abdominal muscles, skimming the dimpled belly button, then up over a pectoral and nipple. While caressing the contours of the well defined alpha with his fingers, Falkirk said absently, "I am not referred to as sir, always M. It's a little thing to separate us from a military and remind us we are a civilian organisation."

With both the instructor and recruit becoming very uncomfortable with Falkirk feeling up the recruit in the middle of the gym. Falkirk moved his fingers up and across the Alpha's shoulder and down the bulging biceps.

Whipping round, to the instructor, M's expression going hard and annoyed. He held up his fingers for Miller to see. "Do you still think this recruit could be an Operative?" Falkirk accused showing the clear colour difference on his finger tips.

Ponting to the muted black ink showing through the concealing make up on the Alpha's arm. "An operative must have deniability! Markings, are a brand that can be traced. A death sentence in the field. Security Guard and Bodyguard have become your only option in this institution, recruit!"

Walking to the recruit who took second place. M's voice like an ice cold wind, biting and painful. "You look a little tired. Do you know what happens in the field when you're tired?"

“Your opponent wins, M.” the other recruit answered.

All the recruits knowing what was to come, the words always said before a particular training exercise.

"You know the drill." M ordered. “Keep within one lap of each other. I decide if the last man standing gets to win. GO!"

The recruits started running. The routine was well known and hated. There was no winning line to cross. The fastest were handicapped because they couldn't lap the slowest. The slowest was often harried by the ones he was holding up. No one could excel or fall behind, it became a matter of pure endurance with none able to set a pace they were comfortable with.
Falkirk felt the stickiness of on his hand. Using his other hand, he pulled out his phone and made the needed arrangements. He then sat down on a bench, glaring at the instructor and the recruits. They were all squirming under his gaze, so M was pleased with the effect.

Darren arrived with M's laptop, and a box of hand sanitiser gel and paper towels. Dodging the recruits Darren walked across the track to the centre where Falkirk was sitting on a bench watching.

"Nice view." Darren said watching the group of Alphas running. Handing over the items as he did so.

Shrugging, as he wiped his hand. "It gets repetitive." Falkirk said and booted up the computer.

After an hour Miller was visibly anxious over the recruits. At the two hour mark the second place recruit was done. A misstep and he fell, disqualify him. He was the third to drop out.

Falkirk didn't really care if Miller was getting the point of what he was doing. While the Marines where about the team, comradely and obedience. MI6 was solitary, personnel strength and ingenuity. In the dark places of the world there would be no friends, superiors or even a plan in most cases. Every operative needed to be able to rely on only themselves.

Falkirk had seen many intakes, he made a point of seeing each group since becoming M. When he was Q he had come across the recruits touring the building in the later stages of there assessment. Unfortunately the twelve Alphas, seven male, four female before him didn't have what it took. One or two may find a place on security but nothing more. Miller, a veteran and with years of experience training Royal Marines Falkirk wasn't sure about either. He played favourites, the two Royal Marines getting encouragement and best assessments from him. With the one recruit who had never worn a uniform being washed the day Miller took over, when the recruit had received the best assessments from the likes of James and even the disgraced Drysdale. MI6 needed so much more, it needed a balance. Intelligence, quick wits, ingenuity and curiosity were just as important as stamina, strength and being able to run and shoot.

In the end only one Alpha Male was dragging himself round the track. He was exhausted, he could barely bring one plodding foot in front of the other but he was pushing on as if his life depended on it.

Stepping onto the track. Falkirk stood in his way. Miller's favourite recruit had to shuffle to the side, trying to move around the M sized obstacle.

"What's your name?" Falkirk asked.

After wheezing and gasping, "Wardner, Frederick Wardner, si... M."

"Perhaps we can do something about that." Falkirk said pointing to the tattoo under the smudged make up.

"Don't lie to us again!" Falkirk said and waved over one of the physiotherapists to help the recruit. “And don't think you actually won! Mister Wardner!”

The recruit blinked, the sweat dripping into his eyes. Even through his body's pain he was
confused, M being very strange. But not kicking him out, or worse making him disappear.

Falkirk turned from the recruit and headed out of the gym. On the way back to E branch. Darren asked, “Why did you give Wardner a pass?”

“He did lie. But a Royal Marines tattoo is hardly a hanging offence. Wardner did manage to hide it through however many physicals, Drysdale and James’ assessments. So he is determined. Never under estimate shear, blind, determination. It's seen James through his entire life.” He could never show it, needing to maintain the aura of command but Falkirk was rather impressed by the recruit. He had a drive that pushed him on when most would give up.
In the darkened room. Mallory sat, hunched over and with his chin resting on his clasped hands. He was looking at the wall directly opposite, with the projected images playing across it. Down either side of the table was the most senior of all branches of military and government. He rubbed his head, he didn't have enough hair to rake his fingers through it but wanting to. Sitting back when the last set of images ended, showing the Russian truck's with mounted missile platforms.

“Ukraine?” Mallory said, softly.

Mycroft admitted, “At this point, Russian rule of the country cannot be challenged.”

The head of the army banged the table, “We can send them packing. The last thing the bloody Russians want is a real war.”

The blond woman, The First Sea Lord glanced at Falkirk. She had helped M so knew something major was up that they didn't know about. When she spoke, she referred to the Royal Navy's own analysis of events as she said, “Much of our intelligence also say Russia will back down with a show of force. That they are just poking Europe to get out measure.”

Foreign Intelligence being Falkirk's area of responsibility. He spoke.

“At this time, Belarus too, should be considered lost. Russia has moving into Kazakhstan and Georgia. Latvia and Estonia are at risk. Basically any country that borders Russia is being targeted. The Modus Operandi is the same as Ukraine. Russian agents foster a pro-Russia, anti-European movement within the country...”

“We know this!” Blasted the General. “When will we be sending in troops? It's just a matter of time before Russia attacks a NATO Country.”

Falkirk waved his hand at Mycroft, in silent request he speak. If Falkirk did it himself, he would just imply he would expose the General's mistress and illegitimate son to the man's wife. Falkirk was sure the man to back down, considering the general had aspirations of politics after military service and wouldn't want to be known as the two timing scumbag.

Mycroft said to the group, “Russia is still in what we consider, Phase 2. We believe Phase 3, will begin when there is a military response to Russia's actions. In short, the moment we respond Russia will escalate the conflict. Not back down.”

The General argued, “We have a small, elite, taskforce, in Ukraine. They'll be quiet and be completely deniable,”

Falkirk just glanced at the man. The General's sagging chin wobbled as he gulped in fear. Falkirk said, “I will order your team's execution if they are not all present and correct at MI6 in three hours time.”

Mallory launched to his feet, “Get those men back! Now!”
The general launched to his feet. Dashing out of the room to go get the men back.

Mallory looked around the others. “There will be no military intervention without My, M's, C's or Mycroft's authorisation. No one else has been given enough information to make a decision, SO DON'T!”

There were acknowledgements from all around the table. Mallory ended the meeting.

As had been scheduled, for after the meeting. Falkirk joined Smiley in his car. The streets of London soon moving by in a blur.

"So why are we going to a school?" Falkirk asked watching the concrete jungle start to thin.

"I have managed to track down someone who's had the pleasure of Karla's company." Smiley informed.

"And why are we making the journey when a phone call would do?"

"If one of your people suffered while imprisoned. Would you treat him with any less respect when asking something of him?"

“I suppose not.” Falkirk admitted. If someone suffered at the hands of Karla they could be spared a few hours of Falkirk's times.

Arriving in the small village. The locals looked curiously at the police escorted car moving slowly along what appeared to be the only proper street. Smiley told his driver to stop, near the arched gates to a school. Getting out Smiley and Falkirk started walking up the winding drive of the private school.

“Are you going to send Andrew to public school?” Smiley asked. After walking for a few moments in silence.

"James did not care for boarding school. I am inclined to agree with him." Falkirk said.

"Public school gives a boy character!"

Falkirk was monumentality unimpressed when the white building came into view. He answered, "I don't think Andrew will be lacking in, character."

A sudden cheer went up from where Falkirk could just see the tips of Rugby goals sticking up. The two entered the really drab and almost derelict looking country house that was now a school.

Falkirk and Smiley were met by a slimy Beta who introduced himself an the headmaster. He fawned as he said, "Sir George, Sir Thomas such a pleasure to have such esteemed guests at our humble little school."

They kept up a civil conversation with the headmaster as they were led through the building. Smiley insisted, “We do not need to interrupt a class.”

Ignoring Smiley, the Headmaster knocked on a classroom door and entered. "Mr Prideaux your guests are here!"
Oblivious to the growing annoyance of the teacher at the head of the class. The Headmaster waved, drawing the attention of the students to the guests, "This is Sir George Smiley, Control of MI5. And Sir Thomas McLair. He is M, that's the director of MI6."

The Headmaster wanted the gossip to reach the homes that important guests came to the mediocre school. Falkirk could see Prideaux was fuming and Smiley was a little annoyed too. Falkirk for his part was thrilled that he wasn't centre attraction, the 'Look! An omega who isn't a home maker.'

The teacher continued his geography lesson. Falkirk carefully studied the man. Prideaux's ethnicity was difficult to determine, he could be Mediterranean, or even middle eastern. A good thing in an operative. Moving about, Prideaux walked with a lumbering limp. His right arm barely moved and the shoulder was held higher than the left, giving a slight hunched posture. The easiest thing to figure out for Falkirk was his sex, the pervasive intense scent of an Alpha almost downing out that of the children.

There was an awkward ten minutes before the bell rang. Now Falkirk heard a few whispered comments about an Omega being in charge of more than a cooker or washing machine. Prideaux bellowed after his students, about their rudeness. With his job done the Headmaster followed the students out.

Smiley greeted Prideaux as an old friend. Pulling out a silver flask, Smiley took a swig then handed it to Prideaux. Falkirk was a bit of a third wheel, sitting out the way while the other two talked. Smiley steered the conversation to a 'Weasel'. At that Prideaux let out a small growl and fell silent.

Frowning and catching Smiley's eye, a nod confirmed to Falkirk the Weasel was Karla.

Sympathetically to the old MI5 operative and his time in the hands of Karla. Smiley said, "You were held by Karla. At the time I questioned you last, I had other priorities. But now we must know all you can remember about where you were held?"

After more cajoling from Smiley, Prideaux started to speak of Prefab concrete huts, large forests, barbed wire fences segregating the huts and incremental perimeters fences. To Falkirk it sounded like the prisoner of war camps from the movies. Prideaux finished by saying, "There were subterranean levels as well. Corridors and rooms making up a bunker."

"Electronics?" Falkirk asked. Speaking for the first time.

Shaking his head. "I saw nothing more than bulbs on the end of wires."

"The stars?" Smiley prompted.

Moving to the map on the wall. Prideaux dragged his finger over the countries. "I think I worked it out to about 30 degrees east."

As Prideaux taped the map. Smiley said, "Not quite mother Russia any more, but soon? With your associate and Jim I think we should concentrate on Estonia and Latvia."

For the sake of posterity. Falkirk said, "Agreed!"

--
Returning to MI6 Tanner intercepted Falkirk on the way to his office. Following Falkirk in Tanner pulled up information on the display wall.

"We got a data burst from Double O Seven. He's caught up to... Trevelyan." Tanner informed. He started with a picture of a dark haired man with hunched posture. The Beta male was well known to Falkirk, a hacker and programmer of formidable skill.

“Mister Sh-lughead.” Falkirk said putting on a Russian accent.

"Boris Grishenko?" Tanner said, clearly not getting the reference.

Something clicked in Falkirk's mind. “That bastard!”

“Trevelyan?”

“Yes, Alec. He heard me complaining about Slughead. Now he's recruited the arsehole.”

Tanner gave an awkward nod and moved on to images of a train being loaded with weapons. Alec and his right hand woman directing the loading with Boris skulking around the two in charge. Tanner had a whole list of images showing suppliers and clients.

"No sign of Karla?" Falkirk asked.

"No but Alec did get a visit from Ourumov and this man," Tanner said changing the image.

"Met.. something" Falkirk said.

"Defence Minister Matveyev. Until he showed up here he was considered a moderate in the Russian government. We've taken him off the moderate list and labelled him as a Karla sympathiser." Tanner informed.

Moving onto a clear image of Alec, dressing in all black while inspecting a rocket launcher. Tanner mused, "I'm surprised Bond hasn't gone for him?"

"Contrary to popular belief James can exercise extreme patients when properly motivated." Falkirk said. “Until Karla is dealt with, Double O Seven has to wait.”

"Someone else said that, once."

The desk phone buzzed, and Darren's voice came through. “The Army's Alpha-two-three company has arrived in reception. They say you are expecting them, M? Apparently they are rather ripe.”

Falkirk meeting the omega's perplexes gaze through the glass wall dividing them. Standing, calling Tanner then Darren to follow him. Falkirk headed out.

Arriving in MI6's lobby. Falkirk came from the rear, and passed the reception desks. Standing in four rows of six, all alphas, men and women. All dressed in black and grey camouflage. Standing at attention. Falkirk noticing the ripe smell of people who had been nowhere near a shower for weeks.

The workers and visitors skirting around the group in the middle of the room.
Falkirk sent a glance to the General and his staff, all in their green dress uniform. The head of the Army looking almost out of breath with flushed face.

Heedless of the smell, Falkirk walked along each of the four lines. The Special Ops team, standing at perfect attention.

After the brief inspection and asking the company about their deployment Falkirk returned to the general. “Are there any more teams that I am unaware of?”

“No, Sir Thomas.” the General snapped.

“Make sure of it!” Falkirk snapped then turned to the company of men. He called out to them, “Please make use of our showers. I’m sure you would like the chance to freshen up. Tanner, please see to our guests’ needs. To make up for dragging them here in such a rush, Darren please arrange a meal on us at... Any Preferences?”

One of the smart-arses in the middle of the group shouted out, “The Ivy!”


“Oh that’s very kind.” the General said, his beady eyes lighting up at going to the posh restaurant at someone else's expense.

“You're not invited.” Falkirk said. Heading off, Falkirk called to the group of soldiers making to follow Tanner, “Do enjoy yourselves.”

--

Falkirk was doing some shopping, just some gifts for Selene. Cody had asked to come with him, so Andrew, Mary and Yulian came as well. It became a full scale expedition when they met up with Darren and Colum.

Darren and Falkirk chatted as they browsed. The parents, ignoring the growing whines about boredom. Darren whispering, “Got the bill in from the Ivy,”

Falkirk picking up a blanket. “Oh! Let me guess! Fillet stake, lobster washed down with dom-prignon by the bucket?” He said with a teasing smile, fully aware of the riot that came with the release of tension after a mission. Putting the blanket back, not liking the cartoon ducks on it.

“They were on their best behaviour... at the Ivy. The nearest pub though, was trashed! Addison said there were a few possible recruits amongst them though.”

“Double O Five went with them?” Falkirk said, moving on to a really nice soft cream blanket.

“Fairbanks too. They’d never miss up a free meal.” Darren took the blanket from Falkirk's hands, saying, “A bit boring?”

“The word is classic.” Falkirk shot back and took the blanket back.

Moving onto the clothes section. Darren started looked at the tiny cardigans. He said, still talking quietly with Falkirk, “Addison put everything on his Black Visa.”
Falkirk gave a dismissive shrug. A little inter agency bonding was not something he would really object to. But it would make good ammunition for when he needed to give the Double O a bollocking.

“So?” Darren said. “Why are we doing this now? Don't even know if it's going to be a boy or a girl yet.”

“I like buying when I don't know.” Falkirk returned. Shifting through little dress. He really didn't like the ones that were pink or frilly. Settling on a dark blue pleated dress Falkirk added it to his basket.

Noticing Cody, separate from the other kids. Wearing a rather uncomfortable and harassed expression. Falkirk headed over to his little brother.

"What should I get it?" Cody's dark eyes darting about baby products with a sense of dread.

"Well, I got my baby brother a teddy bear." Falkirk prompted. Cody taking the suggestion like a lifeline and darted across the shop floor towards the toys.

Looking over the bears. Cody quickly picked out one of the simplest. A light sky blue one with white tummy.

“Do you want to add it to my shopping.” Falkirk prompted, holding out the soft waved fabric basket open.

“I want to buy it.” Cody said and stuffed the bear under his arm to pull out the small Velcro wallet out. “See!”

It was the boy's saved Christmas and birthday money. If Cody wanted to buy the gift himself, Falkirk relented. At the till Falkirk stood back, and watched Cody buy the bear for his new brother or sister.

After lunch and on the way home Falkirk asked his brother, "Do you want to give the bear to Selene now or at the baby shower?"

Cody took his time to think before deciding to wait. “Can I keep it at your house? So Selene doesn't find it.”

“Yes.” Falkirk assured his brother.

Chapter End Notes

A slight note. I use Victoria from R.E.D. The sequel was on last night and I realised her last name is Winslow not Winters. So there will be a change in future chapters but it is the same person.

As always thanks for reading comments and kudos. They are always welcome.
It seemed an age for the Analyses boys in conjunction with Q branch to bring Falkirk satellite photographs.

A little under two weeks since he first met the man. Control, escorted Jim Prideaux into MI6. In Falkirk's secure office the ex MI5 operative looked over the sites eventually indicating the one that best fit his memories.

In the Tactical Suite of E branch, Falkirk and control watched as Double O Nine infiltrated the base. Wade and Ryan where on a telepresence monitor from America watching as well. In the end they saw nothing. The base was well and truly abandoned but to Prideaux's credit it was as he describe, even the network of underground tunnels.

Coming out of tactical Sherlock was milling about Falkirk's office. "I will take my leave" Control said giving Sherlock a glance and walking towards the exit.

After six postcards all the same, from places around the far east. Sherlock didn't even question Falkirk when he handed over another postcard. This statue of Jupiter, from Beijing. Falkirk taking the card and his seat behind his desk.

"Any more agents?" Falkirk asked. Sherlock not very good at reporting his progress.

"No. Twelve people have handed in their resignations. I want to speak with them." Sherlock demanded.

"Well? Go speak with them!"

Wary as if Falkirk was still setting a trap. "No hoops to jump through? Forms? Something?" Sherlock asked hesitantly.

"GO!" Falkirk ordered.

Tanner arrived almost instantly, "Assassination attempt on Alec Trevelyan!" Tanner informed.

Tanner pulled up the information on Falkirk's internal wall. "Double O Seven had to interfere to insure operation integrity." Tanner was saying while a grainy video showed, the cargo trucks Alec's train blowing up.

"Has Double O Seven been exposed?" Falkirk demanded

"The assailant, is one Benjamin Able. A known associate of the Carrington Institute. He set the bomb to lure out Trevelyan from the armoured section of the train. Double O Seven reports he need
to interfere to stop Able killing Trevelyan, but Able was killed by Onatopp. Double O Seven says the mission is still secure.” Tanner answered

Dismissing Tanner Falkirk picked up the phone. Asking Darren to connect him to the Carrington Institute Chicago where Douglas spent most of his time. When Falkirk was eventually put through to Douglas he said, "Your agent is dead and you nearly blew my operation."

“I have no idea what you are talking about.”

Falkirk knowing a lie. He responded, “Alec Trevelyan will get what is coming. But there is more important things than revenge. Trevelyan's master must to be and is our priority. No one is safe with that maniac running about.”

Douglas gave a dismissive hum. Falkirk saw red, “Interfere again and you will see my bad side!” Falkirk slammed the phone down.

As the day turned to night Sherlock returned waltzing into Falkirk's office and flopping down on a guest chair.

"They're all agents, rats jumping ship” Sherlock informed and then proceeded to give a verbal report on each and his deductions on the employees and their spontaneous resignations.

Suddenly Sherlock switched to humming the ominous plodding tune of Catapults and Montagues from Romeo and Juliet.

Looking up Falkirk saw Mycroft coming trough E branch. "I prefer the Imperial March." Falkirk said dryly.

"Mycroft prefers the Ballet.” Sherlock retorted.

Coming in to the office Mycroft sat down barely acknowledging Sherlock. "How has Douglas' interference affected Fortitude North?" Mycroft asked and receiving a withering glare form Falkirk.

Sherlock looked between his brothers, the gears in his brain starting to turn.

"No effect, Double O Seven is still secure.” Falkirk informed in cold tones. Mycroft aware enough to stop talking.

Sherlock took a breath to say something. Falkirk interrupted before Sherlock could speak, "Would you like to come for dinner?” Falkirk listened to the polite refusals before adding. “ This is a pack Alpha's request."

Both of Falkirk's brothers thanked him for the invitation. A pack Alpha's request being an order given politely.

Going to Selene's office Falkirk knocked gently before entering. As usual the wall containing reports on several location, including Falkirk's home. Also displayed was the approved routes to several locations and Falkirk's schedules. Selene might not be Falkirk's Bodyguard but she was still head of his personal security.

"Mycroft and Sherlock are joining us for dinner. Would you like to join?” Falkirk asked. As Selene and Keading were closer to Falkirk she didn't feel the need to politely refuse before accepting.
It was odd to Falkirk. When an Omega became pregnant their scent changed, carrying a muted version of the scent of heat. If Selene was to go by, Alphas and Betas did not appear to have a scent change at all to Falkirk. Seeing the slight swell of Selene's stomach brought a smile to Falkirk.

"Keading gets the same look." Selene said with a soft smile of her own.

Coming up to Falkirk Selene wrapped an arm around the Omega's waist. Walking Through E branch they were joined by Darren and Falkirk's Bodyguard. Falkirk did extend an invitation to Darren but he refused wanting to return to his Alpha with Colum as quickly as possible.

Meeting up with Mycroft, Sherlock and John in the garage. Split between the two town cars they pulled out onto the streets.

"This is novel." Selene teased sitting beside Falkirk.

"Yes, your position has been usurped." Falkirk responded, indicating the Bodyguard beside the driver.

"It's kind of weird travelling backwards." Darren added from his position in front of Falkirk, facing him. The three kept up the casual conversation through the journey.

Arriving home Darren picked up his son and returned to the car for his homeward journey. The dinner passed with casual conversation while Sherlock was being unnaturally quiet.

"Coffees in the lounge I think." Falkirk said to Hudson. Snagging Sherlock Falkirk moved to the Library. The rest of the dinner party moved to the lounge where Coffee was waiting them.

Falkirk told Sherlock to close the door behind him. The LCD control that acted as a light switch and security interface for the house, Falkirk pressed a few buttons. With a jammer now online and a current passing through the window distorting any observer's view. Falkirk looking to his brother.

"Have you deduced what is happening?" Heading off the verbal wave of information "Simple answer please."

"Fortitude:North, one of two operations in support of Overlord to deceive the Germans. From the reference you have three operation..."

Falkirk held his hand up forestalling the rest of the speech. "That is enough." Falkirk said by now he had taken his position behind his desk. "Now lets have no more talk on the subject. Perhaps it's time I make good on my threat to sew Mycroft's mouth shut."

Falkirk getting an amused snort from Sherlock. For all the secrets Mycroft held, he did seem to think it safe to blurt them out at odd times.

When Falkirk and Sherlock returned to the lounge the subject of Selene's pregnancy was the topic of conversation. Mary, very traditional but respectful. Mycroft, traditional and less respectful. John giving his medical opinion, "...pregnancy is still safer for a woman of any gender over an Omega Male,"
"Bath and bed." Falkirk ordered Andrew and took Yulian's hand.

"Yes we should be going too." Keading said indicating Cody. Nodding Falkirk said his goodbyes.

Taking the children up stairs Falkirk filled the tub. Firstly Falkirk washed Yulian then allowed Andrew to bath himself under supervision.

Dressing Yulian in his nappy, then pyjamas the young Alpha was starting to doze off in Falkirk's arms. When Andrew had gotten out and started to dress himself Falkirk went and placed Yulian in his cot. Kissing him on his forehead Falkirk pulled up the light blanket and closed the door slightly. Going into Andrew's room to find the boy tucked up in bed with his green bear beside him.

Seeing his Papa Andrew lifted the book and held it out and open. Smiling Falkirk knew Andrew had memorised the poem but Falkirk started to read.

"Little lamb, who made thee..." Falkirk watched Andrew's lips move in time to his reading throughout the poem.

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Working away, Tanner burst into his office announcing, "Q has enacted Golden Directive."

"Why?" M demanded.

Tanner hesitated, glancing at the door. "Q thought it was a cyber attack, but it looks like someone is trying to get your attention."

The beta sagging in relief when Selene arrived. The woman's presence enough of a fortification for him to admit, "The Carrington Institute attempt on Alec, exposed Double O Seven."

Selene said, "We have not heard from James since yesterday. He may have been captured."

Falkirk stood. Ordering, "Reopen the comm-lines. I want to speak with them."

Tanner tuned on his heels, but before he could run off. Falkirk added, "Get me air support too."

"M?" Selene said softly, she was very aware of the open setting at the entrance to M's office. Whispering, "Please, don't get distracted. James, he's a Double O first. You need to be M before everything else."

Falkirk nodded. He then went through E-Branch, to the tactical suite on the far side. Selene at his side, in the cinema like theatre where operations were overseen. At the moment the large screen displayed, 'No Signal'

Crossing his arms, Falkirk tapped his fingers against his biceps impatiently. Waiting for Golden Directive to be ended, so the building was again connected to the information world.

Tanner ran into the room, "Thirsty seconds to reconnect the lines. The USAF have offered the use of an F-23, with stealth capability, already scrambling."

Falkirk waited. The screen flared to life when the building was reconnected to the various
networks. Over a few moments more, the various panes that made up the large screen filled with information. In the largest central pane of the screen, an indistinct darkened room was shown.

From the speaker, there was the sound of Russian voices. When they fell silent, the camera shook as it was lifted and Alec’s face filled the central screen. Alec taunting, "You answered! I was about to give up hope. Anyway, I think you lost something?"

"MI6 will never negotiate with terrorists." M said, still with his arms crossed and looking directly at the camera in front of him, so Alec would receive a perfect image.

"Oh, I don't know. Depends on what I have." Alec mused. The image was like a selfie, centring on Alec's face while he moved through narrow corridors of his train. "I was rather touched, that when someone wanted me dead, dear old James made sure I survived."

Falkirk's eyes flicked to the side of the screen, showing information on the the American jet scrambled from a German base. It was already halfway across Poland and heading for Ukraine, where James' homing signal was coming from.

Alec opened a heavy metal door by sliding it to the side. The image was still framed like a selfie, so the image blurred when Alec swung the camera round. James was shown, on his knees, with his head bowed forward and hands tied with arms pulled up behind him in a stress position. A guard in the room, kicked James' stomach hard enough to lift him off the floor.

The camera swung back round to Alec again. "Now, about the hostage exchange..."

"Will not happen." M interrupted and Alec burst out laughing.

"Oh, but I know you, Falkirk. No James, no.... champion, no me. Only Selene, a lapdog unfit to be a Double O. No one is there to help you make those tough choices, or make them for you. Can you survive the lingering pain as your bond slowly dies, when James never returns. I, don't, think, so."

Falkirk noticing Alec skip over a name, too hard to mention. Falkirk flicked his eyes to Tanner, the man nodded that the plane was in range.

M declared. "I will not negotiate with a traitor and terrorist, even for the life of my own Alpha."

Alec gave a nervous snort, "You're bluffing."

"You never could tell that, could you." M said and nodded to Tanner. The beta whispered into his headset and the information on the plane showed as it fired two missiles.

Alec was blinking. The camera was lowered, the image being transmitted upside down as the interior of the train moved in a blur. There was a rapid exchange of Russian. Falkirk able to hear one was Alec's voice but they were speaking too quickly for him to understand.

Selene translated, "Alec's asking if you did anything. Boris, says there is nothing happening with the computers. Another male, is reporting two thermal signatures heading for the train. Alec is ordering countermeasures..."

They were now getting images from the missiles as they locked in on the train. A satellite image came on line too, showing the an aerial view of Alec's train. Falkirk's breathing quickened, watching the train start to move and the missiles closing in.
Alec's face filled the screen again. "You think you have everything sorted. Watch this!" Alec's image vanished. Tanner announced the transmission had ended.

Falkirk watched something on the train's roof open up. A box like structure, with a crescent thing at the side was revealed. Falkirk demanding, "What's that!"

"Starwars? A missile defence shield." Tanner said, with a frown of confusion. Squinting while studying the image.

The radar dish activating and the crescent part started to spin. From the box section, there were bright flashes, leaving behind a lingering white cloud of vapour trails. The released missiles curved in a graceful arc until they were heading for the incoming American missiles. The two groups of missiles met, creating a huge explosion a safe distance from Alec's train.

Tanner pressed the earpiece of the headset he was wearing, to hear more clearing. "No impact! Should we try again, M?"

Falkirk looked at the train and where it was. Making for, and nearing the Russian border. One salvo, when neither Russia or Alec were expecting it, was a risk Falkirk could take. Another salvo, when Russian radar would be looking for what caused the thermal trails was a risk Falkirk couldn't afford.

"No. Stand down." Falkirk sagged, "Tanner extend my thanks to the USAF...."

"M?" Selene put her hand on the omega's shoulder.

Falkirk shook his head and pulled away. His scent carrying the expected stress of the situation. She watched the omega's slumping shoulder as he made his way to his office at the front of the building. Falkirk took up his place at his deck, in profile to the rest of E-Branch. Forcing himself to look normal in front of the staff.

Tanner whispered to Selene. "He doesn't want nice words or reassurance. It's the burdens of command. Mansfield was the same in her time."

Selene nodded and headed to her office. “God, James. Please escape.” she whispered to herself.
John entered E-Branch, like a wary animal. Fingering his badge that prominently identified him as an on-staff doctor. He sent a forced smile to one of the heavily armed guards. The man in tactical armour glanced at John then looked over the room again.

Waving John in, before he interrupted Darren. Falkirk waited for the Beta to come through the door.

Entering, John looked very uncomfortable to be in the highest echelon of MI6. "Sherlock ran off. He wanted me to give you this." John said handing over a postcard. “He said he would make his own way.”

Halfway through thanking the doctor Falkirk fell silent. The Fighting Temeraire was the picture on the postcard. The postmark from Beijing. On the back, 'Black King-Bishop's pawn, takes Black King's Bishop. Black King-Bishop's Pawn moves to White King's Pawn.'

Falkirk pulled open a drawer. Laying down an envelope. “Doctor Watson, you are needed. You are hear by conscripted to His Majesty's Secret Service, effective immediately.”

While Watson looked at the documents, conscripting him. Falkirk ordered, “You and Mary Morstan will be stationed aboard HMS Dragon. Charged with the defence of the King.”

Falkirk stood. John stood too, Falkirk able to see the man suppress the desire to stand at attention. “Good luck, Doctor.”

“Yes, sir.”

“M, in MI6 I am addressed as M. Not sir.”

“Yes, M.”

“Report to Q Branch for documentation and equipment. I'll have Mary Morstan brought in. You'll travel together.” Once Falkirk had finished he dismissed the doctor. Calling in Tanner, he then made the arrangements for Mary and for a meeting with the First Sea Lord.

--

After a message arrived at MI6. Falkirk now found himself in a high end Casino, one of James' favourite haunts in fact. His Alpha had even gotten Falkirk to frequent the poker table from time to time.

Sitting down at the Baccarat table. A waiter appeared without prompt, carrying some concoction James had created for him. Within the Martini glass, the sloe gin gave the drink an iridescent blue colour. With James not being here, Falkirk said, “A green widow.”

The waiter took away the vile thing, that Falkirk never had the heart to say he hated as much as the
normal Martinis James liked.

Falkirk waved off the dealer. Not familiar with the casino game. Falkirk sipped the matt green drink, while he awaited the contact.

"Rather impolite, not to play." Zukovsky said. The large man sitting on a stool and looking rather uncomfortable.

"Perhaps you have should pick a game I can play then."

"You're making them uncomfortable" Zukovsky said nodding to the people around him. Leaning in closer to Falkirk. "But there are many more who are far more uncomfortable," the big Alpha whispered, foul breath wafting over Falkirk. “This might help to make them more uncomfortable.”

Falkirk accepted the folded over pieces of paper. The crest at the top was of the FSB. They were some sort of list or something, with columns and rows, populated by numbers and Russian words.

“Allow me to translate.” Zukovsky said, pointing to one row. “Potatoes - 100 Kilos - Udria. Vodka - 12 bottles - Udria...”

“A requisition log?”

“Yes.”

Falkirk didn't like the grin that accompanied the answer, he was missing something. “Where is Udria?”

Zukovsky gave a menacing laugh. Holding out his right hand, “There is Russia.” Putting his left hand flush to the right, “There is Estonia. Near where they meet there is Udria. There has been nothing there for twenty years.”

“But there used to be?”

Zukovsky nodded. “My associates have looked at all the old places. Nothing was found. But Ourumov is sending supplies to the area.”

"What's in it for you?"

"I have become comfortable in my old age. I and many old friends wish to remain comfortable.” Zukovsky said.

Falkirk did believe the Alpha, but was still suspicious of who Zukovsky represented. Standing, Falkirk placed a tip down for his drink, knowing the cost of the drink would be added to the tab.

Getting back to MI6. Falkirk called in the back room boys for a meeting in his office. The Old Yorkshire police inspector, Tosh headed up the investigation in Latvia. So Falkirk got the little round beta the job of organising a team to find a compound in Estonia under Russian control. Dismissing the meeting Falkirk returned to his work.

--

Falkirk noticed a wave of activity passing through E-Branch. It was the moment he had been

“THE KING?”

“Unharmed. Early indications it was the Chinese.”

“Get me...”

“Guillam reports, Director Lin has not been seen since this morning. Ko, has made his move. He is now the Director of the Peoples' External Security Force.”

“Shit!” Falkirk hit the desk with his fist.

Falkirk stood, and marched through E-Branch. He entered the tactical room. First clearing out everyone but Tanner. The theatre like room very quiet, with just two of them. Falkirk took up one of the stations in front of the large screen, himself. He opened and secured the communications himself, too.

“Vice Admiral, Sir Thomas McLair to HMS Dragon.”

A clipped voice snapped, “HMS Dragon, receiving.”

Falkirk tapped away on the computer. So the other operator would receive confirmation of Falkirk's authority. Then ordered, “Message to: Cmdr. Gerald, captain HMS Dragon. From: Vice Admiral Sir Thomas McLair. Message reads: Captain HMS Dragon authorised to open and execute sealed orders.”

The radio operator repeated the message back then signed off.

Falkirk was given two seconds before a beep came from Tanner's phone. The Beta glanced at the device and said, “Seven bomb blasts in Prague. The pro-Russian forces are already saying that terrorism is the price for supporting Europe. Early indications, Muslim extremists have nothing to do with it.”

“Russians?”

Tanner nodded. “It's looking likely, M.”

--

Brayan, Falkirk's backup, now primary bodyguard pulled the car door open. Falkirk took his seat. The Jaguar then pulled away. The Police bikes joining them before exiting the underground car park.

Falkirk was reading on the tablet. Preparing for the meeting after Mallory had talked with the other NATO leaders. With the attack on a European Country, a military response was all but inevitable. Falkirk hoped to push for a fortification and militarisation of the Czech Republic.

Falkirk rubbed his eyes. The car stopped for a pedestrian crossing, without Falkirk's notice until the driver blasted his horn. Looking up, Falkirk's eyes widened at the woman in front of the car. Like she had all the time in the world, she crossed and Falkirk looked at her. The driver pulled away.
“Abort! Get us...”

An explosion, up ahead filled the front wind screen. Snapping his head to the side, the woman blew him a kiss and ran off.

The driver floored it. Falkirk being shaken as the car swerved the traffic and mounted pavements.

“M!” Brayan shouted.

“I'm fine.” Falkirk snapped and pulled out his phone. Connecting to Tanner he shouted, “AGENT TRIPLE X IS HERE! Trawl CCTV, inform Smiley and Mycroft... wait no, I'll call Mycroft.”

With Tanner acknowledging the order, Falkirk hung up. It was a few rings before Mycroft answered. Falkirk snapping, “Give the Prime Minister my apologies. I think someone just tried to blow me up.”

“I'm getting reports of other blasts, throughout London. Karla knows you are in charge and holding everyone back from the war he wants to start.” Mycroft said, stiffly almost afraid.

“We will send troops to aid our allies, but if one boot leaves European soil I will not be pleased.”

“What about the Americans?”

“I'll talk to Wade. He and Ryan know the score. They'll help keep everything calm.”

--

“The death toll has risen to seven, after today's blasts around Vauxhall....”

Falkirk flicked off the news. The main channels had switched to voyeuristic coverage of the bombings. Finding an old comedy thing. Falkirk smiled as the hapless Frank Spenser tried to do some DIY and destroyed his house in the process.

Mary put down the knitting she was doing, to watch too. “Michael Crawford, I saw him in the Westend, Phantom of the Opera.”

“I wish I got to see him. I think it was Michael Ball I saw.”

“It was you, the target? The bombs were all around MI6.” Mary said, returning to the subject Falkirk wanted to avoid. Falkirk just nodded. She asked, “You still think the house is secure?”

“What's a hostage for, but to keep us safe. If anything should happen to Yulian during an attempt on my life. Alec's rage will have no limit. He will be the grenade in the heart of Karla's organisation.” Falkirk saw the hard and closed off look on the woman's face. “If I didn't have Yulian. How else would I stop them going for Andrew. If he was harmed, I would go into a fanatic rage that would see everyone burn. Just as Karla wants.”

“I'm not sure my Grandson knew the darkness you carry.” the old woman said rather sharply.

“I don't know. It takes a darkness to walk into a head office of a major weapons giant and start shooting up the place. And it takes a darkness to teach a sixteen year old, how to prepare guns that
will be used to kill and assassinate. I was brought into the dark place and Daniel was there, teaching and guiding me just like everyone else.”

“That you are a superlative student. I wonder how you will teach?”

Falkirk looked at the hard brown eyes. Mary meeting his gaze. He said, “I still hope the kids will become...”

“A carpenter. A plumber. Or the laird Daniel should have been.” Mary interrupted. “I had the same dream. Not likely to happen. You should prepare, so the boys don't travel the path into darkness without guidance.”

“Are you condemning me, or condoning me?”

“Why can't I be doing both. Why can't I dislike what you do, the way you do it, and the reasons behind it. Why can't I dislike that I do understand you and why you're doing it. And why can't I dislike, that if I was in your place I would do the same thing.”

“It is a real bad situation.”

Hudson pushed open the door and quietly announced, “Mr Holmes and Sir George.”

Falkirk stood, it looked like he would not be getting a quiet night. The two guest were in the library and that's where Falkirk joined them.

Smiley said, “We analysed the bombs. They were placed in junction boxes, with a very precise directionality towards a vehicle on the road. Set on a timer, linked to the traffic lights.”

Falkirk frowned in confusion. Mycroft adding, “We looked at the CCTV. If Triple-X had not held you up, your car would have been beside the bomb. Not even the armour would have protected you.”

“Triple-X was not the one to set the bombs either.” Smiley added. “It was a work crew, four, all males. We are tracking them down now.”

“She saved me?” Falkirk said, getting twin sets of shrugs. No one able to answer him.

“I think I need to meet Ivan Simonov.” Falkirk said. Picking up his phone to make the arrangements through Victoria.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading, comments and kudos.
Falkirk sat in the Prime Minister's office. He held a phone to his ear, so he could listen in. Mycroft and Smiley, and Suzi Kew(001) acting as interpreter in a similar position, all ready to listen in.

Mallory lifted the phone on his desk. Falkirk and the rest hearing the click as the call was connected.

The voice on the other end of the line spoke, fast and in a flowing language. Double O One, standing near Mallory started translating the Chinese, “Mr Mallory?”

“Premier?” Mallory greeted in return.

The voice on the other end of the line spoke. 001 said, “We wish to apologise for the attack on HMS Dragon. We assure you it was conducted by rogue elements within our government. We wish to thank you for aiding Director Lin in bringing these rogue elements to justice.”

While Mallory gave the rather formal and required acceptance of the apology. Falkirk caught the man's grey eyes. It was enough to spur the man to say, “Where is Ko now?”

A woman's voice came on the line, who spoke English. “Please tell, M. Ko is being seen to by his brothers.”

“Ko's brothers?” Mallory said, a little confused.

“No Mr Mallory. M's brothers. And Kindly thank M for the back up.”

“I will.”

The call ended. Falkirk dismissed the Double O who specialised in the far east.

Mycroft musing, “At least Sherlock and Mr Guillam got Ko.”

“What about Karla?” Smiley asked. “Did he give the order to attack HMS Dragon? Was he there, in China?”

Mycroft speculated, “If Sherlock in interrogating Ko, it's unlikely Karla appeared in person.”

“Quiet!” Falkirk snapped. He did not like talking in this office. It was not secure. “We will continue this at our regular meeting.”

--

“Did you see, Ivan Simonov?” Mycroft asked, immediately after entering Falkirk's secure office.

Falkirk behind the large desk, looked to his brother and Smiley coming in. He shook his head, “Victoria can't get a hold of him. But intelligence says he has been given a deputy directorship within the FSB. So it might not be safe to approach him.”

Smiley helped himself from the decanter. Asking, “What about triple X?”

Falkirk said, “Zukovsky hinted that agent Triple X was very loyal to Pushkin and Russia. Never to Karla. So she might not be happy with what's going on.”
“Well,” Mycroft said and launched into a briefing into the deteriorating situation.

When Mycroft finished, Falkirk decided to start the push for something that had been weighing on him. "We need a new piece on the board." Mycroft snapped his too observant attention to him. “We are not progressing. We need to do something.”

"Agreed," Smiley said, not noticing the atmosphere between the two brothers. “I would dearly love to go but I fear I'm little more than a memory to Karla. Only one amongst us would be enough to lure him out."

Mycroft protested, “I do not think that's wise.”

Falkirk said, ignoring his brother, "I was given six possible but unlikely locations for Karla's base in Estonia. I will make a show of leading the investigation. Hopefully too close for comfort. Also, with me out in the field. It may force Karl to act."

"Karla will know it's a trap!" Mycroft argued desperately. With genuine concern in his demeanour and fear/stress in his scent.

"As with everything, the first step in disarming a trap is to spring it under your control." Smiley rebuked.

Despite everyone's concerns it was agreed amongst the three Falkirk would go. Falkirk watched Mycroft encourage Control leave the secure office. Mycroft then turned back to Falkirk.

The Alpha stressing, “This is because of James! You are needed here!”

Falkirk cast his eyes over his stressing brother. “This needs to end, Mycroft. The plan is...”

“Extreme!” Mycroft paced a bit. “I will go.”

“No. As M, as your Pack Alpha, as a strategic move. It will be me. You will be needed to organise things here.” Falkirk said softly. Mycroft gave a silent nod and headed out, his posture very subdued.

When he was alone Falkirk looked at the green leather of the padded door for a few moments. Taking a deep breath Falkirk lifted the phone to arrange the four meeting he would require. The first was the Deputy Director of MI6, Rhett Butler. The next being his lawyer. Then Falkirk issued a recall of all Double Os in the field and finally the meeting with Lady Carrington and Selene.

--

The next days followed quickly to Falkirk and seemed to blur together. First came Rhett Butler, the deputy Director of MI6. The dark haired Alpha, entering Falkirk's secure office with Tanner on his heels.

"I didn't think this place was still used." the suave welsh, ex Double O Seven drawled as he entered.

"Times must." Falkirk retorted and indicated the seat opposite.

"These could be my final orders." Falkirk said handing over a folder. Approximately one page of text, covered each of the scenarios Falkirk had envisaged. All boiled down to ‘Keep calm and Carry on'. 
Placing on the desk several sealed folders, Falkirk said, "To be opened in accordance with those orders." The files contained all the active operations and general information that M would hold and only M.

Butler looked over the order in his hand and then the orders that he could only open if he became M. He acknowledged his instructions. He wished M luck in the upcoming mission. The Ex-Double O Seven then took his leave.

The same day as Butler's visit. Came the visit by Falkirk's lawyer. Nervously the Beta was shown into Falkirk's secure office by Tanner. Being the recognised pack Alpha and with James' power of attorney Falkirk and the Lawyer went through the revision of Falkirk and James' will. Tanner and Darren were called on to act as witnesses.

Setting up the tray of tea Falkirk waited for Mary to arrive. Darren had buzzed down to inform Falkirk, Selene was meeting her in the garage. Eventually Daniel's grandmother and Selene arrived. Falkirk held a copy of the newly amended will in front of him along with a copy of Daniel's.

The old Omega looked about curiously as she entered the depths of MI6. Welcoming Mary and thanking her for coming Falkirk pulled out a chair for her. He then had to pull out the chair for the ever-expanding Selene. The Alpha woman having lost some grace with her rapidly changing body. With a groan Selene sank into the seat.

"I will be leaving the country soon and I have refined my will. Nothing discussed here can be spoken of." Falkirk informed gaining the two women's undivided attention. Both Mary and Selene knew this was more than just a precaution. Also, Falkirk feeling a sense of guilt for only telling Selene now.

"I have asked Keading to take over my business dealing in America and act as executor to the charitable commitments." Falkirk informed then went through other points until he came to the reason he invited Mary and not just Selene. "At the moment there are security concerns and Mycroft has been given specific instruction on dealing with Andrew and Yulian."

As Mary began to protest. Falkirk placed Daniel's will in front of her.

"If all goes well Yulian will no longer need protection. Mary. However, depending on how badly things may go, there will be a number of possible situations. In the better scenarios, you could gain full or joint custody between you and Selene. There is very bad scenario where Selene will have full custody and you will have unrestricted visitation and access rights, I promise that will only occur if necessary." Falkirk informed, clearly seeing how upset the old Omega was with have so little say in her great grand son.

When Falkirk stood Mary did look sympathetically towards him. "I know you are doing best by Yulian," she said as she tied a scarf round her neck. Selene escorted Mary to Falkirk's car which had brought her. Falkirk thinking the meeting with Mery had gone better than he thought.

Before Falkirk could pack up and return to his normal office the door burst open and an enraged, Pregnant, Female, Alpha was glaring at him. "What the bloody hell is going on!" Selene demanded finally letting her emotions show.

"I hope you didn't run in your condition?" Falkirk dead panned. Before Selene could argue Falkirk continued, "I am going to look at possible Karla bases myself. There'll be more security than a
Selene was not convinced and continued to glare at him. "I need to go" Falkirk said finally.

“What about Andrew? He could be an orphan.”

“No he won’t.” Falkirk said and headed out.

The Alpha woman shook her head while rubbing her forehead. “I don’t believe you.”

--

It had been over a week since Mycroft and Smiley had last been to MI6 but to Falkirk it felt like no time and an eternity.

Coming out of his secure office Falkirk walked down a corridor and into the Double O briefing room.

For the first time with Falkirk as M, the Double Os had amassed together. The nine chairs in a semi circle all occupied, except for James. Tanner, Mycroft, Control and Mallory seated at the head table.

Suzi Kew, Briony Thorne, Bill Fairbanks, Syed Masood, Graham Addison, Stuart Thomas, James' empty seat, Ciri Evans and Nathan Maloney. Falkirk looked at each Double O in turn, some he knew professionally others he was very fond of.

“Forg the first time since the sixties there is going to be a joint, major, Double O Mission." Falkirk informed. With the cue given, Tanner activated the projector and the Double Os opened their briefing packets.

At the end of the briefing. A rather subdued bunch of Double Os filed out with the exception of those Falkirk reluctantly admitted to being his favourites. Addison, Evans and Maloney waited patiently for M to finish up with those at the head table.

"Is this completely necessary?" Mallory whispered to Falkirk. It was the first time he had been briefed on the mission.

"Ukraine, gone. Georgia, gone. Czech Republic, nearly gone. France? The Netherlands? Do you want a war with a president in the pocket of someone who just wants to see the world burn?" Falkirk asked.

Shaking his head. "Good luck." Mallory said and walked off following Smiley out.

"You should not be going." Mycroft argued again.

"Give me another plan." Falkirk said.

"I will go." Mycroft stated.

"Your justification had better have nothing to do with James or my sex." Falkirk warned. By the silence Falkirk knew he had Mycroft's problems.

"Go before I have one of them shoot you." Falkirk said indicating the three milling Double Os. With his typical tight half smile Mycroft nodded and walked out.

Turning his attention to the Double Os. M snapped, "What do you three want?"
"Is this wise, you could be captured?" Addison said.

"I sincerely hope that statement is not an indication of your inattention during the briefing." Falkirk stated.

"Ciri and I agree. The plan is... extreme." Maloney said.

"I give you the same option as Mycroft, can you come up with something better." Falkirk asked getting sakes of the head from the three Double Os. "Then we all have our parts to play and you have planes to catch. Dismissed!"

The three double O's gave a respectful nod and said, “M.” before leaving.

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Handing Hudson two envelopes one for the butler himself and the other for Mrs Bridges.

"Dr Watson has expressed interest in having someone to look after him. I believe Mrs Bridges will excel and John will be very accommodating." Falkirk informed. Hoping if something happened that London was safe enough for the doctor's return.

Coming from behind his desk to stand before the butler. Falkirk added, "Lady Grantham is still looking for a butler, so is is Mycroft. Neither you or Mrs Hudson should need to work though. I have made allowances and I have left references if you do desire to."

The older Alpha held himself more rigidly than usual and couldn't quite bring himself to look at Falkirk. Moving to the door Falkirk pulled it open so he could go upstairs to pack. About halfway up the first flight of stairs, Hudson called to him.

"I shall await your return, Sir." the butler then moved to the hall to return to the kitchen. His posture stiff but the que in his scent spoke of fear and loss.

In his and James' bedroom Falkirk pulled out his suit carrier. Picking a brown, a dark grey and two navy blue, three piece suits. Falkirk packed them up. Then came a holdall where shirts, a pair of casual toruses and cardigans went into. The toiletry bag was in a permanent state of readiness and was flung in casually. Opening the mirrored door of the wardrobe and pulled open a drawer.

Removing his cuflinks, which James had bough yeas ago. Falkirk placed them in the velvet lined space. Then Falkirk removed the watch and chain from his waist and lay it beside the cuflinks. Removing a far more expensive and less sentimental set of cuflinks Falkirk threw them to land beside the holdall. Closing one drawer Falkirk opened the other, for James' jewellery. Finding the plainest watch the Alpha possessed, a steel Rolex Falkirk threw it to land beside the holdall as well.

Moving towards the bathroom again Falkirk loosened his tie, kicking a box in his progress. Deliberately not looking at the box, prominently marked for disposal without being looked it. Falkirk moved into the bathroom. Relaxing in the warm water Falkirk played with the mound of bubbles, shaping and swatting the foam at will. By the time Falkirk's fingers had turned to prunes and had topped up the hot water a couple of times he decided it was time to get out.

In his dressing gown Falkirk finished his packing and left his luggage out side the door.

A tapping sounded from the door. Pulling it open onto Mary standing with a tray containing a pot and two cups.

"Tea?" Mary said softly. Standing back, Falkirk indicated the chairs by the window. Using a foot
stool as a makeshift table Mary poured the tea.

She didn't mention it but Falkirk saw the glance Mary gave the box marked for disposal. "I remember when my husband would go away. He would make the same preparations and the same stillness would fall, as if the entire house was holding it's breath. I do not however, remember McKenzie being as distraught as Hudson."

"Hudson was the first good Alpha I knew. He always there, behind my father's back he would give me the only affection I knew in that house." Falkirk informed. They continued to chat until the tea was gone and Mary retired for the night. Falkirk offered to take the tray down.

For Andrew and Yulian the morning progressed as usual. Falkirk walking Andrew and Cody to the school and as usual the moment the main gait came into view Cody took off. Walking Andrew round to the side gate Falkirk gave him a nuzzle and a kiss getting an embarrassed whine in response. The moment Falkirk let go Andrew was oblivious to the dangers his Papa and Father were about to venture into.
As Falkirk was technically in Estonia by invite he was met at the airport by a willowy Beta male introduced at the local Intelligence Minister. In a show of cooperation Falkirk gave the Estonians a list of the sites he was going to investigate. There was no doubt in Falkirk, the list would be in Russia within the hour.

With the pleasantries out the way Falkirk and the MI6 tactical team, in a convoy headed for the first location. The disused factory turned out to be the largest producer of black market Vodka continental Europe had. There was also a rather nasty shed where chemicals went in and white crystals came out. Lethal Vodka and Meth, as bad as they were, were not MI6’s area of concern. Flagging his finding’s Falkirk sent them to the Estonian authorities. The gang didn't even know MI6 had been there.

The next was a hornets nest. Falkirk looked over the two people being packed into the car for return to Tallinn in order to get medial treatment. Falkirk didn't know who he had stumbled upon but he didn't think Karla or his supporters would be speaking Arabic. The unknown group had dug in, so Falkirk withdrew from the abandoned army camp. Making a note, Falkirk forwarded his information to Butler.

The safe house for the night was little more than a rundown farm house. No furniture, most of the windows missing and never having seen electricity or plumbing. Pulling up an aluminium three legged stool. Falkirk found a corner to sit out of the way. He knew his distressed scent was putting the Alpha's of the group on edge. Closing his eyes Falkirk fell into a meditation in the hopes of stemming the pheromones he was producing.

A throat clearing pulled Falkirk from his trance. Standing above him was the blond haired Alpha with hazel eyes who had taken over from Selene. “M?” he said holding out a metal mug.

"Thank you, Mr Brayan." Falkirk said accepting the warm drink.

"Ms Corvin gave me precise instructions," Brayan said with a small smile.

Fixing the Alpha with a heard glare the man snapped to attention.

"No matter your instructions from Selene. You are not to play the hero. I am the bait and you are not to prevent me from being taken.” Falkirk ordered.

"I understand, M" Brayan snapped.

"Good, and thanks for the tea." Falkirk said.
Slowly waking to the dank rotting smell of the farm house, the mixed scents of the Alphas, Betas, men and woman. Something tickled Falkirk's hand and he cracked open an eye. A mouse was pushing its head into the packet from Falkirk's snack and brushed against his hand again.

Piking up the sliver packet Falkirk flung it towards a hole in the wood and brick of the wall. The mouse followed the crumbs. Falkirk pulled on his glasses. Coming out of the farmhouse the scents of the Alpha's base territorial marking pungent in the air. Going a bit further out, away from the farm house Falkirk found a bush where the scents where absent and relieved himself.

Without running water Falkirk had to make do with sanitizer wipes. Preparing for the day ahead Falkirk dressed after having ordered everyone out of the smallest room. Dressed in the dark grey three piece suit Falkirk unzipped the toiletry bag and pulled out a small cologne bottle. He knew his scent was putting the Alphas on edge but James and Daniel had once told him, Omegas without scent ques were untrusted. Left with the decision, leave his natural scent with ques intact, putting the Alphas further on edge. Or Falkirk could mask his ques and hope the Alphas could get passed their unsettled feeling with an omega without ques. Making the decision of wanting level headed Alphas Falkirk applied the cologne liberally.

Coming out of the room, the first Alpha Falkirk passed instantly recognised the cologne. Brayan who handed Falkirk a tin cup containing porridge was the only one to comment. "I think you made the right choice." he whispered to Falkirk.

As the men packed up Falkirk pulled out his phone. In London Andrew would be just getting ready for school. Falkirk spoke with him until Keading called time. Wishing Andrew a good day at school Falkirk hung up.

The first location of the day was a bust. If the dock had been used for something illicit it was now abandoned. Not even the criminals or homeless used it.

The next location for the day was an old soviet era depot. They travelled through wide and empty countryside. The lone road led them right up to the broken wire fence gate. The convoy pulled to a stop just through the gate. Ahead was row upon row of high tin sheds.

Stepping out of the back door of his Land Rover. Falkirk listened. Only the sounds of nature could be heard. The men started spanning out and beginning the search.

Falkirk pulled open a heavy door creating a squeal that disturbed roosting birds in the rafters. Moving through the building Falkirk was thinking, if Karla was observing he would see little more than a headless chicken.

Moving beyond the first warehouse. Falkirk knew he should return to the group of men but being free of the mixed scents of Alphas on edge, was doing wonders for his stress levels. For the first time Falkirk realised the amount Air conditioning and deodorants played in suppressing the scents of Alphas in a metropolis. Out here, free of the confined space of the cars and safehouses was only the stale smell of oil and other industrial smells mixing with the fresh wind.

Coming to the end of the warehouse Falkirk froze. Sitting silent and still on the tracks, masked by the buildings was a Soviet armoured train. A hand grabbed Falkirk and he was being pulled towards the MI6 personnel. Brayan's alert fear trailing behind the Alpha and over Falkirk as they
In sight of the MI6 vehicles Brayan let out a warbling whistle. Instantly everyone was on alert creating a defensive perimeter.

Bundling Falkirk into the car and jumping in beside him Brayan barked, "Move!" to the driver. As quickly as possible the MI6 team piled into their own cars and the convoy took off at speed.

Before Falkirk could order them to stop and regroup in order to return. A tractor t-boned the lead car forcing it off the road. Falkirk's driver swerved around the collision. An explosion sounded, looking over his shoulder to the direction of the sound. Falkirk saw one on the rear cars flipping back over front to land on its roof. Only Falkirk's car and the one behind remained.

Suddenly Falkirk's car started rolling over and down the side of the road. Without a seat belt Brayan and Falkirk were tossed around the cabin while the driver was still secured to his seat. Coming to a stop Falkirk realised he was lying on the roof of the upside down car with Brayan lying on top of him.

The yellow blond hair of the Alpha was matted and sticky with blood. Removing the bodyguard's gun Falkirk wriggled out from underneath him. Rapid cracks filled the air as the tactical team exchanged gun fire with Alec's men on the road above him.

With a last look at the overturned Land Rover. Falkirk scrabbled along the muddy ditch. Something between an orgasmic moan and a growl was all the warning Falkirk got before he was slammed against the rise of the bank. The hand holding the gun was twisted and Falkirk let out a yelp as he was forced to drop the weapon. Using the other hand Falkirk lashed out and the moment he felt flesh under the pads of his fingers he curled them slashing the woman. Another guttural moan sounded as the Alpha registered the pain. Another growl and Falkirk felt teeth clamping onto his cheek and Onatopp ground her hips against him.

Falkirk had wrestled Sherlock, James and Alec enough times to know when he was being played with. Losing track of time, respite came when with a vicious growl Onatopp was pulled off of him. Alec growled at the alpha woman, until she reluctantly exposed her neck. It took Falkirk a moment to realise what was happening. Scrambling for the dropped gun Alec grabbed Falkirk's neck pulling him to his feet.

"Move!" Alec snapped and marched Falkirk up the banking and onto the road. Squirming Falkirk lashed out at the former pack member but Alec's reactions were too fast and his writs was caught easily. With his other hand Falkirk clawed at the hand scruffing him. Alec snorted and marched Falkirk to an open top jeep.

Forcing Falkirk into the back Alec got in beside him. As the jeep pulled off Falkirk looked to the side. The MI6 tactical team lay motionless around the second Land Rover. The hope of some survivors diminished when Falkirk saw one of the bodies with execution wound to the back of the head.

Returning to the Depot. The jeep passed through the road gate. The jeep took a wide route in order to get to the tracks where the armoured train still stood. A locomotive with with its Soviet red star on the side, and four shuttered and armoured coaches. Silent and foreboding.

Alec pulled Falkirk to the coach directly behind the locomotive. The armoured door hissed then
slid open. Falkirk was pushed up the stairs. Passing through another door Falkirk was walked through a darkened command centre. Only the Beta, Boris there to man the computers.

"Do shut up. And get out the way!" Alec ordered the Beta who fussed about.

Passing through ornate state room, complete with electric, crystal candelabras. Moving on Falkirk was shoved down a corridor, to the second last door where he was shoved in. The small cabin contained a narrow inset bed and a small desk and chair. The window had metal shutters which were sealed.

Forced face down on the bed. Before Falkirk could react to being pinned he felt a sharp pain at his neck. The stinging got worse with the drug being pushed out of the syringe.

"Loyal to his Alpha only." Alec whispered into Falkirk's ear causing Falkirk to hiss at the quote from his permanent record. With every heartbeat Falkirk felt the world greying around him

"James' willll..." Falkirk managed to mumble out before the nothingness took him.

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Coming to, Falkirk opened his eyes to bright glaring light bouncing off the tiled walls. The muted alpha scent in the room was familiar, instantly recognisable, and fresh. As Falkirk's eyes adjusted to the light the indistinct dark blur moved until Alec was revealed.

"If you're waiting for the cavalry you will wait a long time." Alec said and brought a portable monitor into Falkirk's view. James was shackled to a wall. Someone had worked him over, blood was covering James' face and one eye looked swollen shut.

"I came to see the organ grinder, not the monkey." Falkirk demanded in as strong a voice he could muster.

"Not until you're safely leashed." Alec threatened and walked out.

Assessing his situation. Falkirk first ran his tongue around his mouth, noticed the missing pre-molar where his cyanide capsule had been located. They had however, missed the new upper molar where a beacon had been placed. The metal chair kept Falkirk rigidly upright. Straps secured his wrists and arms to the back rest, exposing his torso. His legs, ankles strapped to the legs of the chair. And round his neck, a strap kept Falkirk's head up and against the head rest.

Moving his head as much as he could. Falkirk could see blood staining the arm of his shirt. The sub-dermal tracker was gone and if the pain from the back of his neck was anything to go by so was the deep tissue tracker.

The lights were turned off some time later and eventually Falkirk dozed off. The lights came back on, instantly jolting Falkirk awake. The door opened and Onatopp entered. Tall and imposing, with her black hair pulled back into a tight ponytail. The once perfect face now marked with four vicious scratch marks down the left. In her right hand a bowl and a long narrow cigar held between her fingers.

Swinging a leg over as if she was mounting a motorbike Onatopp came to rest on Falkirk's lap. Taking a drag she released a plume of smoke from her nostrils. Holding the cigar between her teeth she looked at Falkirk.
Holding a bowl of a porridge, she lifted a spoon to Falkirk's mouth. Blowing on the steaming food, covering it in a plume of smoke, she ordered, "Eat!"

Wrapping his lips around the spoon Falkirk pulled back, gaining a smile from the Alpha. He spat the hot porridge in her face.

Onatopp's smile grew dangerous as she wiped the grey mush off. She pulled back her hand and the slap stung Falkirk's face. "Naughty, Naughty. If you don't want breakfast let's move on."

Falkirk shuddered when the Alpha nuzzled his neck. Running her nose under his jaw.

Throwing the bowl over her shoulder carelessly, Onatopp spat out the cigar before releasing a final plume of smoke into Falkirk's face. Onatopp pulled a knife from the nape of her neck. Like opening a letter, Onatopp ran the knife between the overlapping front of the omega's waistcoat, the buttons seeming to just fall off as the threads were severed.

Falkirk tried to bite the woman but she was too far away. The tie came next and then the cold polished steel slipped between the layers of Falkirk's shirt. Slowly the knife was brought down, the treads of the buttons giving no resistance as the blade moved. The tip of the ice cold blade grazed against Falkirk's skin, and felt like a razor.

With the shirt falling open Onatopp reached beneath the fabric. As fingers ran over a nipple and pectoral a slight sneer came to her face.

"A child puts such a strain on the body." Falkirk taunted.

"You would have been magnificent in your prime."

The scent in the room was nothing to Falkirk. There was no anger, fear or arousal from the Alpha clearly stating she was here on orders. Alec's warnings appeared to be coming true. Someone thought he would be loyal to his alpha, whoever that alpha was.

Suddenly Onatopp reached between their bodies to cup Falkirk's crotch. She massaged the bulge, still hidden in the folds of the omega's trousers. Slowly, reluctantly, Falkirk started to respond to the touch, growing hard.

The physical arousal of the Omega had a reciprocal affect on the Alpha. On a base level, the omega's improving scent started to arouse the Alpha. Onatopp leaned in and took a beep breath through her nose, from right next to the omega's neck. His pheromones were making her heart beat hard and give her a rush.

The Alpha's pheromones started to affect Falkirk. He couldn't get away so his bond to James was under chemical siege. Falkirk's brain was starting to reject James' claim. Falkirk was squirming and mewling an instinctual reaction, calling his Alpha to him.

Barely noticing what Onatopp was doing. The moment Falkirk felt the woman free his dick with skin making contact with skin. Falkirk hissed and spat like an enraged cat. A last attempt to protect himself and his bond, and discourage the other alpha.

Letting out a laugh."That's the spirit I want." Onatopp purred in Falkirk ear and delivering vicious nips along his chin and down his neck. Skipping over the wide strap holding Falkirk's head in
Standing up, Onatopp moved back. A smirk in place, at the unfocused glare the omega was giving her. Fixing her gaze on Falkirk's Onatopp unbuttoned her leather trousers peeling them off. Not having bothered with underwear. She returned to Falkirk's lap. The Omega's erection, nestling up against the wet heat of the Alpha's body. Angling Falkirk's erection Onatopp ground down a few times. A malicious smile filmy in place. With a hand either side of Falkirk's head Onatopp continued to undulate against the omega, using the chair's headrest for leverage.

When Onatopp could move easily she took one hand from the head rest. Placing a finger at the base of Falkirk's penis she curled it up moving between the penis and vagina wall.

Falkirk was desperately trying to not let the pheromones affect him and wasn't really noticing the actions until something hard moved against his cock. The hard narrow thing moved about his cock and suddenly it was slipping inside of his urethra.

A gurgling, moaning shriek sounded from the Alpha. Onatopp slammed down hard, quickening her pace.

The back of Falkirk's mind supplied a word, barb. The narrow appendage was how an Alpha female impregnated someone. By Onatopp's reaction this was one of the few times she had used the sensitive organ. The growing nonchalance Falkirk was feeling, he realised was due to the presence of his Alpha, who was now the woman grinding down on his cock.

Onatopp returned her hand to the head rest and ground down hard and fast. Wilde sounds coming form her throat. The rhythmic massaging Falkirk's cock from inside and out. The pheromones his brain was now adapting and bonding to. He was being driving to distraction. The next guttural moan Falkirk learned was his by the mocking chuckle from the Alpha.

"Mine!" she stated in a growl.

Falkirk hated her. There was only one allowed to call him, mine.

Falkirk hated his physiology, his body was on fire, his very being sang with the presence of his Alpha. He was getting close and by the sound of Onatopp who was screaming and talking in Russian she was close to.

On their mutual brink Falkirk felt the strap around his neck being released. As Falkirk's orgasm hit, Onatopp's teeth clamped onto her Omega's neck making her mark. The spasming around and inside Falkirk's cock confirming Onatopp's orgasm as well.

With his last lucid thoughts. Closing his eyes Falkirk thought of his Alpha, his real Alpha. He moved to nuzzle the one his physiology said was his alpha. The Omega's sharp incisors clamped as much of the exposed neck as possible. A growl scream from the alpha, turned to a horrific gurgle as Falkirk's teeth met, cutting through flesh, sinew and artery.

Onatopp pushed away from him. Falkirk let out a scream, the fleshy lumps falling from his mouth as he dis so. The Alpha's barb ripped along the internal surface of Falkirk's cock. Feeling as if his cock was being ripped off Falkirk winced trying to close his legs but they were still strapped to the chair.
Disentangled, Onatopp scrambled back. Attempting to stem the flow of blood, unsuccessfully. Reaching the door a trail of blood stretched from her, along the tiled floor and covering the omega. She sagged against the metal door, each breath was more shallow than the last. Until with open and glassy eyes she looked at Falkirk frozen in horror and fear, she died.

Something was happening to Falkirk. He could feel it in his brain and along his skin. A buzzing and itching. His mind was racing and wrong. The death throws of the Alpha had triggered the breaking of the newly formed bond.

It was too early but he wouldn't be able to do it later. Falkirk acted quickly with his increasingly disjointed thoughts. Turning his head he focused, but it was so hard, it was like his mind wasn't his own, it itched and called for a bond that was no longer there. Pressing his cheek and the tooth underneath against the head rest, Falkirk applied pressure and felt the tooth move. Using his tongue Falkirk was able to work the tooth free and bite until it crushed.

Chapter End Notes

A side note on the barb concept. When I first started laying out this fic. One of the key ideas was. As Omega man can have babies. I thought the opposite should also be true, an Alpha woman should be able to be father. And only while being tied dose a full bond between Omega and Alpha occur so needed an alternative to knotting for female alphas.

I came up with something based on a sexual play called Sounding. It was a way to to keep Alpha woman tied to an omega so they would bond. For several reasons I've grown to dislike the sounding concept since writing the chapter. I even removed it during editing but put it back because I have established only being tied dose the bonding occur. And if I changed it, there could be continuity conflicts when someone has his wild teenage years, where he sleeps with many boys and girls without bonding to them.
The woman with short brown hair lowered the binoculars. Her instincts called for her to help the MI6 personnel, but the mission was the priority. So she kept her head down, while Alec's men attacked M's convoy.

When it was over, and Alec was dragging M away. She looked to the motorbike lying on the ground, knowing it only had a half tank at most. Dismissing it she decided to go for the train she saw arriving hours before. She stood and started running across the plane of yellow grass towards the old buildings in the distance.

Pulling out her phone. Before she could say anything, a rough voice answered, “Queen's Castle. Report!”

“Double O Eight. Location:HOT! Request: Medical team to current location! Request: Live position Tracking!”

“Acknowledged. Medical helicopter is in bound... We have your your position, Double O Eight. We are tracking you.”

Hanging up. By now the beta woman was in amongst the warehouses. A low rumble started, helping her find the train. With squealing metal, the long dark train started to move. She ran for the last carriage.

Leaping on to the train. The end carriages were just boxcars, for cargo. Unlike the front carriages which were reinforced metal. Climbing up on the roof. The desolate countryside passing her in an ever quickening blur. Finding a roof hatch, 008 slipped into the car. Finding a dark spot she hid amongst the wooden crates.

Taking off her back pack. 008 settled in, for however long the journey would take. As it happened, the trip would take a long time. She started checking in regularly, every twelve hours.

At the regularly scheduled time. 008 pulled out her phone. It was Q Branch issue, so the battery would last a week of heavy use. She called in. It was a ponce this time who answered, “Queen-Castle's Pawn, report.”

“You report. I'm beside wooden boxes, inside a bigger wooden box on wheels. Where the hell am I?”
There was a noisy sinus breath of annoyance. “You are about to leave Latvia and enter Belarus. Your fellow Double Os are keeping pace with you. Double O Five is preceding to Ukraine, the likely destination given the line you are on.”

Over the journey. The Double O counted the boxes. Looked at what was inside some. Stole a really nice gun or two, for herself and a friend. She checked her watch, the highlight of the day was nearing.

“Grumpy, Ponce, Ponce, Grumpy, Grumpy, Ponce, Grumpy... this time it will be Grumpy.” she said and made the second call of that day.

“Queen-Castle's Pawn, Report.”

“Oh, it's Ponce;”

“What!”

“Oh, nothing. Just reporting in.”

“I hope you ar...” Silence.

Ripping the phone from her ear. The Double O looked at the small screen, showing no bars. “That's not good.” She said. There was not much that could block the single of these phones.

008 climbed the stacked boxes. Reaching the roof, the brown haired woman pushed open the roof hatch. Looking out, she didn't think anywhere could be more of a waist-land than the planes of Estonia. But this place looked worse. Turning around, to the direction of travel. She gasped, seeing a grey city up ahead.

When the train looked set to go straight into the city centre. 008 climbing out. She scrambled along the roof to the rear of the last car. By now, strange buildings were passing her by. The train squealing as it rounded a sharp bend. She jumped off.

Standing there. In the middle of the overgrown tracks. Looking at grey buildings, that nothing seemed wrong with but she would bet all were empty.

Ciri Evens started jogging after the train. Careful of anyone who might be in the ghost city. Hoping the others would get here soon, or better yet, be here already.

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Sitting at the desk. Alec looked at the Walther resting on the rich wooden surface. It was not his preferred gun. The Cougar Magnum was far from here. He rolled the full shot glass of vodka between his thumb and middle finger. The glass scraping as it moved back and forth. So deep in thought he didn't hear the door slide open and the unkempt beta crash into the stateroom.

Boris, Alec's technical and communications expert was waving his arms and gasping while trying to speak all in a rush.

Ripped from his thoughts. Alec glared at the waffling man. Surging up, Alec backhanded the annoyance. In their native Russian he growled, “Make sense!” For added threat he picked up the
gun and aimed at the beta.

Boris righted his little round glasses, bringing the gun aimed at him into focus. He gulped. Not sure if his voice worked. "A broad spectrum E.M. burst, very powerful!"

"What the bloody hell is that?"

Picking himself up. Boris kept a careful and terrified look on the gun. “It's like a flare. A very powerful signal to break through any jamming.”

"Can it be traced?" Alec demanded.

Boris shook his head and shrugged at the same time. “Probably not.”

“Then they are here.”

"Who?" Boris asked.

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From the stateroom with Alec and Boris in them. Out of the carriage with its ornately decorated rooms and cabins. Heading towards the locomotive at the front. Inside a dark and armoured carriage. Two men in black fatigues sat. One paying attention to the computers in front of him. The other had his boots up on the sloping console and blew smoke rings while he 'read' the magazine with a bare breasted woman on the cover.

The old fashioned phone, set into the console gave an electronic buzz-buzz sound. The smoker, deemed to lower his magazine to reached out and lift the receiver.

“What?” he said. Listening to the voice on the other end he answered, “Yes, the screens flickered and there was static... No we don't know what it was...” The man then let out a bark of laughter, “Noo?” The man deemed take his feet from the console in order to laugh harder. He hung up and looked to his companion. “The bitch tore Onatopp's throat out.”

There was no sympathy. Both Alphas started laughing at the idea of the psycho getting her throat ripped out by the omega the had kidnapped.

*Pop!*

The two men looked to the door, leading back along the train and the source of the pop. The smoking man let the cigarette fall from his mouth, “The boss finally got fed up of Boris.”

The other man shrugged.

The door to the carriage slid open with a rattle. Alec looked at the two men, his right arm held slightly behind him.

The smoker asked, “Boss?”

"What's this about the screens flickering?"
Karla, Beta the bane of MI5 and MI6’s existent. Age was catching up to him. His body was getting softer. His hair was white where he still had it. And despite the wheezing cough he refused to drop the cigarette.

Getting out of the Mercedes, a 60s classic of harsh angles, black and chrome. Since an early run in with technology Karla refused to use it as much as possible. Even in his choice of car.

Standing in the dark forecourt. Karla looked up. The grey of the blocky piece of concrete, black in the night time with no street lights or even internal lights to the buildings around them. He glanced to the side, everything was too dark to see properly. Out in that darkness, was a train station several hundred meters away.

Entering the old hotel. The blacked out doors letting a shaft of light spill out onto the street as they were briefly opened. The lobby floor had the command centre in the middle of it. The balconies of the floors above were shrouded in darkness.

By now the new addition to his ranks should be ready. Stepping up to one of the desks, careful of the trailing wires used for power, CCTV and telephones. Everything had to be hard wired to overcome the jammers in operation. Karla looked at the screens. Ignoring the one showing the battered Alpha, Karla cast an eye to the one with the Omega strapped to a chair.

The Director of MI6 was squirming against his restraints. The omega arched his head back and let out a mewl that carried over the speaker.

"What's wrong with him? Why is he covered in blood?" Karla demanded.

"He killed Onatopp, with his teeth. He's going through a bond break." the operator hesitantly informed.

Casting an eye over the other monitor a wicked smile came to Karla. Walking out of the control room. Karla descended a metal staircase down to a dank underground network of basements. The strings of lights leading along the wall flickered ominously, threatening to give out at any moment.

Karla reached the door he was looking for. A big Alpha stood guard with the glazed expression of someone who had developed their body while allowing his mind to atrophy. The Alpha duly opened the door and Karla walked into the dark cell.

James was shackled to the wall, his hands fixed above his head while he sat on the floor. James used the eye that wasn't swollen shut to to glare at the new comer.

Staying clear of James' unrestrained legs. Karla pulled a clean handkerchief from his pocket. Getting close enough to the Double O, he wiped the sweat from James' face then neck. Suddenly James twisted his hips, swinging his legs to capturing Karla in a scissor hold.

Immediately the door guard burst in. A swift rifle butt to the head had the Double O seeing stars. Karla used James' distraction to wriggle free. Standing by the door, safely out of range Karla bent double and started hacking and spitting out phlegm and blood. While the wet thuds if James getting a kicking filled the room.

About to wipe his mouth Karla froze, then carefully placed the handkerchief in his pocket. Wiping his mouth with his sleeve Karla was filially able to stand. Walking out of the cell, Karla leaned on
the hallway wall after only a couple of paces to hack again. The effort was almost more than he could handle and despite it, Karla placed a cigarette between his lips and lit it.

Karla needed a few more breaks before he reached Falkirk's cell. The Beta guard opened the door for him. Stepping through from the dark hallway the bright light was momentarily blinding to Karla.

Blood stained the grouting between the tiles of the floor, in a path going from the Omega restrained to the chair and to the door.

The omega stretched his neck, trying to clamp his teeth round the strap of his upper arm. The omega in a mindless state, mewling and crying out. His instincts telling him to find a small dark place to hide. The chair keeping him in the middle of the bright room.

Removing the handkerchief from his pocket, Karla held it out and stepped closer to the Omega. The low mewling became a high frightened hissing at the scent of an Alpha, even one who was known to the omega. With the conformation the Omega was no longer bound to the Double O, Karla mentally cursed for not having an Omega on hand. Omegas being the only ones who wouldn't get a violent reaction from an omega in M's condition.

As a beta, Karla took the risk and tried to reassure, giving a stroke to the omega's neck. Falkirk's head snapped to the side, like a snake striking. The beta barely pulling his hand back in time. But the up close look at the sharp teeth alerted Karla to something suspicious. Grabbing Falkirk's chin Karla ignored the hissing and attempts to bite him. Lifting the dark upper lip, being careful of the omega's vicious teeth. Karla saw a tooth missing, that was unaccounted for.

Returning to the control room in the lobby. Karla demanded, “M, he had a tracker tooth and a suicide tooth. Why is he missing three?”

"He broke it then swallowed it.” the operator informed.

Thinking it through. "Did anything else happen when he broke the tooth?"

"The screen flickered and there was static.” the operator informed.

"Where's Janus?" Karla asked.

"On his train." the operator informed.

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The woman, looked over the utter darkness. The place was creepy at night and creepier in the day. She found a sign when she had been scoping out the area. Pripyat, once a city of 49,000 then a nuclear reactor blew up. Pripyat, like many other places were abandoned after Chernobyl.

Ciri Evens lifted the binoculars, the dead city being revealed through the green hue of night vision. Only visible through the binoculars, lights were being projected upwards from various buildings. A dozen targets had been painted for them.

“Ciri?”

Despite recognising the voice, 008 spun and brought up her gun to aim at her friend and Double O.
Lowering the gun, “Wanker!” she accused 009.

The blond omega took the binoculars and stood at the edge of the roof. He scanned the area, “Alec's done his job. Okay. Seven targets...”

The next of the senior Double Os, Addison also lifted a pare of binoculars to scan the area too.

On the roof of the building on the outskirts of the city. The eight Double Os lead by Maloney and Addison as the longest serving and most experienced of the group, drew up the plan of attack.

Maloney ordering, “Thomas(006), Ciri(008) and myself will take the tall building. M's likely to be there.”

Addison saying, “I will take the two buildings on the east. Kew(001) and Thorne(002), you take the two central. Fairbanks(003) and Masood(005), you take the west.”

There was a nod of agreement from the others. Addison had the final word, “Remember. Quick, quiet and perfect. So M doesn't bitch at us.”

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Karla arrived at the old station. Like everything else it was shrouded in darkness. The Soviet era design was blocky concrete like the rest of the city. He moved through the building and out onto the platform where Alec's train stood.

Opening the door to the first carriage behind the locomotive. Karla stilled. Inside the train's control centre, two bodies were slumped over the equipment. Going to one, Karla tilted the man's head to see the hole in the forehead.

Fleeing the train. Karla hobbled as fast as he could. Coughing as he tried to run. He came out of the train station. The Hotel was just a darker patch against the cloudy sky. He went to an apartment block, about three stores high and close to the station.

Reaching the building. Karla climbed up to the third floor. The apartment door was unlock. The three men inside jumped in surprise. Karla cast a critical eye over them, he recognised the man at the balcony door, where binoculars stood on a tripod. The two tall and lean Alphas he didn't know.

Karla demanded. “Did you see Janus?”

The man Karla recognised nodded, “He came out of the station about three hours ago.”

He wasn't getting something. He had expected the perimeter outpost closest to Janus' train to be filled with bodies like the train. Karla tried to force his brain to connect something and give him a clue. “Was Janus acting suspiciously? Or, have you seen anyone moving about?”

“No sir, nothing!”

Karla looked at two of the men dressed in dark camouflage. “With me.” he ordered and moved out, the two tall Alphas following him.

When Karla was gone. The man by the binoculars gulped in relief. He jumped for the box with the telephone receiver on the side, the hard wire connection stretching from the box and out the

Before the man could reach the phone, his body did a strange spin and he fell to the floor. His green eyes open and unseeing, a neat bullet hole entering at his temple. The unseen marksman so far away, there wasn't even a sound of a shot.

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Grunting, James strained every muscle but the manacles bolted to the wall were solid. He turned around, to brace his booted feet against the wall. Straightening his legs, it pulled the chains taut. Pushing against the wall more, it felt like his hands would rip off before the wall or metal gave way.

A dull thump came form the door. Then a few more. James recognised the sound of a fight. The door burst open and a wrestling mass landed on the floor. James caught the smell of an omega coming from them, before he recognised the slightly smaller man. Only when Maloney straddled guard's chest, pinning the guard's arms to his sides did James visually recognise 009. Maloney throttled the guard until he was dead. An ugly but effective kill for the Double O.

Maloney tried patting down the guard but didn't come up with a key. Standing he pulled out his gun and reloaded it. He aimed for the point where James' manacles were attached to the wall.

James looked away and closed his eyes. There was a dull thump from the silenced gun and the manacles were released from the wall. Standing James lifted the Kalashnikov from the guard. “Bloody embarrassing, being rescued...”

“By an omega?”

“By anyone!”

“Bond?” only when the Alpha's crystal eyes were on him did Maloney say. “M's here.”

James let out a snort. “Oh, brilliant! M charging in on a white horse?”

“BOND!” Maloney snapped, James on the wrong train of thought. “M set himself up as bait to lure Karla out.” Now James was on the same page, the Alpha was about to enter a blinding rage.

James ran from the room. Maloney was shouting for him, to the Alpha it was just a rushing noise in his ears. James wasn't thinking clearly with his omega in danger. The corridors rushing by him. He saw a mousey-brown hared woman up ahead, standing guard. James swept aside Ciri Evans as if she was nothing and pushing into the room.

The leaner and and more delicate of the omega Double Os, was soothing the willowy man curled in his lap. James approached his mate, smelling something very wrong with his omega. Stuart Thomas warned, “Bond, he's not in the right frame of mind.”

James ignored the other omega. Reaching out, manic green eyes flicked to him, white teeth flashed and clamped onto James' hand. Seeing Thomas press the heels of his hands to Falkirk's jaw, to get the omega to release him, James wanted to attack. He wanted to attack Falkirk for biting him, and attack Thomas for hurting Falkirk(even when he wasn't).

Thomas forced Falkirk's jaw open. The blood stained teeth letting go of the Alpha.
James felt an arm hook under his and pull him out of the room. When he tried to fight, a knee hit his stomach reminding him how bruised he already was. James swung for the person attacking him, stopping his fist when Maloney was ready to take the punch. The Alpha and Omega's blue eyes met. James roared and punched the wall, just needing an outlet for some of the instinctive violence.

“Bond! M has been claimed, and somehow the bond is now broken. He can't be around an Alpha just now.”

James roared and grabbed Maloney's jacket and threw him towards Falkirk's room. “STAY!”

Maloney caught himself before he fell. He watched James run along the basement corridors.

“Nathan?” Ciri whispered. “Does James know Alec is a friendly?”

Nathan looked to the room behind him. He dared not leave M, he couldn't. He ordered the beta woman, “Get after him!”

Ciri started running after James. She came out of the basement stairwell, and ran through the lobby. Bursting out onto the forecourt of the hotel. The black and chrome Mercedes was little more than two pinpricks of red light in the distance and getting further away. She looked around, for any indication of the direction James went.

A buzzing roar built up, giving the high-lowering whine of a motorbike shooting passed Ciri. The rider had blond hair whipping in the wind. Alec. Another bike shot past a moment later, this rider had very short hair. James.

Heading round the side of the hotel, the direction the bikes came from. Ciri tried to find another bike, jeep, anything with keys in it.

“Double O Eight!” Addison shouted running towards her. “Is M secure?”

“Yes, but...”

“No buts! Double O One spotted trucks coming into the city. We need to get out of here.” the sandy haired man shouted and headed for the hotel. The other Double Os following him.

Ciri bit her lip. She wanted to follow James and Alec, but M and whatever was coming their way was the priority. She returned to the hotel.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter went through a rewrite when I got lost. If I couldn't understand it why should the reader. If anyone is interested I posted the original on my tumbler. Original version is here
The man's brown eyes flicked to the side-view mirror. Seeing the pinprick of a headlight catching up to them. Then even further back another light of a motorbike.

“Put your foot down. Company's coming.” the man said, pulling out his revolver and making sure it was ready to fire. The passenger on the back seat, looked over his automatic pistol.

“I see them.” the driver shot. But did put his foot down. The old and well maintained engine giving a powerful deepening roar as it was pushed harder.

Still watching their pursuers. The brown eyes caught the flash of muzzle fire. Hen the riders were still too far back to be aimed at them. Then saw one of the bikes swerve wildly, trying to force the other from the road. “Turn us around! Now!”

The driver swung the wheel round. The three occupants being pushed outwards as the car skidded in a 180 degree turn.

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James focused on the single red light of Alec's bike. Then beyond that, the two lights of a classic car trying to escape.

The wind stung James' eyes, making them weep. He aimed the unwieldy gun. Squeezing the trigger, the Kalashnikov jumped and sprayed the bullets wide. He couldn't keep his grip so lost the weapon. Alec's bike gave a wobble but James clearly missed it by a mile.

James leaned forward so he wasn't fighting the wind. Pushing the bike as hard as it would go. His eyes really hurt now. James tried to keep his path as straight as possible, without hitting a pothole or concrete that littered the street.

Managing to come up along side Alec. James had no gun, so swerved into his one time friend. Alec swerved away. James hearing the man shout but the rushing wind stole Alec's words.

James couldn't go for Karla without dealing with Alec first. And he couldn't deal with Alec any other way. James swerved hard into the other man. Both bikes went down. James feeling the ground rip clothes and skin as he skidded and rolled to a stop.

Pain coming from everywhere. James forced himself up to his knees. His eyes going wide, seeing Alec picking himself up. James lunged at the other man, pinning Alec to the ground and beating his face. Roaring a wordless sound of rage, James beat the other man to a pulp. So focused, he didn't see the light building up, silhouetting the fighting men. Nor did James see the classic Mercedes skid to a stop. He did notice when a massive Alpha dragged him up. The man with shaved head and round face, James didn't recognise. Then noticed the Alpha's scent and the brown eyes, he was looking at a ghost.

“That is enough, I think.” came the rolling Scots brogue.
James scrambled back the moment he was let go.

“Guys!” the blond man stepping out of the the car shouted. “Something's coming!”

James was dumbstruck. He watched Daniel go to the bloody mess that was Alec and give a supporting arm.

“K'la?” Alec said, slurred from the swollen face and bleeding mouth.

“We have him.” Sherlock called, also standing by the car.

“Bond! Get in!” Daniel ordered.

James' arm was taken by Sherlock and was escorted to the car. He was pushed into the front passenger seat. The blond driver, James realised he knew. Guillam of MI5. He then looked into the back of the old car, where Daniel was helping Alec slide into the middle of the bench seat, between Daniel and Sherlock.

“Where's Karla?” James said, as if in a dream. Still very confused.

“In the boot.” Sherlock announced. Guillam put the car into gear and floored it.

‘oot de 'astard.” Alec slurred.

“The Laddie wants him alive.” Daniel said. “Karl's extremest must see they have lost.”

“Nor can he be a martyr to them.” Guillam said.

“If Alec's here, so is his train. Head for the station.” Daniel ordered.

Alec tried to say something, through the blood slipping don his throat from his nose. James whispered, “Falkirk's here.”

Daniel swore. He ordered, “We secure the train then go for the laddie.”

Ciri retuned to the cell, where 009 and 006 were caring for M. She knocked and pushed the door open. “Hostile reinforcements inbound.”

Maloney whispered, “Get us a blanket so we can move...”

“Addison fortifying our position.”

Maloney closed his eyes. If Addison was digging it, it was too late too run.

“If you get out of this, the password is 'Mother'. I'll shoot anyone who comes through the door and doesn't use it.” Maloney said. He then looked at the more delicate Double O omega. “Double O Six, you go help!”

Stuart Thomas pulled himself from M's side, leaving the hurting omega to tremble and mewl
against the more muscled Omega.

Thomas shook his head, his thought a bit strange and his skin not fitting well now M wasn't with him.

The two Double Os arrived in the hotel lobby. Addison, was preparing one Kalashnikov to fire then putting the strap around his head. He then prepared another gun and held it. Thomas and Ciri also took as many guns as they could carry then stuffed pockets with magazines.

Addison ordered. “Double O Eight and I are on the door. Everyone else, on the first floor and cover the four sides of the building.”

The Double Os dispersed. Addison and Ciri taking up their place either side of the main doors. The makeshift flood lights in the lobby were killed, plunging it into darkness. Addison pushed open the doors, to watch the jeeps and trucks pull to a stop. Two black BMW saloons, looked very out of place in the centre.

Addison's eyes darted from vehicle to vehicle, making a rough judgement on size and armaments of the Russian forces.

A bald man stepped forward. Addison took aim of him.

“Ourumov.” Ciri identified. “Head of the FSB.”

“A dead man soon.” Addison whispered back. He wouldn't start the shooting, but would make them regret coming here tonight.

Ourumov shouted, “You can still live through this.”

Addison thought about ignoring the taunt. If he answered, it could be a way to measure their strength and get a fix on locations. He decided it didn't matter so taunted back, “Even when you find out Karla is dead?”

“How do you know?” a new Russian voice shouted from deeper in the mass of soldiers. Ourumov turned to the voice and said something that didn't carry, but clearly displeased with the other man speaking.

Addison debated what to say. If Ourumov was a disciple of Karla's, Addison wanted him in a blinding rage and thinking irrationally.

“How do I know Karla is dead?” Addison sneered. “The man's a moron! He was out played! That how I know! Bond one side, Trevelyan another and Carrington filling up any gaps. After what Onatopp did to M. They probably tore the arsehole apart with their bare hands.”

Addison saw Ourumov take a shocked step back.

“Yes, Mr Ourumov! Trevelyan, M's to the last. A loyal omega to his Alpha and pack, who would do anything to protect his son. I wonder whose stupid idea it was to threaten Yulian?”

“One my command!” Ourumov screeched.

Out of the crowd. A smaller man emerged, dressed in long black coat. Flanked by a taller and
younger woman, with long and straight raven and black hair.

“That's Triple-X.” Addison whispered to the Ciri, beside him. Concern growing for one of the elite being here.

Ourumov spun to the pare emerging from the crowd. Hysterically he screeched, “Simonov, what are you doing?”

Ivan Simonov nodded to the woman. XXX raised her arm, with a gun in it. The nickel plated gun seemed to shine out of the darkness. Ourumov started running. The bang echoed around the buildings. The smaller man went to the fallen body and rolled Ourumov over with his foot.

“We're done here. Lets go!” Simonov ordered and headed for a car.

All the Russians packed up and pulled away. Ciri and Addison exchanged confused glances. A voice shouted from an upper level, “Are they leaving?”

Addison shouted up to all the Double Os, “Report!”

001 was the first to shout back, “North-West, all units pulling back!” Followed by all the Doubles Os stationed around the hotel, shouted that the Russians were pulling back.

“Addison!” Ciri whispered and pointed to a lone figure moving out in the darkness.

“IDENTIFY!” Addison shouted.

“WHITE QUEEN-BISHOP'S PAWN!” The English voice shouted back.

“Peter, that you?” Addison cautiously stepped out of the door.

The man in the distance waved, “Graham ya bastard. You never called!”

“Graham?” Ciri teased, Addison telling her to shut up.

The lean blond man and Addison met. Guillam reporting they had secured Alec's train and the extraction point had changed to the train.

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Standing on the platform. James watched the two Omega Double Os. The smaller, Thomas was acting as guard. While the more solidly built Maloney was carrying, *his mate*, to the door of the carriage.

Boarding the train behind the group of omegas. James could pick up Falkirk's scent hanging in the air and smelling so wrong. Following the scent he came to a cabin door and slid it open.

Maloney jumped up and barrelled into James pushing him out. "No Alphas!"

With both in the narrow hall. A bit more sympathetically Maloney lowered his voice, "M was claimed by Onatopp, but I think he killed her. He's going through a nasty break. Until it's fully broken an Alpha, any Alpha, even you, M will react badly to.”
Maloney looked over the other Operative before hesitantly adding. "You could resolve the issue here and now. But it would be by brute force, when M is at his most vulnerable."

James studied the narrowed blue eyes of the omega Double O. Accusing him, “You wouldn't let me do that.”

“Not a chance! If you want to truly help M. Keep the Alphas from this door.” Maloney ordered and went back inside the cabin.

Returning to the opulent stateroom. The first shudder went through the train as it pulled away. James found the Double Os winding down and helping themselves to Alec's vodka stores. Going over to Alec and Daniel sitting apart from the group, on the floor, at the entrance to the next carriage. Alec holding the makeshift ice pack to his face, nothing more than cubes bundled into a towel.

"Who's driving?" James asked.

"Mr Holmes," Daniel answered. "The controls seemed to fascinate him."

"Explain!" James demanded.

Alec glanced at the bald and beardless man that was his mate, in plea for him to speak. Especially since Daniel's face hadn't been pummelled in the last few hours.

“When Sandy told Karla and his lot to get stuffed, there was a problem. Sandy's codename was Janus, a god with two faces. Yulian's playschool teacher gave him a coin showing Janus. It was a threat. So Sandy made a show of resenting being kept away from his son. And went rogue.”

"And your part?" James prompted the Scots Alpha.

"The laddie needed someone who Karla couldn't see. With Alec going rouge and me dead by Alec’s hand. I was the likely candidate for the job. Peter Guillam was low enough to escape Russian monitoring, so joined me. We wrapped up the Russian networks with the closest links to Karla. Things got bad when Ko tried to take over Chinese Intelligence. So I called in Sherlock to help us save Director Lin and get rid of Ko."

“Why wasn’t I told?” James whispered.

“For a spy, you're a crap actor.” Daniel said. “You needed to believe my death and Sandy's betrayal to make it believable to the ones watching. And we were being watched, my house, your house, Selene's, MI6, the agents were like cockroach. As I said, even Yulian's playschool teacher, the same one Andrew went to, and Cody before Andrew. She was an agent watching us for years.”

James scrubbed his face with his hands. Ignoring how it hurt his cuts and bruises. “Why is Falkirk here?”

At that the two men shrugged. Daniel informing, “In Beijing Ko got a tip-off Karla was in Ukraine so we hot-tailed it here. Sherlock managed to do his trick, to find out where one of Karla's contacts was sending supplies. Pripyat.”

Alec admitting, through slurred speech. “We were told to go to a depot and capture the one leading the investigators. I didn't know who it was we were to capture. Onatopp was my point of contact to
the rest of the organisation and I don't think even she knew more than what Ourumov told her.”

Admitting they maintained an almost communication black out once deployed. Daniel did speculate, “Ko tried to assassinate G. To pull China into things. Perhaps things were getting desperate for the Laddie.”

“Or ‘is dumb al'ha was spotted.” Alec slurried and hated himself the moment he said it. James looking like a kicked puppy. But there was little Alec could have done, once James had been spotted trailing them.

A throat cleared behind them. Addison said, “It was more than that. Russia was invading Europe. There was an attempt on M's life. It was getting quite bad.”

James finally sat on the floor with his back to the wall. Addison handed over a bottle of Vodka before retreating to the other Double Os. James taking a swig and winced at the first liquid he had drunk in over a day, and it burning the split in his lip. Passing the bottle on Alec took a swig, also wincing as it stung the cuts on his lip. Daniel took a sip and put the bottle down, making sure the other two didn't get waisted while in a condition the thinning blood could cause them to bleed again.

"Who got the harpy? Alpha, Female, five-ten...." Alec started, then James said, "Double O Nine suspects, it was M."

"Bugger me!” Fairbanks, 003 said. “I always though he was bluffing when he threatened to shoot me." and took a swig of the bottle in his hand.

“Oh he took me on a training mission once...” Ciri started to reminisce of her time as a recruit and the then Q taking her to New York.

James listened to the awe and respect the other Double O extended to his mate. James knew how wondrous Falkirk was but he had always thought of Falkirk as his Omega. Listening to how the other Double Os talked about Falkirk, it was how he and Alec once spoke about M. There was respect, awe, fear, affection and even humour as they shared the stories of their experiences with the Omega. To them he was the one and only M. Like Mansfield still was for James, she would always be his M.

"….then he went and hired the bitch!” Addison finished his story. The rest of the Double Os bust out laughing.

Suzi Kew, 001 spoke up for the first time, "It's when everything goes to fuck. You pull open a door and he's standing there with with Corvin at his shoulder and a tac-team at the ready. Like faire godmother packing heat."

There was a bit more reminiscing before James asked, "Has M burned any of you?"

Briony Thorne, 002 started to talk about one of the bollocking she had gotten from M.

"No.” James said, “I mean. MI6 denies your operation. Your credit cards, travel documents, identity is all cancelled. The end of your Operational support.”

The concept seemed completely alien to the Double Os, answering James better then any other response.
Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the delay. No excuse. I forgot, then thought I had done it. Well at least I'm now back on a weekend update schedule.
#66: Home.

Mycroft stood in the bleak afternoon light of Poland. Only the narrow dirt road, running along the railway track, and barren fields as far as the eye could see. Smiley, unable to be still walked in slow circuits through the waiting Land Rovers. At the sound of the rails beginning to sing, the two men got closer to the track. The train itself not able to be seen or heard yet.

It was several long moments before the black locomotive arrived, in the roaring of the diesel engine and squealing of breaks. Filling the air with the smell of fumes and oil.

When the train came to a stop. Mycroft stood with George Smiley, at the head of the waiting men. Sherlock jumped down from the locomotive. But all eyes were darting between the doors of armoured first carriage, and the second passenger carriage.

The door of the armoured carriage was the one to open. The dark haired man with long face was the first the emerge. Fairbanks(003) turned to help the next coming down the steps. The appearance of the old and hunched man, making Smiley gasp at the spectre that had plagued him for many years. Following Karla, the blond doppelgänger of Sherlock's, Guillam.

With barely a notice, everyone else looking at Karla being bundled into the back of a Land Rover, with Fairbanks and Guillam beside him. The large Alpha came out from the second carriage.

“Control.” Daniel called. “You and your men, accompany Karla!”

Without word, Smiley opened the front passenger door to the same car Karla was in. His car pulled away, taking several with it. Leaving Sherlock, Mycroft and the MI6 team.

By now most of the Double Os, along with James and Alec had joined Daniel outside of the train. James standing back from the door, glaring and growling because he needed to show his displeasure. Daniel grabbed Addison, telling him to get rid of the security and commandeer three of the waiting cars.

The MI6 team withdrew to their cars, and drove off but not by far. With the Double Os waiting a distance off, making a defensive perimeter. Ciri(008) backed up a Land Rover as close to the train as possible.

A rather lean and blond man was the first off. He talked to someone still inside the train. Mycroft tensed, the domed edge of a wrapped bundle the first he saw of his brother. James paced and jumped irritably, seething that he was unable to be the one to help his omega.

Under a blanket, Maloney carried Falkirk out. Thomas held the car's door open for two omegas. When the two were safely inside Thomas took up position beside Evans in the Land Rover's front.

James, Daniel and Alec commandeered another Land Rover with Sherlock and Mycroft squeezing in with them. They took up the rear of the convoy. Daniel keeping Falkirk's car in sight as they headed to the nearest airport. The Land Rover with the four other Double Os taking point.

The plane was a problem for Falkirk. The confined space, with so many alphas had him screaming and clawing at anyone around him. Neither Maloney or Thomas were able to calm the omega. James had to leave before he reacted violently. The two Omega Double Os held Falkirk still to
allow the a doctor close enough to administer a sedative.

When Falkirk was quiet, sitting in the middle seat between Maloney and Thomas. James was able to return.

Everyone started to take their seats. Mycroft took the chair, behind the desk of the large private jet. Opening his laptop, and booting it up. A heavy hand landed on his shoulder and was unceremoniously hauled out of the way. Taking Mycroft's place, Daniel vaguely recognised the woman with beehive on screen, looking over her narrow red glasses. Having more important things to do Daniel tossed the laptop to Mycroft and picked up the phone.

"Secure Line to MI6." he ordered the communications officer, who acted as the operator. Having been designated spokesperson. James and Alec watched while Daniel made the arrangements for Falkirk's arrival.

James growled at the doctor poking at him. Alec too, was growling at the doctor fussing about him.

“A moment.” The head of medical said, dismissing the beta male looking over James. She then turned to James, presenting him with a form. “This will allow us to administer Neurotriptoline. The drug will alleviate the symptoms of the bond break and allow M lucidity.”

James took the form, just needing his signature at the bottom. “He didn't want it the last time?”

Sympathetically the doctor reminded, “That was before my time. But last time M thought you were dead. To an omega the breaking bond is part of the morning process. Which was denied to him back then.”

James signed the consent form and handed it back. Dr Dean then said in parting, “Do be a good Double O and let them look at you.” James just growled at her.

When they were released. James came out of medical to find Daniel shooing off the lingering Double Os.

Dean came out of a small and private treatment room. She announced to James, Daniel and Alec, “M's still under sedation. With the drug treatment, he should be more aware when he wakes up and shouldn't lash out at Alphas. But may still be uncomfortable around them.”

“Shouldn't?” James demanded.

“A mission is a traumatic event for anyone. Even M has to see psyche afterwards. Speaking of which, no getting out of yours, Double O Seven, Mr Trevelyan and... is it Q again?” the woman said. Her eyes darting from man to man.

The door of the room behind the doctor opened, Maloney again carrying Falkirk. A clean blue blanket wrapped round Falkirk, replacing the rough military issue he had arrived in.

“Remember Double O Nine,” the doctor called. “Watch out for M being sick...”

“I remember!” the omega snapped over his shoulder. The three others surrounding him. The omega
Double O muttering to himself, “I'm a bloody expert by now.”

Tucked into Maloney's car Falkirk whined seeking out the contact of the other omega. Maloney quickly came round to the diver's side and slipped in. Again the cars moved in convoy, with Maloney and Falkirk between Daniel in the lead and James bringing up the rear.

Moving an omega was an ordeal when in the state Falkirk was in. When at Falkirk's house, the Alphas had to stand back, while Maloney carried Falkirk.

Mary pulled the front door open with Keading and Darren beside her. Maloney taking Falkirk up the stairs, the other two omega males leading the way. Mary following, but before reaching the landing saw the ones coming in the front door.

In typical grandmotherly fashion and in the midst of a crises Mary looked to the grandson she thought of as dead until a moment ago, ”You shaved! Oh, and you lost the beer belly, good!” then continued to direct the activities of the other Omegas.

When the Omegas disappeared from view Mallory and Selene came out of the lounge door. Mycroft and Sherlock coming in behind James and the rest.

The group of Alphas collapsing into chairs, couches or the floor. All about the lounge.

"You're huge!" Daniel said looking at Selene's rounded belly.

"And you're dead!"

Hudson appeared and like everyone else in in the house, looked like he had been pulled out of bed.

"Life saver." Daniel said taking a glass of whiskey from the tray.

Hudson stopped by Selene while handing out the drinks. Whispering, "Ma'am, the rooms are ready."

Shortly after the drinks, exhaustion caused the break up of the group. Hudson saw Mycroft and Sherlock out. Alec and Daniel disappeared into the room at the top of the first flight of stairs. Mallory continued up where Andrew, Yulian and now Falkirk were staying. James held his temper until he saw Mallory disappear into the room given over to the other alpha. Selene stood at the entrance to the room beside James and Falkirk's until she was sure James wouldn't attack the other Alpha.

Entering the room and closing the door behind him. James basked in the scent, far more stressed then he would have imagined but at least it had the right note of a bound omega and not the strange sickly smell of a breaking bond.

Falling on the bed fully clothed James rubbed against Falkirk's pillow. He drifted in and out of his lucid state. Not quite able to fall completely asleep in the lingering absence of his omega. A soft click of a handle had him up and alert. The shadow in the doorway being so small, killed the instincts of a Double O.

“Daddy!” a high, happy squeal sounded and the young omega ran and jumped onto the bed. James pulled his son against him and curled up around him. Brushing his nose into the small delicate neck, taking in the light, slightly sweet smell that had hints of Falkirk and what James assumed to
be himself. James drifting off rather quickly, with Andrew rubbing against him in a scent bath.
Opening the door. Alec peeked into the darkened room. He crossed to the crib, suspecting it was time Yulian should move to a bed. Stroking down the small boy's back, it was only a moment before Yulian began to stir.

The boy's brown eyes fluttered open. To most seeing their papa battered and bruised would send them into a terrified huddle. But not Alec, Yulian had seen his Papa after fights enough times to not be shocked by it. Or even by the long absence from home.

Alec lifted the boy out of the crib. Yulian eager to be out of the nappy he had slept in. After a change. Alec sat on the floor with his legs crossed, keeping his son in his lap.

The door pushed open. From the small boy's point of view a man he didn't know came in. A bald man. A man with slightly hollow cheeks. Sunken eyes. And lean.

“Hello, daddy.” Alec called. Yulian hid his face in his papa's chest. Frightened of the stranger.

Daniel sat, cross legged, in front of his mate and child. His appearance my have changed over the months. But his voice had not. He sang, deep and operatic.

Yulian peeked out, knowing the song and the sound of the deep voice. Slowly taking in the changes. Smelling the air. Listening. Trying to recognise the bits of his dad he could.

“...Hear his voice a-whisp'ring low: 'Big boy, remember, you mus' remember, REMEMBER....”

Alec joined in for the chorus, “STAN’ UP AN’ FIGHT UNTIL YOU HEAR DE BELL, STAN’ TOE TO TOE, TRADE BLOW FOR BLOW...”

Not quite able to keep up with the words, Yulian sang, “La,La lala.” in time to the words while bouncing.

The door burst open. Mary in a dressing gown and hair curlers, “Would you lot keep it down.”

Daniel smiled and ducked his head. Alec opened his arms to let Yulian stand and go to his dad. Careful not to startle his son, Daniel wound and arm around him. Feeling the small hands touch his face, where his beard should be, then the hands moved up to touch the short stubble on top of his head.

Daniel meeting the light brown eyes, that had been inherited from him. Brushing the the brown hair, not as dark as his own nor able to be described as the blond from Alec.

Alec slid closer and lay his head on the bigger Alpha's shoulders. Watching Yulian explore the changes to Daniel's appearance.

“See ducks?” Yulian asked with big pleading eyes.
Like Daniel, Alec reached out to run his fingers through his son's long hair. “Yes, we can go see the duck?”

“Ice cream?”

Daniel nodded. “Breakfast first.” He said, making the boy pout in disappointment.

They stood. Daniel keeping a hold of his son, lifting him up. The two parents and son stepped out of the room finding the early morning rush was beginning.

Cody was coming out of the bathroom, rubbing his sleepy eyes. His dark hair sticking up at all angles. Mallory was seeing to his own son.

Selene burst out onto the landing, looking round. “Andrew isn't in his room!”

Cracking a jaw popping yawn, Cody said, “Heard him go to Falkirk's room.”

Everyone looked to the door on the far side of the landing, where Falkirk currently was. Cody adding, as of he was speaking so someone especially stupid. “Down, stairs,”

Selene clipped the boy upside the head. “Watch your tone.”

Completely unfazed, Cody just plodded back to the room he had been using. To go get dress and ready for school.

“Dose Keading know you skelp him?” Daniel teased the woman.

With a slightly wide gated waddle, Selene headed for the stairs. Tossing over her shoulder, “He dose it all the time.”

Over the few hours he had to sleep James' muscles had stiffened and every bruise and cut hurt worse. The scent of Andrew and his happiness filled James nostrils as the child rubbed against his Alpha. Wrapping his arms around Andrew James squeezed slightly.

"School," Selene called from the door "And Daddy needs a bath!"

Andrew reluctantly pushed himself from his Alpha to go get ready.

Unable to find peace with four children going through their morning routines and Selene, Mallory Daniel and Alec's voices shouting to corral various children. James was forced to get up. Grabbing a quick shower James made it down stairs for breakfast.

Of course Andrew was the only Omega present. The others caring for Falkirk. The table was rather lively. Cody dividing his time between eating and the adults. Aware something wasn't right but not able to understand it yet.

When the bell sounded Hudson extricated himself from the dining room to go answer the door.

The butler returned with Ciri Evans, carrying a rucksack. "Nathan wanted me to bring some stuff over," Evans informed.

James stood before anyone else could do anything. Showing Evans up to the second floor where Falkirk had been quarantined from the Alphas of the pack. Indicating the door, "It's best if I hang back."

From the stairs James watched as the Beta woman tapped lightly on the closed far left door. The
Old Omega opened then closed the door, for Maloney to appearer a moment later. When the omega Double O stepped out James knew he would see nothing so went back downstairs.

When James returned to the ground floor everyone had finished their breakfast. Mallory had already left and Alec, Selene and Cody were just coming out of the Library.

Cody asking Alec and his stepmother, “So it was just a game?” Selene confirming in a way, that meant she had answered the question before.

Alec patted the boy and said, “How could I leave my favourite little man. We were just tricking some silly people who were watching.”

Cody still asked a few more questions. Until Selene called, “School time.”

Andrew darted out of the lounge. Dressed in his dapper little uniform. With school satchel on his back. Cody, not quite so proud of the stuffy uniform needed Selene to straighten his tie and tuck in his shirt.

"I'll take them," James said.

Gathering Andrew and Cody, James lead them out the back to the garage. Unlocking the Aston James flipped the seat forward so the kids could climb in while he opened he door onto the lane that ran behind the house.

James stopped the car outside the school. The moment he was out, Cody ran for the main gate automatically. Andrew held his dad's hand, expecting and wanting to be walked to the gate.

"No. That one." Andrew said pointing to the side of the school.

Following the path round the side of the school. A pleasant Beta woman greeted James at the gate for the youngest class. "So you're Andrews father?"

The Beta introduced herself as an teaching assistant on morning duty, but James could just watch Andrew. Moving through the gate the boy was immediately accosted by two smaller children. One dirty blond haired boy and a black haired girl. James suspecting they were Omegas as well.

Then a bigger boy James suspected of being an Alpha approached Andrew, backed up with two friends that could have been an Alphas or big Betas. The two kids with Andrew dropped their heads but Andrew refused. He then he dropped down and lunged with his shoulder, sending the lead Alpha boy to the ground. The Alpha's friends ran, then the Alpha followed them when he realised he was alone. By the time the teaching assistant turned to see what James was looking at the whole incident was over.

"How is he with the other pupils?" James asked the assistant.

"The Omegas look up to him but... Andrew is rather confrontational, especially towards Alphas." the assistant informed.

"Gets that from his mother," James casually informed with a disarming smile.

"Sir Thomas? He seems such a nice laid back gentleman." the assistant insisted.

"A mistake most people make." James returned and gave his goodbyes.

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Retuning home James found Selene laying on the couch. Groaning and rubbing her back. She informed James, Alec and Daniel had taken Yulian and Colum to the park.

"Congratulations. How far along are you." James asked sitting down.

"Fourteen weeks." Selene informed.

"Bond," Maloney said coming to sit. "M is a more aware now. He wants to see you."

Nodding his thanks to the Double O. James headed upstairs. On his way up James passed Mary Carrington coming down.

Tapping lightly on the bedroom door on the 2nd floor. Keading pulled it open. Leaving the door, Keading retuned to the pile of blankets in the corner and whispered something near the nest. James stepped in but didn't approach the nest. Slowly a flap pulled back and the green eyes unencumbered by his glasses peered out of the darkness.

Giving a smile to his mate James was pleased to receive one in return. Getting a hidden wave from within the folds of the nest as well. James could see the longing on the Omega and wanted nothing more to wrap himself round his mate mingling their scents again, getting lost in each other.

James moved to the corner diagonally opposite of the sparsely furnished room. The Alpha made himself comfortable.

Falkirk made a few aborted attempts to say something, James gave a smile and didn't press him. Content to be in the presence of the Omega James relaxed. A slight movement within the nest as Falkirk rested his head in his knees just watching the Alpha.

Mary arrived with a tray at lunch time. When Keading handed Falkirk a sandwich James heard some muttering. Keading nodded and followed the old woman.

"I'll be back in a minute." Keading said as he walked out.

James knew when you had gone through hell the last question a person wanted to hear was 'How are you?' but he couldn't think of anything else. As James ran through openings it was Falkirk who spoke first.

"I fucked up. I gave the go to early." Falkirk said, his voice barely carrying through the nest.

"We got the bastard, that's what counts. I'm annoyed you didn't tell me about Alec." James said trying to keep his tone light and non accusatory.

James held up his had to forestall the argument Falkirk was about to make.

"As M, how did the mission go?" James asked immediately continuing, "Did we get Karla? Yes. Did we damage his networks? Yes. Is President Matveyev under siege from his own people without his handler? Yes. Is Ourumov lying dead in the middle of a ghost city? Yes."

James got a hesitant nod after each statement.

"Mycroft said Defence Minister Mishkin has asked for asylum and Zukovsky is negotiating for Karla's head." James informed and added "You of all people should know. It doesn't matter how messy a mission gets. All that matters is the job gets done."

Most of Falkirk's time was devoted to cleaning up the messes of the Double Os so couldn't really
argue. However, being part of the mission had put a new perspective things for Falkirk.

"It's a bit different in the trenches. With the blood and grime caking you. Sweat and Sex sticking to every pore and filling you nostrils with the stink." James said, with a slightly haunted and far off look.

Falkirk knew and often read the reports. James hardly mentioned his missions and never his conquests.

Now he had started talking James couldn't help feeling he was rambling and continued. "They were talking, the other Double Os. You were given a new nick name, Double O M. But as they talked, something wasn't mentioned so I asked them. They didn't even knew what burning meant. You have not abandoned a single Double O since becoming M."

"I killed one."

"I fucked up that time." James admitted for the first time. Remembering how he acted after Papava's death.

"I saw Andrew floor someone twice his size," James said deliberately giving Falkirk a chance at a lighter topic. The drugs were messing with Falkirk's scent but James wanted to smell something other than the sickly que and see more than the haunted look in his Omega's eyes. "Apparently he is the leader of the Omegas,"

"Early indications of problems with authority and Alphas," Falkirk added.

"I wonder where he could have learned that from?" James teased innocently.

"No idea," Falkirk shot with a real smile that shone through his eyes.

Slowly Falkirk started to break the nest and shivered at the temperature difference between the cocoon and the room. James moved to his feet and offered a hand to Falkirk.

Seeing James looking at the box strapped to his left arm Falkirk ducked his head. Falkirk said, "You don't mind, I can't..."

Interrupting Falkirk by tipping his chin up. "We have all the time in the world. Only when you're ready."

With a steadying arm James helped Falkirk down to their room. First helping Falkirk change into something warm and comfortable. Then he helped him down to the lounge. Keading got a blanket from Falkirk's cupboard in the library.

Mary expressed her concerns for Falkirk being up so quickly but Keading and Darren argued it was good to get fresh air. Alec and Daniel returned exhausted, with to rosy cheeked children in tow. Colum made for his Papa claiming his place on Darren's lap.

At three o'clock, on Falkirk's insistence he was bundled into James' Aston Martin. Driving to the school James insisted Falkirk wait in the car while he walked to the gate to get Andrew.

Seeing his Father, Andrew ran to him at full speed. Scooping up the child James listened as his son told him about his day at school. They then met Cody standing at the front gate. It didn't go unnoticed by James the wide birth the other children gave Falkirk's brother.

"Cody? How was your day?" James asked casually.
"Boring and uneventful," Cody replied.

James knew while Cody was kept with his age group his academic exercises were far more advanced. Keading had expressed concern about Cody only interacting with pack members and had no known friends.

"Papa!" Andrew shouted seeing his Papa in the grey car. His attempt to see his Papa this morning having been thwarted. James whispered a warning that Falkirk would smell strange and wasn't feeling well.

Cody and Andrew called a greeting to Falkirk, while climbing in to the back. Andrew keeping up a constant stream of chatter to his Dad and Papa throughout the journey.

Returning home James pulled into the garage. Telling the kids to go on ahead. Andrew ran out of the garage while Cody took a far more sedate pace. James came around the car to help Falkirk out.

"He's very observant." James said referring to Cody who had watched Falkirk quietly throughout the journey.

"Yes, I'm going to ask Hudson or Shane about when Sherlock started display his quirks." Falkirk answered.

Coming out of the garage. James careful of his omega pressing to his side and how Falkirk was very unsure of his feet. Cody was still making slow progress along the garden path. James whispered, "He's using the widows to watch us."

"I know." Falkirk whispered back.

Inside, Keading had sent Darren and Maloney home. He was now taking charge of Andrew and Cody, watching over the two as they did their homework. Alec had taken Yulian upstairs for his bath.

While the children were occupied Falkirk sat on the couch. James untying his mate's shoes then tucking a blanket around the recovering omega.

Having heard his brother was up Mycroft arrived just before dinner. Moving to the Library so they could speak in private. James made sure Falkirk was safely in a chair with his blanket before giving a warning glare to Mycroft and left the two siblings alone.

"I hear Mishkin is seeking asylum and Zukovsky is brokering a deal for Karla's hide." Falkirk said. It was clear Mycroft didn't expect Falkirk to know as much as he did.

"Yes. Apparently Karla's supports are deserting him and his enemies are moving in. The location of Ourumov and the President is currently unknown. The Prime Minister has all but taken control of the country," Mycroft informed.

"I don't have details yet. But I believe Ourumov is dead. Everything else?" Falkirk said.

Hiding his surprise over Ourumov. Mycroft answered, "Falling into place as expected."

"Make sure the Chinese and Europeans don't succeed in getting their agents into positions even at the cost of ours. It's better the Russians decide the new president than the likes of us or anyone else." Falkirk said.

"Agreed." Mycroft responded.
“HMS Dragon is returning to the UK. Watson has decided to stay aboard until it arrives in Portsmouth. 6 days, if sailing is good.”

Mycroft was just going through the details when James knocked the door. Calling Falkirk and Mycroft to the table, James moved to help his omega again.

It was nice that James wanted to fuss over him but Falkirk was starting to feel the invalid in James’ eyes. "I'm warm enough" Falkirk reassured seeing the Alpha about to pick up the discarded blanket.

The meal passed with amiable conversation. The drug suppressing the affects of Falkirk's breaking bond had left him queasy and after a couple of bites stopped eating. Mycroft took his leave and the rest of the pack retired to the lounge. Keading supervised Andrew and Cody's bath and put Yulian to bed.

After dinner James attempted to tuck Falkirk in again but Falkirk thanked him, then placed the blanket on the floor beside him. Falkirk was getting tired but dismissed James, Mary and even Keading's concern when he returned. Forcing himself on Falkirk waited until all the children were in bed and then Mary retired for the night as well.

Looking to Selene. Falkirk ordered, "Brayan, report"

Selene who had been avoiding the topic dropped her gaze a moment before returning it to Falkirk. Alec also looked uncomfortable with the reminder of the assault on Falkirk's convoy.

"One of the seven out of the fourteen who survived. Barely. Brayan's condition as of yesterday was serious but stable. Severe cranial trauma resulting in swelling of the brain was the worst of his injuries. The doctors suspect there will be brain damage, the severity of which will not be known until he wakes up." Selene informed.

"And the rest?" Falkirk asked getting a clinical list of the injuries and deaths of the tactical team who had accompanied him.

Now he had the information. Falkirk pushed himself up, James came to his assistance. On the first floor Falkirk moved past the flight to the second floor. Wanting to go to his own room. Climbing into bed. The day taking its toll on him. The moment he lay down, Falkirk was out like a light.

--

Something was wrong, an Alpha, too close. A mewl broke from Falkirk's throat. The remaining rational part of the omega's mind identified the Alpha as James but Falkirk couldn't help class him as a threat.

"What's wrong?" James asked almost frantic.

With the last of his focused thought Falkirk thrust his arm towards James. Seeing the IV pump, realising what was wrong James jumped out of bed. Running, James ripping the door open. Bounding upstairs to the room Falkirk had been recovering in James opened the medical bag looking for the IV bag.

'Fridge!' James thought and ran down the stairs passing Selene on the landing. James continued to the ground floor then down to the basement.
Pulling the fridge open James saw the supply of Neurotriptoline. Picking up the bag he read the instructions as he returned to his room.

'….Storage temperature between 2ºC and 8ºC.... Allow to reach room temperature not exceeding 30ºC before use....'

"Bugger!" James spat

When James returned to his bedroom Keading was comforting Falkirk. Falkirk's head in the crook of the other Omega's neck on the opposite side of Keading's bond mark.

"Take him upstairs." James ordered.

Keading supported Falkirk out of the bedroom and up the stairs. Free of James' intense scent Falkirk started to clam.

James followed, keeping his distance from the two Omegas. When Falkirk and Keading disappeared into he small room James closed in. Knocking. After what felt like a lifetime Keading repapered at the threshold.

James held out the still cold IV bag. "Wait until it reaches room temperature. Do you know how to replace the bag?"

Nodding Keading replied, "Nathan showed me."
Pulling the fridge door open. Daniel cast his eye from shelf to shelf. Confirming his worst suspicions. "She really didn't bring anything?"

"No, your Grace." Came the gentle brogue of the butler, from behind Daniel.

Slamming the door, Daniel looked around the kitchen. "Well can I bring you back something?"

"Oh, yes please." said the little omega cook. "A fish supper, mushy peas with extra vinegar... if you're offering, your grace."

Hudson looked a little bashful. "A most kind offer, your Grace. A dressed fish, if you please."

"Even I'm not posh enough to ask for dressed fish." Daniel teased.

"A special fish." Hudson said, using the more common name for the fish cooked in breadcrumbs rather than batter. "Haddock if at all possible."

"Oh, yes. No self-respecting Scotsman has cod from a chippy." Daniel called, headed for the stairs.

Daniel barged into the lounge. Looking at his grandmother sitting in the chair, knitting away. "No Red Cola? Beef-ham? BUTTERIES? SLICE?"

The old woman looked up. "I had something else on my mind."

"I don't care. You have a standing order for when you come down."

"You can order and have them..."

"And pay a bloody fortune! Do you know how much it would cost to have that lot shipped down?"

"Oh, you are so like your great Great-grandfather. He was a cheep sod too. God! The first time I went to Seagate, the old bugger begrudged me a shovel of coal for the fire."

"HA!" Alec called in vindication. "I knew it wasn't just me. You are a stingy git!"

"While we're on the subject of why I came down here." Mary said. Putting down her knitting and looking at her grandson. Daniel knowing the look, that meant there was going to be a talk. "I know you and the Kirk went your separate way a long time ago. I understand old Father O' Flynn made the church's position so abundantly clear that you came to blows. But there is no way in heaven or hell, you are being buried anywhere but the family Chapel. Am I Clear?"
Daniel could just nod.

"Good." Mary said and turned back to her knitting. “And don’t think for one minute, you can just wait until I’m dead and ignore me. I’ll come back and haunt you if you think of being laid to rest anywhere but the family chapel.”

Daniel jerked his head to the door, calling for Alec to come. As soon as they were out the front door, Alec pulled out a packet of camels and used Daniel's 21st lighter to ignite it.

"So it's official. You are a stingy Scotsman." Alec teased, getting into the passenger seat of Daniel's large Bentley.

Daniel getting behind the wheel. Shooting back, "I prefer, 'short arms, long pockets.' "

"Still means you're a tight fisted bugger."

Daniel pulled away. First going to a supermarket. Alec brushing shoulders with the bigger alpha before heading off on his own. Daniel found the soft-drink aisle, to pick up his less favoured accompaniment to a fish supper, Irn-Bru. At the till, Daniel felt Alec brush against him again. Daniel's eyes fixed on the small screen. Nearly choking when a thirty quid bottle of vodka was scanned.

"Pay the nice lady." Alec teased, patting his mate's back.

In a show of not being tight. Daniel handed over the cash with a smile.

Daniel pulled to a stop outside his favourite chippy, in London at least. "I've been looking forward to this. Dreaming of it on those lonely nights."

"What about me?" Alec complained. Following the man into the warm and steamy shop.

"Oh I thought about you." Daniel said brushing against the other man.

Daniel ordered and paid for the meal. Then joined the waiting crowd.

When Daniel was called up the collect his order. Alec was beside the man. Seeing small bottles in the fridge behind the serving girl. Alec said, "We'll take a couple of Red Colas too."

Daniel said nothing. He waited until the girl put the two small bottles on the counter, and swept them up and headed off. "Be a dear and pay the girl."

Alec gave his mate a smile and turned back the the girl.

"Ten quid, luv!"

"F...ng, hell! How much!" Alec glanced at the door to see his mate was gone. If Daniel didn't like the place so much he'd have run rather than pay. The girl repeated the price.

"Fine," Alec said through gritted teeth and handed over the tenner for something that should be a ninth of the cost.
Coming out and over to the car, Alec was still silently fuming.

Daniel inspecting the small bottle of dark red liquid. Musing, "Shame it's Barr's, Currie's is nicer." looking up to his grumbling mate, taunting, “Who's the stingy git now?”

"You're lucky I love you or I'd kick your arse." Alec grumbled. Getting into the passenger seat again.

When they got back. James and Falkirk had returned from picking up the school kids. In the finest tradition of a fish supper, they ate it out of the paper wrapper on their knees, while sitting in front of the TV. Daniel claiming one of the red colas for himself. The kids relegated to the bright orange Irn-Bru.

When they were finished. Daniel offered to take the kids out for an hour, seeing as they ate rather early. Keading offered to take the rubbish down to the kitchen. Leaving Falkirk to rest against James.

The waning summer evening was still bright and fairly warm. Daniel and Alec setting a sedate pace towards the park entrance at the end of the road.

"Why couldn't I stay?" Cody asked.

"Because you have just had a big glass of Irn-Bru and all its bronzy orange chemically goodness. In a few minutes you're all going to be, aff yr nut, " Daniel said. "So when the sugar rush hits your all going to be safely in the park."

"There are empirical studies, proving the 'Sugar Rush' is a psychological phnomiunum."

"Phenomenon." Daniel enunciated. "And Sherlock doesn't know everything."

Once they were in the park, the kids were sent off. Cody went over to a large bush and inspected the leaves. Andrew ran, with Yulian chasing him.

Every now and again, Daniel or Alec would call a muster. To do a head count before walking deeper into the park. Coming to the empty swing-park. Daniel and Alec sat on the swings, just pushing back and forward gently. The only voices were the children, all getting a bit louder.

The first tears that accompanied the overstimulation were Yulian's. Taking a tumble, when he shot off the end of the slide. Usually he would bounce back but now, burst into tears calling for his parents.

Alec went and picked Yulian up. Bringing him back to the swings. Alec sat with his son in his lap. Just holding the sniffling boy, while they swung gently.

The next was Andrew. Who gave a scream then ran up to his uncles in tears. "Cody... pushed...MEE!" and promptly burst into heaving sobs.

"Didn't!" Cody shouted, very angrily. "Andrew pushed me!"

Daniel pulled Andrew to sit in his lap. Alec called Cody over and hugged the boy. Cody leaning into the man, and resting his head on Alec's shoulder. An unhappy downturn to the boys lips, to the boy's sullen face.
With the three boys recovering from their crash. Daniel and Alec stood, before the kids got it into their head to start playing again. They headed home. Andrew asking to be put back down, about halfway there. Yulian staying in his Papa's arms, with Cody still holding Alec's hand.

Getting home. The night fell into a familiar routine. Alec bathing Yulian. And putting him to bed shortly after. Followed by James supervising Andrew's bath. And finally, Cody bathing himself and deciding to read in his room.

The adults settled in the lounge. Falkirk not having moved from the corner of the couch. Only having to switch from lying against the arm or James if the Alpha was there or off doing something. Selene too, hadn't moved much. Keading seeing to his pregnant Alpha's every whim.

Alec decided to settle on the floor, leaning back against his mate's legs. Daniel sitting in a chair. Mary in the other one, still knitting away.

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Six days back. The Sunday was passing as many a day before. Falkirk glanced around the lounge. Selene and Keading were on the other couch. The other omega leaning against his alpha with his fingers skimming over the woman's stomach. Mary, sat in the chair knitting at a mile a minute. Her fingers a blur that she wasn't even looking at. Every so often the high voice of one of the children mingled with the the deeper voices of James, Alec or Daniel.

Falkirk pulled up his legs and tucked the blanket around him a bit more. The French doors letting in a draft. Everyone but Falkirk feeling it warm. The band of the pump around Falkirk's arm pinched his skin a moment so shifted the device a bit. But no matter what the two bands that secured it to his arms always pinched a bit. More so the needle going into his arm. Without the drug he would be mindless, and unable to stand the presence of any alpha. So he was stuck with the drug that messed with the equilibrium until his brain stopped producing the the hormones that were produced during the breaking of a bond.

Hudson appeared, shortly after the knock at the front door. The butler announcing Mycroft and Sherlock.

With the demographic shifted towards Alpha, Keading came and sat at Falkirk's side. Mycroft perched on the same couch as Selene. Sherlock first sat on the same couch as Falkirk then joined Mycroft.

“Ants in your pants?” Mary said to Sherlock then whispered, “Shit, dropped a stitch. Knit one, pearl two. Knit one...”

Falkirk added, “They won't be here for a little while yet. Go play with the others.” Sherlock flounced out the French doors, without a word or glance.

“Eager to see John.” Falkirk mused to the room, not expecting any answer but Mycroft did.

“It would appear so. He even deemed to dust his flat for the good doctor's arrival. It was almost clean enough for me to sit down.”

Falkirk let out a small laugh. But with Mycroft here, Falkirk could get the information others had been avoid giving him. “Karla. Report.”
“He has not spoken. Before you offer the services of MI6's Alice. I would not advise more extreme methods. He is dying.”

“Nothing more dangerous than a fanatic with nothing to live for.” Mary mused absently. Without lifting her eyes from her knitting.

The door bell went again. The room fell silent. The lounge door opened and Hudson was rather smug as he announced, “His Majesty, King George. And Dr. John Watson.”

Watson, was the first to enter. With a wide and crooked smile on his face. Behind was the blond teenager, fresh off his first tour.

Sherlock barrelled into the room and came to a grinding halt. His razor sharp eye and perception scanned John up and down. Promptly, Sherlock turned and went back out side.

John looked about in confusion. He wasn't the only one. He asked, “Did I do something?”

Mycroft rubbed his temples and said, “Well doctor. From your swagger to the dopey grin you are still wearing. The fact you have recently been laid, seeps out of your every pore.”

G laughed, and said to John. “My money is on the Captain telling Mycroft about you and....” He then fell silent, noticing the atmosphere. While an oblivious Mycroft launched into an explanation of how sex lessened tension, gave an ego boost and other points to support his deductions.

“I know you... are not gay.” Falkirk forcing himself to miss out the 'say' in that sentence. “But you do know Sherlock is in love with you?”

“I'll go talk to him.” John said and headed for the door.

Falkirk looked at G and asked for a run down on what happened. The blond perched as far as the couch allowed, the same one as Falkirk was on.

G started by discussing the assault on HMS Dragon, in which John and Mary stopped the Chinese assassins. “Something must have happened. Because John and Mary were close after that. Always smiling and giggling at each other. Then they were found in a supply cupboard together.”

“Ah, hell.” Falkirk said, rubbing his forehead.

“At least Sherlock again has Alec.” Mycroft mused. On the strange relationship Alec and Sherlock shared. After Alec had detoxed the teenage Sherlock, by force.

G played with his hands a moment. Sending furtive glances at the indomitable omega, who to his eyes looked fragile. Not even heavily pregnant had M been so delicate looking. “How are you?” he asked of his pack alpha. Then hung his head with the deathly silence that fell.

Giving a disappointed, oh, Falkirk said, “I had money on Mallory being the first to ask that question. I think I'm doing better than expected, for having be forcibly bonded to an Alpha and ripping her throat out for doing it.”

G gave a shocked little, oh, sound. He swallowed and looked about.
“Don’t worry.” Falkirk tried to comfort the young man.

Mary adding, “It takes an awful lot to break a true fanatic, Your Majesty. Falkirk dear will be right as rain.” Her fingers still moving in a blur, her piece of soft ivory fabric ever growing.

Patting the young blond's arm, Falkirk said, “Tell me of your shipmates. I believe there was a bunkmate, a wind up merchant if memory serves?”

G jumped on the topic, like a lifeline. Telling tales of the ship and the people on it. Until Hudson called lunch was served.

At the table, Falkirk kept an eye on Sherlock. The detective had gone back to his normal, slightly sullen and bored, selfish self. Andrew claiming the seat beside the handsome blond teenager and promptly talking continuously at G, about everything.

Wanting to get back home. Sherlock and John were the first to make their excuses. Before leaving, John handed a letter over to Falkirk. From his place at the table, Falkirk just wanted the pair go.

After Mycroft and G also left. The omega, again not up to seeing the guests out so stayed at the table. Falkirk pulled the young blond into a nuzzle, from his place at the foot of the table. James and Andrew being the proper hosts, in seeing the guests out. At the door, G went down on one knee to give Andrew a nuzzle. The boy blushing and giggling all the time.

With James' help Falkirk made it to his desk in the library. Where he opened the letter.

M,

I know you. If I stay you will call on me every time you need someone who isn't MI6. To do the dirty work that you can't have MI6 do.

So. I have decided to make my own way again.

Neither you or John will ever see me again.

Mary Morstan.

P.S.
Tell John it was fun. But it's over for us.

“Ah fuck!”

James jumped at the hissed curse from his mate. Falkirk looked to his Alpha. Asking, “After we drop Andrew off. Could we go see Sherlock and John.”

James came over to the desk, from where he had been sitting by the unlit fire. He took the letter to read. “No. You are pushing yourself. Maloney told me how bad that stuff is,” James said pointing
to the lump under Falkirk's cardigan sleeve.

“And!” James said, in a strange almost hysterical way. “I really don't want to be the M in this conversation. But here goes. You have a down time for a reason. So do I, Maloney and all the rest. Use it!”

“But I need to…”

“Give John his, Dear John? Well he's as straight as a pig's tail. Let him get strung along until his heart is broken. He's done it enough times to Sherlock. He might learn something for once.”

Falkirk reluctantly nodded. No one believed the 'I'm not gay.' line.

“Fine.” Falkirk said. Then the asked James to help him back to the lounge. To spend the day lazing and recovering.

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Coming down the stairs, in response to the butler's summons. Daniel was told by Hudson his brother was in the library. The Scotsman headed for the open door. Swinging the door closed behind him. Before Douglas could say anything Daniel swung, punching his brother in the jaw.

“How could you be so stupid. Benjamin was a friend. We trained with him for Christ's sake. What the hell were you thinking?”

Douglas groaned and writhed on the floor, while holding his jaw. “'v already had the riot act.”

“I told you before. Falkirk is godfather. He has full custody. So what the hell were you trying to do?”

“Kill the arsehole that murdered my brother. Why didn't you tell me? You told gran for fuck's sake!”

“Gran didn't know.” the moment Daniel said it he knew he had missed something. The fleeting look over his brother's face held something. Douglas really did think their grandmother knew. “Why do you think she knew?”

Rolling onto his knees and standing. Douglass said, “She was the one pushing for everything, then all of a sudden it was throw on all the breaks. On killing Alec and the custody battle. She was going to go for M too.”

Daniel pulled open the door. Passing Hudson, standing in the foyer, with a silver tray and an icepack on it for Douglas. Daniel headed into the lounge, where the other members of the pack had congregated. With the exception of Keading who was out the back watching over the kids.

Daniel demanding of his grandmother, “How did you know it was a ruse?”

Everyone perked at the question. Mary lay down her knitting and looked at her eldest grand child with a world weary expression.

“Because I know Falkirk Bond like the back of my hand.” Mary said, with infinite patience. “Not only is he a Holmes, with the whole raft of quirks that goes along with it. He is an Omega and true
fanatic. Given the right circumstances, there is no distance he won't go to, no line he won't cross. The second he showed me the pack tree, I knew Alec couldn't have done what we were led to believe. If Alec had, Falkirk would have struck Alec's name from the pack tree. Hell, I bet Falkirk would be at the picture with a bottle of Tipp-Ex. Which led me to think about Yulian, I'm sure Falkirk would have renamed him, taking the Trevelyan away.”

“I'm not that extreme.” Falkirk defended.

“You did put a bullet in your father's leg.” Alec mused.

“There was Os... Oz,” Mary said. “Whatever that gangland pimp's name was. He was found, tortured, mutilated, with multiple bullet wounds, gunshots to both knees, and throat slit. You do seem fond of kneecapping?”

Daniel, coming to sit on the arm of the couch, so he could give a comforting stroke to the omega's hair. James, already stroking Falkirk's neck.

“We are all fanatics.” Daniel said.

His grand mother said, “No we are not. The ability to de-compartmentalize emotions of the Double Os, James, Alec and Selene, even you Daniel indicate sociopathic tendencies. Omegas tend to have fanatical tendencies. We should have no illusions about it. Even me, I've not been a little old lady all my life. My first assassination. Mary Wilson, in the drawing room, with the ice pick.”

“Please.” Falkirk said. “Cludo is a no-no word. Sherlock gets quite, involved.”

“I tell a lie.” Mary mused. “My first kills were poisons. But I and the other omegas were the first to fall under suspicion. It was quite by accident I noticed, when a man was stabbed through the heart, the police didn't look the road I and the other omegas were on. Violent assassination, avoids suspicion falling on an omega. I liked using knitting needles, I then covered the wound up by leaving an ice pick in it. The back of the skull was a good target, because it doesn't send out the same message of a 'weak attacker' that a stab to the back does. But did allow me to approach from the rear....”

Everyone just looked at the little old lady, continuing to mutter away while she knitted. Daniel interrupted, “Douglas said you were going to go for Falkirk?”

“Oh, yes.” Mary said pleasantly and looked at the other omega. “If all else failed. For my family, for my great grandson, there is no line I will not cross either. Rather silly of you, my young boy. Inviting me in. So close. So unsuspected. So well armed.”

Mary pulled one of her knitting needles out from the loops of the blanket she was making. Holding the needle out, she asked Daniel, “Test the strength, please.”

Daniel tried to bend the narrow shaft of metal, his face going a bit red as he did so and failed. Mary musing, “My husband found this new stuff being experimented with. Titanium. In my younger days I could throw the needle from about eight feet and embed it a good half inch into a wooden target. That needle now has a body count higher than the current Double O Seven.”

James looked rather scandalised. Mary consoled, “Well I lived through a world war, a cold war and lots of more minor conflicts. So there were lots of spies, traitors and generally bad people needing dealt with. I even met the first Double O Seven, oh back in the early sixties it was. So tall, lovely
rolling voice, a right flirt...”

Everyone just looked at the little old woman. As she threaded her needle onto the wool again. And continued to mutter about her past.

Chapter End Notes

Don’t know why I like my Qs to be slightly unhinged in some way. But it comes through in most fics. Speaking of which. I’ve got a new fic coming out soon with an even more dangerous Q in it, with some hidden psychological issues. A short fic for me, just nine chapters.
James stood, leaning against the clinically white wall. The Hispanic woman came out from one of the other doors lining the corridor and approached him. Without greeting each other, Dr Dean leaned against the wall too.

With a stretch of the woman's arm to pull the sleeve off her wrist, Dr Dean looked at her watch. “That's surprising? By now, I would have thought Dr Doreen to have run out, resigning, as he did so.”

“I'm sure M is on his best behaviour.” James mused.

Dr Dean slumped. Speculating, “They will be in there, staring at each other and saying nothing.”

“Yep!” James answered. “M stares down each end every Double O, day in and day out. He will be just sitting there. Letting that poor doctor squirm and fidget under M's gaze.”

“Good!”

When James snapped his attention to her. Dr Dean added, “I thought my Plan-B was about to go to waist.”

The door to the treatment room opened, to the second, of the time allotted for M's first psyche session. M stood in the doorway, with a curious look on his face. Dressed in comfortable tartan trousers and cardigan.

Falkirk's omega male psychologist, scuttled down the hall, with head down and shoulders slumped. Trying to pass under everyone's notice. Giving a slightly fearful que, in his wake.

Dr Dean asked for a word before M left. That little wild part of James' alpha nature wanted to attack the alpha woman, who went into a room with the person who should be his bound omega. He controlled it.

Dr Dean made sure M had an easy path to the door, and that he would not have to pass her to get to it. This time after a mission was delicate, and she wanted to put the omega at as much ease as the situation allowed.

Dr. Dean asked, “I take it I can expect Dr Doreen's resignation?”

“I wouldn't know.” M answered, in his soft and unyielding tone.

“To put it bluntly, M.” Dr Dean said. Having no illusions that the doctor assigned to M had achieved nothing. “You are sexist. You like men. Alphas. Attractive. Young. Capable but not overtly assertive.”

M was not impressed with the observation. Dr Dean pushed on.

“Given the recent mission, M. Typically we would try to make you comfortable with your doctor. In your case, an omega, preferably male over female. But I believe you would respond better to an Alpha male best. Would you give me permission to arrange sessions with one.”
“You may do as you see fit.” M answered sharply.

“Very well, M.” Dean then hardened herself. “I will not sign off on your return until I'm satisfied you are fit.”

“Well I didn't hire you to be a pushover. Even against me.” Falkirk said, letting the harder tone of authority leave his voice. “Now if we are finished for the day. James promised me a walk in the park before we pick up Andrew.”

“Good afternoon, M.” Dr Dean said and was given a goodbye. She came out of the room, to watch M and Double O Seven walk away hand in hand. Then James switched to winding his arm around M's waist when the omega wobbled as he walked. The drug obviously still affecting the omega's balance.

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On the second week, Daniel and Alec had started going to MI6. To begin reporting back to Falkirk, along with Tanner and Darren. Now into the third week back, Falkirk was still aware of the weight and tightness on his arm. A constant reminder that something wasn't right. Not to mention the scent of James. His scent was that of an Alpha, a trusted alpha but not his alpha. James wouldn't be his Alpha until he came off the drug and they bonded again.

Still with weeks to go in his treatment. And however long on his enforced downtime. Falkirk decided to take some air. Keading was beside him. Both sitting at the small bistro table on the terrace at the back of the house.

Below, on the grass. Yulian and Colum with James playing with the two boys. Selene was lying down, inside. Mary, was off on a shopping trip. A strange normalcy having fallen over the house.

Hudson appeared, to announce John and Sherlock. The doctor unable to wait stepped out, before the butler could finish announcing the guests, in the proper way.

“I'm sorry to interrupt.” John said. Stepping around the butler. Ignoring the older Alpha's unamused look.

Sherlock adding, sharply, “John doesn't believe me. The clues are there. Mary has left.”

“Sherlock!” Falkirk snapped. Then looked at the doctor. “I'm sorry,”

“He can't be right. Mary, she couldn't leave...”

“It was in her letter. I thought she would have told you. She said as long as I knew where she was, I would never stop calling on her. She stressed even you wouldn't be able to contact her for me.”

John's face fell. Sherlock placed a hand on John's shoulder. “I'm sorry, John.” Sherlock said softly. Leading his friend away.

When he was sure his brother and the good doctor were gone. Falkirk mused, “I'm surprised he isn't having tea with Mr Tumnus.”

“Oh, because he's in the wardrobe!” Keading said, getting the reference. “I don't think I got the
meaning of the movie. That older brother is a total douche-bag. The younger brother was far more...real.”

Falkirk nodded, “There is something about a person facing the worst of themselves and being better for it in the end.”

It was shortly after Sherlock and John's visit when the second visitor of the day arrived. Falkirk indicted the metal chair beside him and invited Smiley to sit. Falkirk adding, “I'm not overly mobile at the moment.”

“Quite understandable.” Smiley said taking a chair. “Just here to pay a visit...”

Falkirk guessed a 'visit' was the last thing on Control's mind. When Smiley stood to go, Falkirk said, "I'm not really meant to, but I'm intending to go into the office for a few hours on Tuesday. Would you be willing to meet me then."

So Smiley pulled out a diary and wrote in 11:40. "Don't trust computers," Smiley informed, with a smile and nod of thanks.

Falkirk suspected that he was the cause of the security concern, rather than computers themselves. Mycroft was the same, for some things Falkirk's brother refused to store anything electronically.

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Another day went by, when Hudson appeared at the lounge door with his small silver tray. Coming to Falkirk's side he lowered the tray, to present the business card on it.

“Very formal.” Falkirk mused, taking the card and reading. 'Adm. Sir R, Hargreaves RN, KCB (ret)’ Nodding Falkirk stood, while the butler went to wait with the guest.

With the drug still affecting Falkirk’s equilibrium, he used James’ arm for support. Falkirk walked out of the lounge greeting the retired Admiral in the foyer. Showing the Admiral in to the library Falkirk sat behind his desk.

Waving off the offer of coffee Hargreaves dispensed with the pleasantries.

"I don't know if your brother has told you, or even if he knows but this is very hush hush at the moment," Hargreaves informed. Falkirk, already feeling his eyes going heave with the droning and voice. "I was approached yesterday by a Mr Laws. He's the shadow Foreign Secretary. He was with someone from one of those annoying committees that like to justify their existence. There are people who wish to use this incident with Russia to bring you down and they know about...”

Hargreaves trailed off at the prospect of discussing Falkirk's bond state. Just giving a waving gesture to Falkirk.

Hargreaves continued. "They are pushing for you to face a security committee to answer questions on your ability to actually lead the intelligence service. I have been asked to compile a dossier on your conduct."

"Is this Laws aware of our association?" Falkirk asked.

"I believe so, but they may have the impression I disapprove of your methods." Hargreaves
answered.

"Why would the think that?" James growled.

"Now listen hear I have been dealing with," Hargreaves started before James growled again and took a threatening step towards the man.

"James, please?" Falkirk said.

James circled behind the older Alpha. Literally breathing down Hargreaves' neck, making him squirm.

Falkirk returned his attention to Hargreaves. "Why would Laws 'think that'?" Falkirk said using James' turn of phrase.

Hargreaves admitted, with a squeak in his voice. "I may have been critical of your initial appointment as well as some your associations and decisions." Very aware of the Double O in his blind spot.

"Thank you." Falkirk said leaving Hargreaves in no doubt it was time to leave.

James' hand landed on the old Alpha's shoulder and marched him out. Q hearing James' distant growl coming from the foyer, followed by the front door slamming closed.

"Spare me the guilt of OAPs." Falkirk mumbled while slouching down. Picking up the phone Falkirk called Mycroft. As politics was his area of expertise Falkirk demanded the names of anyone helping Laws.

Booting up his computer Falkirk pulled up the files he had on the opposition. Richard 'Dick' Laws, Labour's Shadow Foreign Secretary. Falkirk read on ignoring James as he sat at the coffee table.

"Bugger! An extra materiel affair already exposed and some padded expense claims. He's as clean a politician you're likely to get." Falkirk said pushing the keyboard away.

"A perfect person to send against you." James said, continuing to leaf through a book.

"You think he has a, sponsor? Someone who isn't as respectable." Falkirk mused.

After a few moments thought Falkirk shook his head. His research was going no where fast.

"I'm hungry lets get a snack." Falkirk said and pushed himself up. James instantly at his side to offer a supporting arm.

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Walking into E branch a hush descended over the room. Falkirk looked about, Self-consciously he wanted to hide the bulky box attached to his arm. Straightening his back Falkirk let go of James' arm and walked to his office. Not happy when he had to take slow and careful footsteps, or risk wobbling, followed by falling over or being caught by James.

Darren who Falkirk had seen when he dropped Colum off gave a usual greeting of Falkirk's title while not looking up from his work. The moment Falkirk sat behind his desk, Darren appeared
with the day's mail.

Rhett Butler knocked on Falkirk's door a few minutes later. With a charming smile, Butler drawled, "His Grace is not in the building."

"Again you must share your position and Q will be taking a demotion." Falkirk replied.

The epitome of the professional Butler gave Falkirk the rundown on what had been happening over the past weeks. Coming to the end, Butler said, "Welcome back, M. You have been missed by all. I will inform His Grace he may return."

Thanking the man. Falkirk started looking over his backlog of e-mails.

James tapped on Falkirk's door and reminded him of the appointment with Control. As they walked through the building, out of E-Branch Falkirk allowed James to hold him upright. Falkirk asked, "So where were you hiding?"

"Well if I'm playing bodyguard. I may as well use Selene's office." James said with a teasing smile but the mention of bodyguards reminded Falkirk of Brayan.

Arriving at his secure office Falkirk entered the wood panelled room.

"I took that piece of sentimentalist piece crap down!" Falkirk blasted, seeing the copy of The Fighting Temeraire back in its place.

"A Constable fan?" James teased.

Falkirk just shook his head and hobbled towards the big conference table. Upon the richly grained surface, Falkirk saw the sealed orders he had placed there before leaving. Only one had its read ribbon cut, indicating it had been opened. The actual orders were gone, having been executed but the brief still remained. The missions, including Alec and Daniels role within and a signed amnesty for Alec.

Clearing the orders up Falkirk moved them to the desk. Sitting down Falkirk pulled the drawers of the big oak desk open.

"Where are you?" Falkirk said to himself. Pulling open the last drawer, "There you are!"

Falkirk pulled out large yellow envelopes. Placing each order in its own envelope including the remains of the orders which had been executed. Falkirk filled out the details then added Tanner's name as the courier.

When Smiley arrived Falkirk handed the yellow envelopes to Tanner. The Chief of Staff took his leave to properly dispose of the sensitive documents.

"They want to triad Karla." Smiley informed.

"And you don't?"

With a bubbling anger Falkirk didn't know the ageing Alpha could muster, "I want to see him taken out the back of the sheds, and shot!"
"I vote for that one. Perhaps with a side order of a kicking-in" James piped up from his position over at the conference table.

Falkirk fell into silence while thinking over his options. A part of him wanted to see the man's end as well. Mycroft had gone to length to impress upon Falkirk the value of Karla. Everyone seemed to want him and at one point Falkirk had promised to hand him over to the Americans.

"I traded him to the Americans and both you and Mycroft agreed." Falkirk reminded. Smiley refused to answer and Falkirk continued, "By all accounts Karla's survival is in doubt."

"Enough tar to pave a road." Smiley said quoting the casual assessment a doctor made of Karla's lungs.

Now it came to it Falkirk didn't want to hand the man over either. "A firing squad may be out of the question. But I'm sure we could arrange something." Falkirk said getting hollow smile from the head of MI5.

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Dr. Dean removed the needle from Falkirk's arm. With a sense of trepidation Falkirk thanked her and stood. Walking out of medical Falkirk found James waiting for him. Still under the affects of the final dose Falkirk and James returned home. Falkirk wanting to be somewhere safe in case he freaked out again in the presence of an Alpha.

Over the next few hours Falkirk noticed he was starting to scent the air more. Taking deep breaths through his nose savouring the smells. James, the only Alpha in the room was the most intoxicating. The other Alphas smelled better and more intense to the unbound Omega. For the first time Falkirk was able to easily pick out the individual Alphas where before their scents seemed to blend together.

Hearing Falkirk stand James looked up from his news paper. Coming over to the Alpha Falkirk extended his hand to the other man.

"I have been comparing the relative attractiveness of the Alphas' scents in the room." Falkirk said with a teasing smile.

Letting the Omega pull him to his feet James then swept down to scoop Falkirk up. "Mine!" James proclaimed possessively and carried Falkirk upstairs.

Laying his omega down on the bed. James pressed his nose to Falkirk's neck. Taking in the scent of an unbound omega. Not the sickly smell that had been clinging to Falkirk. The ques were again more prominent, there was arousal, and a little fear.

"James," Falkirk whispered. "I'm not sure..."

“When you're ready.” James assured. Falkirk's bond was broken, James' was still intact. This was the first time the Alpha was able to get drunk of the pheromones his omega produced, but it still wouldn't be perfect until Falkirk also had the note of a bound omega to him.

“Can I just smell?” James said, running his nose over his omega's neck.

Falkirk gulped a few times, before giving an affirmative sound. Not trusting his voice to work. He
pulled James' head to the side, wanting to get lost in the scent of the Alpha too.
Falkirk smelt the nervousness of the Alpha across from him. Dr. Dean had been right. Give him a frightened, adorable, Alpha male, and Falkirk couldn't muster the cold and hard attitude of command he used to intimidate.

“w-w-w,” the blond doctor seemed to have an abundance of excess letters, not a true stammer just nerves. “W-W-What have you been doing.”

“Well the pack has closed around me. My Alph- well he's not my Alpha at the moment....” Falkirk trailed off seeing the doctor's baby blue eyes flick up to him and take a gulping breath to say something.

“Yyyou sound pained about having no Alpha. Have y-you been thinking ab-b-out bonding?”

Falkirk nodded. “We go a little further each time. It started with sharing a bed, even when I was on the medication. Then scent-baths. We're touching, in a more intimate way.”

The gentle to and fro of the conversation continued. A small clock gave a passing strike, just a single quiet chime to mark the hour. A sound, less harsh than a buzzer and far less intrusive. Falkirk found himself a little disappointed for his time to be up.

They stood. Falkirk noticing again, but for some reason was still surprised he was taller than the younger blond man.

The Doctor waited back, so Falkirk wasn't between the Alpha and door. “I am not a porcelain doll.” Falkirk said. The act getting a little annoying.

“Dr. Dean gave strict instructions. With...” The doctor trailed off, with a nod to the camera that oversaw the sessions. “I wouldn't want to get into trouble.”

Like most times, when Falkirk pulled open the door. Dr. Dean was waiting. James, was there like always. Falkirk took his mate's hand and the two headed away. Looking back over his shoulder, Falkirk saw MI6's head of Medical backing up the young man back into the office.

“Is he in trouble?” James asked. “And I think, could I smell fear off of him?”

“Wasn't me!” Falkirk said, with absolute innocence. “He's just the nervous sort.”

James gave a shrug. “Well, he doesn't set my instincts off, that's for sure.”
“Admiral Hargreaves has been encouraged to produce a, thorough, researched, considered...”

The man behind the large newspaper said, “Slow?”

Mycroft gave a tight smile, which James couldn't see. “Yes, slow. Along with the favours...”

“And what will they cost?” James asked. Still reading the paper. Falkirk didn't have to do much, James’ '2 cents' was carrying on his half of the conversation for him.

“Not as costly as my brother's usual negotiating style.” Mycroft said. “So all in all, the Foreign Security Committee will not sit this year. First quarter of next year, most likely.”

Falkirk frowned. He knew the mechanics of government was slow and easily stalled. But a delay of about six months, he found suspicious. “Mycroft...”

The tall and thin man braced, he had many conversations with his Pack Alpha like this.

Falkirk was at a loss for words. “Just, please think about what you're doing and who you're talking to. It's been pointed out I'm a fanatic, but I do try to do what is right. Please do the same.”

Mycroft nodded. “Many favours are exchanged. It's how the game is played. I assure you nothing, dishonourable will occur.”

James' laugh floated from behind the newspaper. He deemed to lower it, to look at Mycroft. “Do you even know about honour?”

Mycroft sent the other Alpha a grimacing smile. And that was all the answer James got.

“Thank you, Mycroft.” Falkirk spoke, not in gratitude but dismissal. Hudson appeared, to escort the guest out.

When it was just Falkirk and James. The Alpha stated the bloody obvious, “You should keep an eye on him.”

“I do! Just like I do, all the other Double Os. Doesn't stop any of them ballsing things up though.”

James stood and moved to the couch, to slip in beside the omega. Pulling Falkirk to him. James started to relax again. Pushing his nose into Falkirk's wild hair, while giving long strokes down the omega's long back. Falkirk settled his head on James' shoulder, with his nose pressed to the man's neck. They stayed in the embrace, until Selene and Keading came back with the younger kids who went to playschool. But when it came time to collect the older kids, Falkirk insisted he wanted to go get Andrew and Cody with James. Falkirk liked the time he and James had been spending with their son.

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Falkirk let out a laugh. The larger than life American was giving a hearty, belly wobbling, laugh. James, was trying to defend himself from the tiny omega, testing out his brand new Dallas Cowboys helmet and football jersey.

Falkirk stood. While James still had his hands on Andrew's shoulders, the small boy was trying to
charge him, with the ball tucked into his chest. Falkirk came round the couch, and gently placed a hand on the still laughing Wade's shoulder.

Wade grabbed something out of his carry on luggage before following the omega out. In the library, he found Falkirk lowering the drinks cabinet. Wade nodded, when a decanter was held up in silent question.

“It's done.” Wade said, exchanging the folder in his hand for the glass.

The two made themselves comfortable in the small seating area in the centre of the library. Falkirk flicked open the folder and started to skim the contents. “Thanks for arranging this, Wade.”

“Hay, Kiddo! I did nothing! I'm innocent. I'm just the bringer of bad news... or is it good?”

Falkirk flicked a glance to the alpha, unable to stop the smile. “So I don't owe you a favour.”

“I thought we stopped counting favours.”

“Because you still owe me more than I owe you?” Falkirk teased.

Seeing the way the older Alpha look him up and down. Falkirk translated the look, you're better than I thought, it said. “Jack Wade, you're my friend but I'll deck you if you don't stop looking at me like that!”

The Alpha burst out laughing. “Not your style, Kiddo. You go for the jug... the balls.” he ended with a forced, innocent, grin.

“Jugular? Jack. You can say it. It's only less figurative now.”

Jack wiped his mouth a moment, losing his buoyant attitude. “Okay Kiddo, I admit it. I'm old fashioned. Omegas...”

“I swear I'm going to belt you if you continue.” There was no real anger or hostility. They were old friends and could speak openly. “You're just not used to an omega coming out of a hellhole.”

“You're right.” Jack admitted. “How do you cope when you see 006, or 009 coming back when they're...”

Taking Wade's waving hand gesture to mean the state of any operative after a bad mission and the particular set of problems omegas face. Falkirk said, “We deal with the damage done. Patch them up and if they think they can carry on they go out into the field again. Is there a point to this?”

Jack took a swig of his scotch. “Progress. Ryan has some flyboy hotshot, wanting to join black-ops. He'll be the first Omega CIA operative. There are some concerns.”

“Well you're here for a few days. I can arrange with Deputy Director Butler for you to see our procedures for supporting omega Operatives. People forget Alphas bond too, and need support in their own way.”

Wade took Falkirk up on his offer. The two came back through to the lounge, where James, Alec and Daniel were teaching, Andrew, Cody and Yulian how to do a scrum.
“Hay-hay-hay.” Wade called softly. Pointing to the football jersey Andrew was wearing. “That's sacred. At least take it off, if you're playing rugby.”

Wade patted the boy's head, to show he was just teasing.

“Time to wind down.” Falkirk said. Getting a chorus of disappointed awws from everyone.

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Entering the white stone building, pillars giving it an intimidated appearance. Met by an austere Alpha female that Smiley had once called a mother. Falkirk was escorted to head on MI5's office. The man in question sat behind a leather topped desk. The office was similar to Falkirk's secure office, very traditional but unlike Falkirk's office the windows here were real, with views Big Ben in the distance.

“The cousins got Karla, with your blessing, while you were...” Smiley accused, but still not able to bring up Falkirk's bond state and recovery.

Pulling Wade's file from his briefcase Falkirk placed it in front of Smiley as he said, “There is no point in offending our allies. Especially when they are very helpful for friends. This was given to me the other day.”

Smiley read over the report. “Karla arrived in America, dead?”

“A haemorrhage in his lung. One little coughing fit, and Karla died choking on his own blood. The coroner suspects lifestyle, stress and the sudden changes of air pressure during transit contributed to the rupture. For some reason the tear didn't clot or close this time.” Falkirk informed innocently. Very innocently.

Smiley looked suspiciously at Falkirk. “I notice a distinct lack of a toxicology report in this post mortem?”

“Well we can't have questions arising, that no one really wants answered.”

Straightening his features, Smiley leaned back in his chair. “Not taken out back of the sheds, but it'll do.” He handed Falkirk back the file with an imperceptible smile.

Smiley informed, “I've been put on notice, I'm to attend the Foreign Security Committee. They want my assessment on your tenure, M.”

“I know.” Falkirk responded, pulling himself to his feet. “Mycroft is pulling strings.”

“You know what happens when you pull strings?” Smiley said to his guest heading for the door.

“Everything can unravel.” Falkirk said and headed out.

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Feeling the weight settle over his back. It was very early. Falkirk not even fully awake. His body danced to a familiar tune. One of the base instincts of Alphas and omegas. At one time, the nocturnal drives meant the Alpha and omega could do this in their sleep. Sometimes, only waking after they were tied.
Through the fog of sleep, Falkirk felt the alpha's strong arm come around him, so they were flush. James' rough chin scratching the back of his neck. Falkirk arched his back, feeling the solid rod of flesh held trapped by the alpha's shorts, brush against his backside.

Both wore pyjamas. Since getting back they had both worn pyjamas when sharing a bed.

Falkirk roused a bit more. Becoming aware of what was happening. Their writhing movements. The smell of the bed and the freshly produced pheromones. The omega taking deep inhaling breaths, the smell of the Alpha's lust so intoxicating to him. Something in his brain, an itching uncomfortable absence was starting to ease for the first time since it was broken.

“James?” Falkirk's voice little more than a breath. He only got a hum in answer.

James was giving slow humps against him, while the Alpha's arms kept him in place. Falkirk gulped. His stomach was feeling a strange hollow sensation, of fearful excitement. His breath was in shuddering pants.

Falkirk did what he did for many reasons. All some version of, he wanted it. The omega wanting the closeness. He wanted the intimacy. He wanted to be again bound to his Alpha. He wanted it for the growing arousal that was burning through him.

Falkirk reached behind himself and between their bodies. He felt the warm skin of James' stomach. Skimming downwards, he came to the waistband of the Alphas sleep-shorts. With a brief excited knotting in his stomach, Falkirk reached beneath the fabric. Finding the rock hard length, he felt it throb. The heat was almost burning.

“Falk...”

“Please?”

James' hips pulled back a bit and Falkirk was able to pull out the burning length. All the time the omega heard the Alpha's panting grunts right by his ear. The powerful muscular body covering his own, and writhing against him. The Alpha's nose running over his neck and into his hair.

Falkirk pushed his own pyjamas over the round of his buttocks. He gasped as James' dick rubbed along the cleft of his backside.

“Are you sure?” James breathed. Far more awake sounding that Falkirk thought the Alpha would be.

In answer, Falkirk arched his back. Pulling the cheeks of his backside apart, the Alpha's dick landed on the hidden and slick heat.

“Please speak,” James said.

“Yes!” Falkirk gasped out. Almost sobbing with the strain to get the power of speech to work again.

The first stretch came, just the head of the Alpha's insistent cock at his entrance. Falkirk threw his head back and felt his Alpha's hand jammed in. Unable to scream, he bit down. The penetration continued, the wide head and then the long shaft. Falkirk feeling his body ripple along his Alpha's
cock.

So full, with the Alpha's strong thighs pressed against his backside. Falkirk pulled his teeth from the heel of his Alpha's hand. “Move?”

Falkirk let out a shudder, as his body shifted around the retreating organ. His stomach was in knots. Not since the first time had he felt like this. Nervous to the point of being queasy. Arousal that felt it just needed one more push for him to break.

James pushed in, a hair before Falkirk was expecting and the omega bit his lip to stop the scream. The pull out, made the omega gasp. Falkirk wasn't even aware of the kisses raining down on his cheek, neck and shoulder.

Falkirk was giving little panting grunts, in time to the thrust into him. The still mostly clothed writhing bodies had pushed the quilt onto the floor. The room still dark, before the dawn. Falkirk felt a hand on his chin, and then the heel of his alpha's hand slip into his mouth again. Then blunt teeth clamped on his neck, in turn Falkirk bit down again on the heel of James' hand. The marking bite to the omega's neck blossomed in a familiar ache, that pushed Falkirk over the edge. James' gagging hand was not enough to suppress the wordless scream of the omega's orgasm.

“Mine!”

Oblivion took the omega for some time. Falkirk woke to a wonderful sensations. He felt his Alpha still within him, his body giving cramping contractions to milk the Alpha's cock. The knot and hard cock filling him up. A hand raked through his hair. James' chest heaved, in time to Falkirk's, as they recovered. Kisses brushed his ear, moving onto his neck and cheek. Best of all, his Alpha was here. Not just any Alpha, or an Alpha of the pack, Falkirk's own bound Alpha.

“Mine!” James whispered in the shell of Falkirk's ear.

“I heard. But you can say it again, my Alpha.” Falkirk said. The words, like the bond felt like home.

Falkirk stayed in his Alpha's arms. Basking in the sensations that he was being given. So relaxed and safe, Falkirk drifted off again. Still tied to his Alpha. With his Alpha watching over him. Protecting him.

Chapter End Notes

I've got another fic I'm going to be posting. While it goes up, I'm taking a break from this so I can sort and edit the next arc. There have been some changes to it and needs a bit more editing. So normal service should resume a couple weeks from Sunday.

In the meantime My new fic, titled Nessarose, proof read by 1Miss Molly(apart form the last minute changes)will be going up. A chapter every few days. Like most it's Q/James with a bit of Sherlock on the side. Hope you like it.
Like Busses: Half Term

Chapter Summary

Falkirk is still off from work. Giving a little time for his family.

Chapter Notes

I'm back.

Thanks to all those who stick with this very long fic.

My schedule of a couple weeks break went to pot. I rewrote some chapters so Hamish became Rosamund and the events of the fic were a little closer to what happened in Sherlock. Then went and misplaced the bloody chapters! I suppose that's my fault for writing on an Android Tablet, laptop and big gaming rig PC, with everything 'usually' stored on a NAS. Anyway I found them. So back to a weekly update.

“Kill me...”

Wet coughing interrupted the weak, pleading and suffering voice. The harsh hacking petered out to a slow death rattle breathing.

With a wet rattling breath, “I can't go on like this!”

Falkirk rolled over, lifted the pillow of his Alpha's head and planted a kiss on James' warm forehead. Grimacing and avoiding the bubble of snot that expanded and contracted over the blond man's left nostril. Pulling back he said, “It's just a cold. You'll be fine in a few days.”

“It's the Russians!” James moaning out his misery. “Retaliation for Karla. They infected us with the plague.”

“No, James.” Falkirk said getting up from the bed. “No Russians. No Retaliation. Just a little plague carrier called Andrew, sharing the germs he got from his friends.”

James cracked open his red, bloodshot, crusty eyes. Seeing the unsympathetic bastard he was bound to, walk, like it was the easiest thing in the world to do, into the bathroom. The moment he lifted his head, his sinuses become a band of pain tying to crush his head. He flopped back down, his balder wasn't important enough to get up yet.

“Kill me! For the love of god, I can't take any more!”

Falkirk came out of the bathroom. Shaking his head in amusement. Getting dressed in comfortable cardigan an check trouser. Torture, and the macho, double O, Alpha was shrugging it off and moving on. Life threatening injures were the same. But one little cold and James was reduced to begging.
Going to the bed, Falkirk kissed the man's temple. “I'll bring a hot toddy.”

“And a Walther, and one round. I'll do it myself.”

Falkirk headed upstairs. Keading was already up and dressed, seeing to Yulian. Falkirk checked on Andrew. The boy was pulling on his shirt over his head, rather than deal with all the button. The wild dark hair poked through the neck hole, soon followed by the whole head. Falkirk caught the boy's left hand when Andrew went to wipe his nose on the sleeve cuff.

“Use a tissue!” Falkirk yanked one out of the box on the night stand.

“Yes, papa.” Andrew said blowing his slightly runny nose. Falkirk taking the tissue before his son could stuff it in his pocket.

Falkirk made sure Andrew had several clean tissues stuffed into his pocket before allowing him out of his room. “Remember! Blow your nose in a hanky and bin it! I don't want snot stains on your shirt, jumper or hands. And remember to wash your hands, after the toilet, before eating, after playing, AFTER WIPING YOUR NOSE ON YOUR PALM...”

Andrew froze, with his hand pressed against his nose. “Yes Papa!”

Before Andrew went to wash his hands, Falkirk felt his son's face and head looking for a hint of a temperature. Apart from a runny nose, he was fine.

Before going with Keading to do the School run. Falkirk kept his word. He returned to the groaning and suffering mound under the duvet and pillows. He took a smell of the steam rising from the tall glass mug, sweet from the honey, bitter from the lemons and the fumes from the whisky and filled to the brim with boiled water. Daniel and Hudson swore there was nothing a Hot Toddy couldn't cure. Falkirk had been sneaked them by Hudson during his first few heats as a child, and it did help the strange achy feeling he was suffering at those times.

James emerged enough to take the warm drink. Falkirk left James, sipping and complaining, “You forgot the gun.”

Going down stairs, Falkirk joined Keading in getting into the big, police escorted, Jaguar. He looked at the strange man sitting by the driver, Falkirk liked to know his bodyguards. Selene had been his shadow so long he felt uncomfortable without her. Almost as bad as when James went away too long. Brayan he had known for a long time too, just a little thing from when James was shot and the blond guard walked him back to Q Branch. A stab of guilt entered his chest, thinking of the man he saw lying in a coma, with a doubtful prognosis.

“How's James?”

Keading's voice pulled Falkirk from his thoughts. “Begging for death.”

“I think it's an alpha-guy thing,” Keading said. Glancing at his own son who used this commuting time to read. “They have to be so macho and all that crap. But when they get sick, it's like they are free to be babies again. They just want their Mom to run around making them feel better and bringin them treats.”

“Well Dr Dean still isn't signing off on my return. So I may as well paper James... ANDREW FREDERICK BOND!” Falkirk snapped his attention from Keading to his son.

The boy stilled, with his hand just under his nose and about to use the back off his hand as a hanky. Quickly Andrew pulled out a tissue and used that. Ducking his head while under his Papa's glare.
At the school, Cody took himself to the main gate. Keading and Falkirk walking Andrew to the side gate. Falkirk choosing to put his hand on his son's shoulder rather than hold hand, that may or may not be covered in germs. Nearing the playground for the younger classes, there was coughing, sneezing and sniffing in abundance. Like James, Falkirk saw several of the parents and nannies looked like they were on death's door too. But the children carried on regardless.

Falkirk kissed the top of his son's head and sent him towards the turnstile gate. Where Andrew joined all his other plague carrying friends. Falkirk seeing his son wipe his nose on the back of his hand. Then go up and touch a blond boy, who wiped his nose on his blazer and started talking to Andrew.

--

That evening, Darren arrived to pick up Colum. Then Alec and Daniel arrived home.

Over dinner Andrew looked up to his Papa. Asking, “Do we go away?”

Confused, Falkirk asked, “Go away?”

“Tattie week,” Daniel answered. Only gaining more confusion.

Andrew answered his Papa, “Ms Tingle asked the class if we were going away over the holiday.”

As Falkirk told his son nothing had been planned. Keading asked “What's a tattie week?”

“Potato week,” Daniel said dropping the Scottish pronunciations. “The week where children were pulled out of school to help bring during the late harvest. Usually the potatoes.”

The conversation passed on to the School calender, and possible plans. Keading and Daniel then starting to talk about Halloween. The rest of the evening followed a nice routine.

Falkirk decided to go to bed early, just after Andrew. James was awake when he climbed in. The alpha had slept so much he couldn't sleep any more, even when he was still tired. But Falkirk now knew, bring some bowls of soup and hot drinks and generally doting on the man, was enough to stop James begging to be put out of his suffering.

James curled around him, laying his head of Falkirk's stomach. While stroking his alpha's head, Falkirk said, “I forgot. This is the half term. Andrew's home for the next week.”

Out of the blue, James whispered, “I think I' like Andrew to see Skyfall some day.”

Falkirk could hear the pain in James voice, he knew the conflict his mate felt about the place. The old home bringing forth the memories of loss and pain. First from James' parents then M but it was still part of James' history.

“We can go any time.” Falkirk reassured.

--

For such a large house, it felt so small. Especially on a rainy day, not helped by Alec, Daniel and James all being called into MI6. Leaving four children to run about, screaming at the top of their lungs.

The pregnant woman clutched her head, when one brown haired boy ran into the lounge, followed by a slightly bigger darker haired boy. Andrew chased Yulian around and round and round the
Keading stormed in, “OUT! Both of you.” The two boy ran around him and out. Their feet thundering through the foyer and up the stairs

“Selene? Can I...”

“NO!” the alpha roared. “I don't need, ANYTHING!”

The omega froze. Nodding his head frantically before running away.

Hearing the sound of a distant upset sniffing, as her mate ran. Selene hung her head. Whispering, “Shit!”

The rattle of the sliding doors, announced another omega had come in. She couldn't look up to Falkirk, who was sure to be there. She felt a comforting pat to her shoulder before his soft footsteps sounded, padding out of the lounge and up the stairs.

Falkirk pushed open the door of Selene and Keading's room. Like any upset omega, Falkirk found a hastily built nest in the corner of the room.

“It's the pregnancy,” Falkirk reassured the mound of fabric. Sitting down beside the nest, Falkirk started speaking about the time during his pregnancy when he threw a hair brush at James, or started screaming at people for no apparent reason. “Oh, remember with Alec. The time he punched Daniel for fussing over him?”

Cody put his head round the door and Falkirk called him over. Sitting the young Alpha between himself and the nest Falkirk stated stroking his brother's neck absently. Continuing the anecdotes reminding Keading and Cody both of what it was like to be pregnant.

Still a little choked, Keading's voice came from within the nest. “Next time I'm the one having the baby.”

“That's the spirit. Then everything will be her fault. And you can be the one to shout and scream.” Falkirk returned and received a snorting laugh from the other omega.

Pulling open the nest Keading saw his son and the concern he held for him. Pushing back the covers a bit more Keading welcomed Cody into the folds.

Going downstairs Falkirk found Selene in the library. Falkirk couldn't really blame her, pregnancy was a trying time and it wasn't Selene's fault Keading could only react badly to any rebuke from his Alpha. If it had not been for Daniel fighting for Falkirk where James was concerned he knew the same would happen to him. Hell every time they had a real argument Falkirk still retreated to a nest.

“Could we stay, until?” Selene asked, waving to her expanded stomach.

Falkirk agreed instantly knowing how much stress Selene was under and how Keading needed support as well.

Selene paused a moment, taking a deep breath. “When the time comes Keading wants to be in the room, and I want him there as well but...”

“You're worried how he'll cope with you screaming and throwing accusations about?” Falkirk supplied, getting a confirmation in response.
“Could you be there?” Selene asked before quickly adding “We haven't discussed it yet so don't mention anything to Keading.”

Falkirk nodded.

“Well I had better go make amends,” Selene said. It was rather amusing for Falkirk to witness the graceful and powerful Alpha struggle to her feet. Selene waved off Falkirk attempt to help.

As Selene was about to walk out Falkirk called, “Beware of the guard dog!”

--

James and Alec, still at a bit of a loose end, spent their down time taking Andrew, Yulian and Cody to all the things they liked. The indoor ski slope, rock climbing, trekking, even doing something none had done like kite surfing. Every day, the children would come back with new bruises or scrapes and describe in graphic detail the events of the day.

With it being Saturday. Daniel, who was back working full time could join in. Daniel wasn't the only one, John and Sherlock had joined them.

With trepidation Falkirk watched his son get the plastic armour strap to his chest by James. All the others were doing the same, strapping on plastic body-armour.

Daniel, Alec, James, John, Sherlock, Keading, Cody and Andrew listened to the safety lecture from a spotty teenager as he explained the dos and don'ts of the paint ball range. Selene barely held a straight face as Alec and James asked seemingly relevant questions, subtly making fun of the Alpha teen.

While the others went off, to get their guns and masks and enter the range. Falkirk and Selene hung around the cafe area. Selene was sitting on a bench while Falkirk watched the still too young Yulian, play on a roundabout.

After a while, the group headed inside to the cafe where it was warmer. Falkirk headed up to the counter, and returned with a tray. Selene gave a grimace at the herbal tea set before her. Yulian sat and ripped open his ice-cream wrapper and dug in, soon wearing a wide creamy smile across his cheeks.

Sipping his own tea Falkirk was looking out the window when Selene nodded in the direction behind him. “They're back.”

Keading, Cody and Andrew had a half dozen paintball marks each, John and Sherlock faring a bit worse, while James, Alec and Daniel were painted from head to toe, all had a mix of the team colours.

Getting up Falkirk walked towards the group with Yulian and Selene following. Snapping a quick picture Falkirk lowered his phone and said, “I see the team structure broke down.”

“He shot me in the back!” Daniel accused pointing to Andrew.

“But Uncle Daniel shot Daddy, and they are on the same team.” Andrew whined at his papa.

James patted his son, purring with pride, “Good boy.” Andrew beamed at his daddy and bounced slightly with the praise.

--
Looking around the dinner table. The kids would be back at school on Monday. But what got Falkirk, the three missing people. Daniel and Alec had been going to and from their own house so often, that they moved back with barely a notice. Only now, on the third dinner they had not been here did Falkirk realise they had taken up their own space again.

Cody was giving Falkirk curious looks as he scented the air. Keading, called to his son, “Stop playing with your food.”

Falkirk and James had discussed the oncoming heat and had decided to go though it together. After dinner, and before Andrew's bath. Falkirk and James called their son into the library.

Falkirk sat his son down then sat beside him. This would be the first time Andrew would be present during a heat. “When you're older you are going to go through a cycle, three times a year. Just like Keading, Darren and I. I'm about to go through one of these cycles. Daddy and I will be spending a week alone together...”

Andrew looked up to his Papa. “Are you going away?” he asked voice soft and desperate.

Shaking his head. “No, poppet,” Falkirk reassured before continuing, “We will go into our room and come out in about a week. When we do I'll be very tired and a bit sore. I'll also smell heavily of Daddy.”

Andrew had a few questions mostly to do with 'Why'. Falkirk kept his answers as abstract and non graphic as possible but Andrew knew there was more than what he was being told.

--

Over the next week. Before Andrew went to school, he would look at his parent's bedroom door. The scent of the alpha and Omega in heat emanated even through the wood. Keading had to remind Andrew it was a special time for his Daddy and Papa and was not to go into the bedroom.

Like it used to be, Keading picked him up at school. Andrew came home on the Friday, to find his Papa finally up. His Papa was wrapped up in a blanket while watching an old movie.

“Hay poppet,” Falkirk said in a weak voice.

Coming to sit beside his Papa, Andrew wriggled until he was under the blanket and pressed against his Papa. Pressing into the crook of Falkirk's neck Andrew breathed in the intense sent of his Father on his Papa's skin.

Andrew watched fascinated as James doted on Falkirk's every need. “Why's daddy being so nice?” Andrew asked.

“Because I'm sore and tired and it's Daddy's job to look after me.” Falkirk mumbled.

“Is that an Alpha's job?” Andrew asked.

In his tired state Falkirk answered, “Yes, that's what an Alpha dose.” Without considering the stereotypes he was enforcing.
Tanner bust into Falkirk's office, “Riot! In PT&A!”

Well he was truly back now, Falkirk thought. Dealing with ever piece of macho bravado, inter office politics, politicians, and the icing on the cake of M's life, the Double Os.

True to Tanner's amassment there was a great deal of commotion when Falkirk entered the MI6 gym.

“This is why we avoid a full house of Double Os,” Falkirk muttered to himself. Just knowing they would be in the mix somewhere.

The Ex Royal Marine instructor was currently in the centre of Addison, Fairbanks, Masood and Maloney. He had obviously done something to provoke the Double Os and they were now humiliating him in front of everyone. While three would distract the instructor, the last would dart in from the instructor's blind spot, to deliver a light punch or slap.

Falkirk stood back as he saw one of the recent recruits, Wardner, moving in. Deciding to see what the other ex-marine would do Falkirk waited. As Addison went to slap the small of the instructor's back, Wardner darted forward bypassing Maloney to barrel into Fairbanks. The instructor launched at the Double O in his line of sight, Masood. Addison looked confused to what had suddenly changed, while Maloney looked affronted after Wardner passed him by to tackle an Alpha.

“ENOUGH!” Falkirk shouted drawing the attention of the brawling men.

The Double Os immediately stood up and back off. Even Wardner complied although he was a bit slower due to his first fight with a Double O. The instructor who Falkirk had forgotten the name of and now didn't care to look up, lunged at the first Double O he saw, Fairbanks.

“I ordered you to stop!” Falkirk shouted at the man trying to continue the fight. A nod from Falkirk was all the permission Fairbanks needed. The Double O stopped playing with the instructor and unleashed all of his skills. Before the instructor knew what was happening he was sitting on the floor in a restraining headlock.

Addressing the restrained instructor. M said, “You are too set in your ways and are not acceptable for MI6. You have disobeyed my orders twice in the last few minutes and your services are no longer wanted.”

Falkirk waved over a couple of guards. They took the instructor from Fairbanks' hold and carted the dark haired man off.

Moving on Falkirk stood in front of the recruit, Wardner. Pointing to the blond omega, M
demanded, “What is his designation?”

“Double O Nine, M.”

“Why did you bypass Maloney to attack Double O Three?”

“Well he's a..” Wardner trailed off with an embarrassed little smile.

Giving a smile of his own Falkirk cast his eyes to Wardner's left arm. Pull the hem of the recruit's T-shirt sleeve up, Falkirk inspected the sightlessly whiter area where Warder had been receiving treatment to remove a tattoo.

“It's coming off quite well,” Falkirk mused.

The moment Wardner's attention moved to his own arm Falkirk quickly pulled his hand away. The recruit grit his teeth and his whole body shook. Falkirk pulled back his other hand, letting the recruit collapse. While looking at the recruit at his feet, Falkirk placed his micro taser back in his pocket.

Turning his attention from the unconscious recruit to the Double Os. M snapped, “For all you care, you have all gained another reprimand.”

The chastised Double Os acknowledged by calling Falkirk's title.

“All Recruits step forward!” M ordered.

Six Alphas stepped forward out of the crowd, two female four male. M split them into groups of two, then divided them between the trouble making, Alpha, Double Os. Ordering the Double Os, “The recruits are now your responsibility. At least one must pass from each group or you will leave with them.”

The Alpha Double Os acknowledged. Maloney wave his hand, “You forgot me, M.”

Indicating the unconscious Alpha recruit. Falkirk said, “Wardner is yours, Double O Nine. When he wakes up teach the recruit never to overlook an omega again.”

With order restored Falkirk walked towards the door. The crowd parting for him.

Spotting the group by the double doors onto the room. Falkirk said, “Walk with me, Mr Trevelyan”

Alec pushed away from the wall. Where he had stood back with James and Evans, just waiting to intervene if they deemed it necessary.

In the wide corridor. Falkirk asked, “Could you take over for now. I know training is boring...”

“I'll do it.” Alec said.

Stopping and rounding on Alec Falkirk offered his hand. “Congratulations! Physical Training and Assessment is now yours.”

“Do I get a fancy letter?” Alec teases.
“Well, letter titles were for heads of the Directorate of Military Intelligence. Q being the head of MI9, before it was merged into MI6. But sure have'a pee,”

Falkirk smirked at the blond man who was flipping him off, as he stepped onto the lift back up to the surface levels.

--

As soon as he was allowed. He had visited before, but could only stand outside of the private room. Looking through the glass window, he could see little of the blond man in the bed, connected to dozens of machines to keep him alive.

This visit, Falkirk enter the recovery ward for neural trauma. There were a lot of soldiers, and a few civilians in the dozen or so beds. It took Falkirk a few moments to spot Brayan, his once shaggy hair, witch he got into trouble for regularly, was now shorn to the scalp. Everyone on the ward had been shaved. Some patients watched Falkirk, others stared out blankly.

Getting closer to his old bodyguard's bed. Falkirk saw a nasty raged scar and neat surgical scars intersecting from above Brayan's left ear and going over the top of his head.

A woman sat beside Brayan on the far side from Falkirk's approach. When Falkirk arranged the visit, it was a physiotherapist he had spoken to. A Beta woman named Gail who Brayan had built up a rapport with.

“Hello?” the woman said carefully as Falkirk approached.

With an awkward flopping head movement Brayan looked to Falkirk. Brayan's hazel eyes squinted and he became slightly distress.

“Mmm?” Brayan said.

“Sir Thomas,” the Beta offered woman. Brayan swung his head to her and emitted the same M sound.

“I believe he is using my professional title, M,” Falkirk said to the Beta.

Falkirk's voice caused Brayan to look at him. The once blond man's head movement floppy and rather jerking. He didn't seem to catch or understand what Falkirk had said though.

“Well M,” Gail said. “As I said on the phone. Use short clear statements directed at Dylan.”

Falkirk sat on the edge of Brayan's bed and placed a hand over the Alpha's.

“Hello,” Falkirk said looking directly at his former bodyguard.

“ 'llo,” Brayan responded in a grunting slur. When Falkirk gave him a smile Brayan attempted to respond but it was like his muscles wouldn't do as they were told.

It took Falkirk a moment to realise that the slight movement under his fingers was Brayan's attempt to move his hand. The injured Alpha's annoyance grew rapidly. Falkirk didn't know what Brayan wanted and the hand was little more than a dead weight. Lifting the hand into his lap Falkirk
clasped it and started to stroked the back.

Having trouble understanding the 'ha, ho hay' sound Falkirk looked to Gail for help but she was as perplexed as Falkirk. Brayan's agitation grew as he realised he wasn't being understood.

“I'm sorry,” Falkirk said as a glazed look passed over Brayan. The alpha looking away.

As Brayan's head flopped back to look at Falkirk the first words he didn't catch but the 'Sha-sheed' sound Falkirk think he got.

“Yes we got the bastard,” Falkirk.

“Language!” admonished Gail.

Very aware of the public setting and the woman beside him. Falkirk said, “I was pulled into the hive and the Queen Bee showed himself.” Falkirk wasn't sure of how much Brayan understood but he couldn't be more specific.

Brayan made the same, “Hoo Ho'ay.”

Thinking for a moment Falkirk took a chance. “I am alright. I was down for a while.” Falkirk said. It was testament to the Alpha that he was still concerned when Brayan came off the worse in the long run.

A nurse tapped Falkirk on the shoulder. “Time.” she said softly before moving on to another visitor.

“It has been nice seeing you. I'll come back again, if you want?” Falkirk said. Getting an approximation of a smile and a hissing sound Falkirk took to be a 'yes'

“I'll see you soon,” Falkirk promised.

Walking out the Beta woman quickly caught up to Falkirk in the corridor out side of the ward.

“You were Dylan's boss?”

“Indirectly. He was my Bodyguard, he answered to my personal security chief.” Falkirk answered. The mention of a bodyguard had the Beta's eyes flicking to James who she seemed to only notice for the first time.

Gail hesitated a moment before asking, “I know Dylan has a brother, but is there any other next of kin?”

“Not that I know of, why?”

“Dylan's brother just appears to have, different priorities.” Gail informed.

Falkirk took it to mean the brother was looking for money. As M, Falkirk had seen it before. An estranged, or even unknown family member dies, and the closest relative only thinks about themselves and not about the stranger they didn't know.

Rounding on the Beta. Falkirk asked, “I know you are not allowed do discuss specifics but what is the likely prognosis of someone of Brayan's condition?”
“Physiotherapy will improve his motor skills but he will essentially be relearning how his body works. The Aphasia will be managed rather than cured. The memory loss we are still gauging, he didn't recognise his brother. But given how he did remember you, and the impression form Dylan's brother, I'm not sure if Dylan was just ignoring him.”

“Is the brother that bad?” Falkirk asked.

“I didn't speak with him, It was Nile the Social worker. He got the impression the brother was more cornered about money and control of assets.”

“There are protocols for the welfare of employees. I can have our HR look into any other next of kin or guardianship. I'll have them contact the social worker” Falkirk said.

--

In the weeks before Christmas a letter arrived from Whitehall. Falkirk had been officially summoned to appear before the Foreign Security and Affairs Committee. Falkirk was moaning about the January date when Selene knocked on his door.

Coming in with a Sandy haired Alpha on her heals. “This is Andy Ray, your new bodyguard.” Selene introduced. With Falkirk shaking the man's hand.

Falkirk looked the stranger up and down. Shaking his head at the number of pretty boys that came through the doors. The Alpha, blue eyed with smattering of freckles across his nose. Not too tall, Falkirk had half an inch on him in hight. With a compact athletic build. Falkirk nodded his approval trusting Selene to have thoroughly investigated his capabilities.

“So Mr Ray excited to be part of my detail?” Falkirk asked.

“Yes, M. A great honour.”

“Yorkshire?” Falkirk asked, looking for the hidden accent underneath the generic British he used for ease of communication in the metropolis.

“Yes, M. Grew up about a mile from York Minster.” Ray responded.

“Not to sound self serving but I hope you do your duty with the honour, integrity, conviction and wisdom of your predecessors.” Falkirk said.

Dropping his head and baring his neck Ray made a quick glance to Selene before saying “Yes, M I do too.”

With a reassuring smile. Falkirk asked, “Did Ms Corvin threaten you?”

“She did mention something about crushing me to the floor until I'm nothing more than a smear, M.” Ray admitted.

Falkirk, after casually asking Selene about violent tendencies brought on by hormonal imbalances and getting a blase shrug in answer. In a reassuring voice Falkirk said to his new bodyguard, “You have nothing to fear from Ms Corvin. She's fat and slow and when she finally has the baby she won't be able to move quickly enough for months,”
Gaining a smile from Ray, as he accepted Selene was just pulling his chain. Falkirk added with an evil grin, “You have to be far more concerned about Q and Alec Trevelyan in the short term and Double O Seven if he's here.”

The bodyguard swallowed and nodded. Selene clapped the man on the shoulder, making his jump. She pulled him out, saying, “Come on pup you've more to see. And you need to be briefed on all of M's tricks, so you're not taken by surprise.”

“But I like keeping my bodyguards on their toes!” Falkirk shouted, not sure if he was heard when his soundproof door swung closed with a solid clunk.
The preparations for Christmas day were progressing fast. As the pack alpha everyone would congregate on Falkirk's house. Three servants had been drafted in to help out Hudson and Mrs Bridges. Selene sat on the couch unwilling to move while James and Keading helped Cody and Andrew decorate the tree.

“James, what should I send G?” Falkirk asked from his position beside Selene. The young Alpha on his second tour, and the PR people loved the fact he would be sending the traditional Christmas message from a warship.

“I never paid attention to the the others when they got letters and stuff, from home,” James admitted.

“How about a care package. You know, candy and stuff.” Keading offered.

James mused, “Fruit! Something, anything, fresh. It might have changed now, but in my day if it couldn't be tinned, jarred, or vacuum packed you didn’t get it. Hate tinned fruit to this day.”

“Thank you.” Falkirk said.

Deciding to offer another olive branch to his brother. Falkirk called Mycroft, to invite him on a shopping trip.

Soon, Falkirk found himself, with Mycroft in Harrod's. Before Mycroft could head for the food hall, Falkirk called, “I want to have a look at the clothing.”

Picking up a few things. Mainly presents for the extended pack. Mycroft giving some input, on the likes and dislikes of Tanner and Lestrade. For John, Falkirk had an idea, but a shop like this would never dare to sell the type of jumper Falkirk and John liked.

After getting the gifts he needed. With Mycroft at his side Falkirk headed for the food hall, to stock their care package. Alcohol onboard a ship, would be strictly regulated so that was out. Mycroft added high-end boxes of luxury chocolates and biscuits while Falkirk picked up a selection of the standard sweets.

Seeing someone stocking shelves of fresh fruit, Falkirk asked for the Styrofoam packaging that kept the apples separate and protected during transit. Much to Mycroft’s embarrassment. Falkirk was indulged, and was allowed to take the sheet of stiff foam that looked like a big tray for eggs. Falkirk then picked up a variety of fruit, nothing too soft, but apples, oranges and pears were all picked out.

Returning home. The two went to the library, with Hudson bringing in the empty box for them, along with wrapping paper and other items needed. Along with the fruit James had suggested, all in protective packaging. Falkirk and Mycroft filled a box for dispatch.

The last thing Falkirk added to the box. A nice bronze-brown cardigan. Placing the neatly, Christmas paper wrapped cardigan on top Falkirk added a card with his own message, 'Merry Christmas and Remember to wrap up' and signed with an M.
“A little short notice?” Mycroft mused. When the box was sealed and he went to sit down. A small genuine smile playing on his pale lips.

Falkirk joined his brother at the small seating area. “I know it's an abuse of power. But I was going to pull a few strings. Especially when Nora is wanting a little versus competition, her best against mine.”

“Nora, is it?” Mycroft teased, with a slightly raised brow. “Very familiar with the first Sea Lord.”

“Well I can't go around offending everyone!”

“Well, I thought it was your favourite hobby.”

--

Opposed to tradition Falkirk preferred a dinner to lunch on Christmas day and it allowed him to visit the hospital during the day.

When Falkirk entered the ward. Brayan wasn't the only patient to not have any visitors. Alone were some of the military men with no one but their unit, that had now been ripped from them since being injured. Shaking his head remorsefully, Falkirk approach the one he knew. Stepping into the line of sight of the Alpha with a glazed look, Brayan slowly focused and looked at him.

“Merry Christmas Mr Brayan,” Falkirk said pleasantly. Again Brayan used Falkirk's title when returning the greeting, but pronounced the sound of the letter rather than the name.

Placing the loosely wrapped gift on the bed Falkirk watched a moment as Brayan's arm moved towards it. Without dexterity the other man's arm faltered and Falkirk could sense the distress the lack of control was causing Brayan. Clasping Brayan's hand Falkirk manoeuvred it to the gift and helped him rip the paper.

“I think I'm getting obsessed with people being warm enough,” Falkirk said pulling the cardigan out. Falkirk lay it across the alpha's chest. “It goes with your eyes.”

Giving his old bodyguard a smile. Brayan gave Falkirk a smile in return, and flopped his head to look down at the silvery green cashmere draped over him.

“Has Harry been to see you?” Falkirk asked and Brayan flopped his head to look away at the mention of his brother. Reaching over Falkirk gently pulled Brayan's chin back towards him. “Do you want him in your life?”

An aggressive 'Oh' sound was Falkirk's answer.

It was clear Brayan didn't like his brother. Human Resources didn't have anything positive to say about Harry either. A quick background check threw up debt upon debts and Harry could smell the savings his brother had amassed.

“You will need someone to manage your affairs until you're up and about,” Falkirk said and could see the distress it caused the other man to see himself as helpless. “If you know someone I can get them. Selene or I would be happy to do it until you're up on your feet again.”

Brayan looked at Falkirk a moment before stretching his head forward giving an indistinct, 'oo'
Nodding, “Okay I'll talk to, what's-his-name, the social worker,” Falkirk said. Falkirk's loss of name seemed to amused Brayan as he snorted in laughter. Names were never a strong point in Falkirk's memory.

“Ha'ie?” Brayan asked.

It took a moment and another attempt from Brayan before Falkirk figured he was asking about a baby. “Not here yet, any day now though.”

With a flop of his hand Brayan indicated Falkirk. He said, “Hurl,”

“I'll add your name to the pool,” Falkirk said. When the ward sister came round Falkirk said his goodbyes

Walking out Falkirk looked to Alec who was playing bodyguard today. He had not come on to the ward in case he distressed Brayan.

“Bad ending,” Alec mused with guilt in his voice.

“Brayan is alive. It's a new beginning,” Falkirk insisted clinging to the one hope of the situation himself.

Returning home Sherlock was in the process of provoking Mycroft and Daniel in equal measure. Shane just watching his younger brothers. Selene looked like she was in hell trapped between Keading, Darren and Mary discussing babies.

Tanner, John and Lestrade had sectioned themselves off speaking softly as far from the mad house as possible. James and Mallory in a scene of domestic chaos were attempting to maintain order amongst the hyper and squealing children.

Andrew spotting his Papa, broke off and ran up to him. Holding up a small blue plastic gun. “Look what uncle Daniel made me, but Daddy won't let me have the pellets!”

“Perhaps that's for the best. We can play with it tomorrow,” Falkirk placated. Falkirk plucked the gun gently from Andrew's grasp. It was plastic, in a sky blue but was a faithful recreation of a scaled down Walther. With practice hands Falkirk realised it was an almost exact replica. Asking James for the pellets James threw a clear magazine which Falkirk missed completely. Picking up the magazine the clear plastic showing the tiny bullets with green tips with brass bodies.

Despite size and materiel differences. Falkirk recognised the training rounds. Falkirk's anger of the inappropriate gift for a child tempered by the people in the room. In the long run even if Andrew decided to become an architect or something. The enemies his pack had amassed meant Andrew would need to learn to defend himself. Just in case. Falkirk suspected it wasn't just Andrew. Asking his son, “Did Cody get one as well?”

Falkirk got a nod from his son. “Daddy and Keading too,” Andrew answered excitedly.

“This is not a toy from a shop. You will have to learn how to use and take care of it,” Falkirk said reverently and handed back the gun, keeping the magazine.
Falkirk opened his gifts. Posh tea leaves from Sherlock and John. A cardigan with a really nice paisley pattern from Andrew, that James would probable be embarrassed being forced to pay for. A training gun from Daniel in a forest green plastic in the form factor of his preferred Falcon II.

“Oh Bloody funny!” Alec's expletive silencing the room. Holding up a hot-pink plastic Walther.

“Yes I found that joke to be in bad taste,” James said indicating his own pink weapon on the side board.

Everyone sat for the meal. The Gravlax starter going down well. Then as the Venison version of beef Wellington arrived Selene helped herself to a glass of red wine. Keading quietly mentioning alcohol while pregnant with Mallory supporting him.

“I've been dry for nine months! One glass won't hurt!” Selene insisted. Alec offered his support for the woman.

Falkirk stayed out of the debate.

Mallory and Darren were the first to make their excuses but as Colum was starting to doze off Falkirk understood. While Falkirk was waving the family off Mycroft was next with Tanner accompanying him, Shane and David going with as they were staying with Mycroft while in London.

Lestrade then followed, while Falkirk was seeing his two brothers, nephew and chief of staff off.

“Thanks for the invite. The meal was lovely,” Lestrade said. Stopping on the doorstep a moment, to give a proper goodbye.

“Oh anyone willing to watch over Sherlock is welcome and thanks should go to Mrs Bridges,” Falkirk said pleasantly.

“Oh? Perhaps I should,” Lestrade said indicating the hall that would take him downstairs.

“She usually likes a short nap after the chaos. But if you insist, perhaps a short note. She likes something she can show off and preen over,” Falkirk offered.

“I'll do that,” Lestrade said and started to pull away.

Falkirk called the man to wait, “Think of it like a collectors game. Use your full name, title and any awards when you sign the letter off. Not that it matters, she's got one from G, so the only thing to beat that is an Imperial Majesty. But she likes the progression of her collection, of Mr to sir, up through baron to duke then the royal titles.”

“Top trumps?” Lestrade said, referring to the children's card game of One-upmanship and Falkirk saying it was jut like it.

“We're leaving!” Sherlock said abruptly and flouncing passed Lestrade and Falkirk both.

John attempted to give a more graceful exit but Falkirk reassured him,“I know what Sherlock means, goodbye Doctor.”

Returning to the lounge Falkirk bumped into James with Andrew sleeping in his arms.
“I'll put him to bed,” James whispered. Falkirk kissed child then James, and watched the two head up the stairs and out of sight.

In the lounge. Falkirk sat in the wide space James had left in the couch. As Daniel and Alec were staying the night Yulian had been put to bed when Mallory had left.

Cody was making a valiant effort to stay awake but when Keading told him, “Bed Time!” he didn't argue. Returning Alpha man and boy passing at the threshold of the door. Cody not even noticing when James patted the boy's head.

Mary then retired shortly followed by Selene. Keading stayed up leaning against Falkirk allowing Selene to rest.

“Did you have to make it pink?” James complained looking over his own paint gun.

“I like it,” Keading said.

“Is pink such an insult to you masculinity?” Daniel shot back.

“What colour is yours?” Keading asked, the big Alpha with Alec leaning against him.

“I haven't moulded it yet. I'm open to suggestions,” Daniel answered.

“Pink!” James and Alec called in unison.

“Tartan,” Keading offered.

“Sorry, patterns are too complex.” Daniel answered so Keading switched to purple.

“Two for pink, two purple. Casting vote?” Daniel asked.

“I shall side with my Alpha,” Falkirk teased. Daniel gracefully accepting, and saying he'd cast a pink gun for himself.

About an hour after Selene went upstairs, Keading said, “Goodnight!”

The others calling a goodnight in response as the omega headed out of the room.

With James and Daniel having a final whisky while Alec had a vodka and Falkirk a bourbon they continued to talk about nothing in particular. Finishing their drink, Daniel and Alec disappeared out the door and up stairs.

“Bed!” James instructed feeling Falkirk lean more heavily on him by the moment. With James' arm wrapped around his waist Falkirk was led up to their bed room. James carefully stripped Falkirk then lay him down before laying down beside him. The moment James stilled, Falkirk turned to press his nose into the crook of the Alpha's neck. Letting the soft touches and the clam scent lull him to sleep.

A bang sounded and Falkirk started awake. James instinctively reaching for his gun.

“It's coming!” Keading shouted in a panic, nearly getting his head blown off for barging in. James
quickly lowered his gun but Keading hadn't noticed as he was already gone. Getting up Falkirk scrubbed his face then got dressed. Coming out onto the landing, to find Keading was literally going in little circles, speaking so fast Falkirk couldn't quite understand.

Alec and Daniel were standing with a bemused expression at the normally well organised Omega. Suddenly stopping, Keading looked to Falkirk, took a calming breath he ordered, “Get the Car!”

Pointing to James then Daniel, “Help Selene!” the two men snapped salutes. Keading stepped into his and Selene's room, a holdall sailed out and through the air. Alec letting out a grunt as he caught the projectile.

“The chauffeur driver car, everyone's still drunk!” Keading added as Falkirk went downstairs to make the call.

Coming out of the library, after arranging the car. Falkirk went to Keading standing at the bottom of the stairs as Selene was helped down between James and Daniel. Alec was following with the overnight bag and Mary who had also been roused stood at the top of the stairs.

“I'll see to the children,” Mary reassured from the front door.

Alec jumped in beside the driver while Falkirk and Keading entered the back first, both sitting with their backs to the driver. James sat down and braced Selene as she entered with Daniel holding the woman's arms. The Alpha woman giving grunting hissing breaths.

James with his hands braced on the small of the woman's back, as she lowered into the seat. Said, “God, you're heavier than Falkirk.”

Selene shot her elbow back, hitting James' side. James gasped and curled to protect his side. “She broke it, she fucking broke my rib!”

“I'll break your fucking neck if you say another thing, BOND HAAA!” Selene started giving a hissing breath to see through the next contraction.

Arriving at the hospital Selene was wheeled into a private room as James, Alec and Daniel were shown into a waiting area. Two Nurses helped Selene onto the bed, not bothering with asking about contractions since Selene was emitting a constant growl.

Going tough an examination. “Oh! Baby's in a hurry,” the little Irish beta nurse said pleasantly.

With Keading on the right and Falkirk on the left both giving encouragement to the stressed Alpha.

“Would you both shut the fuck up!” Selene growled before giving a scream of pain. Her black hair clinging to her red and sweating face. Her blue eyes were bulging.

“You're doing good! Not long now!” Falkirk said ignoring her outburst.

“This is all your fault!” Selene screamed at Keading.

“Next time it'll be all yours,” Keading answered hesitantly as he stroked his mate's hair out of her face. Able to stay where he was, even when everyone saw the obvious omega instinct to bolt.

The midwife ordered, “On the next contraction, push!” Selene growled, screamed and swore at her
Falkirk knew his memories were a little sketchy of Andrew's birth. He seemed to take hours. But for Selene, in no time at all the midwife proclaimed, “Baby's Crowning!”

“One more!” the midwife encouraged then with a monumental snarling growl from Selene the midwife called, “There we go!”

The exhausted alpha slumped back and closed her eyes. Keading stroking the long hair out of his mate and Alpha's face. A few moments later wail went up throughout the room. A hiccuping cry of someone who was very unhappy.

Keading detached himself to go look at the new arrival. With Selene managing to open her eyes a for a moment at the first cry.

Falkirk let go of Selene's hand, to give the new parents some privacy. His part, in being a supportive presence to Keading and Selene over, and not that necessary in his opinion. Both Alpha and omega did wonderfully without him.

Entering the waiting room the three men looked at him for answers. Falkirk did see the gender and suspected the sex but it wasn't his place to say.

“Well what is it?” Alec demanded.

“That is for Keading and Selene to tell you,” Falkirk stated. Then looked to his own mate. “I thought you had a broken rib?”

Alec patted James on the side. “He's just soft.” James punched his friend's arm and ducked away from the protective growl from his friend's mate.

The door opened about ten minutes later. Keading stood in the opened doorway with a bundle held in a practised arm. Slowly James, Alec and Daniel approached.

“What is it?” James asked looking at the sleeping bundle.

“A baby, Bond.” Daniel teased.

“A girl, Omega,” Keading said softly as not to rouse the baby.

“Well. Congratulations, Daddy!” Alec teased, patting the shorter man on the back.

Approaching, Falkirk slid in beside Keading and Alec, subtly elbowing Alec for his joke in the process.

“She's beautiful!” Falkirk said despite the baby looking like an over ripe tomato.

“Got a name yet?” Daniel asked.

“Michelle,” Keading answered. When Falkirk looked at Keading he saw a hollow half smile. Falkirk knew the relevance of the name and obviously so did Keading.

When Keading returned to Selene Falkirk walked with him. “Are you alright with Michelle?”
“Yeah,” Keading said dropping his head. When Falkirk gently reached forward to touch the exposed neck Keading continued. “I really don't mind, but sometimes it feels like there's a ghost living with us.”

“With every day Michael's memory gets older, with no new ones.” Falkirk stroked the baby's head. “With every new memory created, Selene thinks about him a little less. With new love the old one seems a little less. She just doesn't want Michael to fade into nothingness. She is just as loyal to you. She may not speak about love, James doesn’t, Alec doesn’t but they do feel it.”

Keading gave a small nod. It was hard when there was someone he knew his Alpha still wanted to be here. And he was just the second in line. There had been nothing to end the love she felt for her first omega.

Falkirk pulled Keading to a stop. Sending a glance up and down the empty corridor. He said, “I knew Selene wouldn't be good operative the first time I saw the two of you together. She was more concerned about the vulnerable Omega than the mission objective. Double Os are only meant to only ever think of the mission. Concern, romance these are all meant to be fake for a mission, Selene could never do that.”

A slight snort came from Keading, “Hardly a romantic, even in Paris she was like a soldier on duty.”

It was Falkirk's turn to snort. “That's just her way. She looks for trouble, so she's never caught out. But a long time ago it was Selene asking, 'You're going to New York?', 'Yes, but James will be going with me', and Selene was all, 'No, I'm your bodyguard, I will be coming' then she would spend the whole trip making goo-goo eyes at you. I made the offer but it was Selene who really wanted you to come and live here.” Falkirk said partly quoting an old conversation he and Selene had had a long time ago.

Keading uttered a quiet “Oh?”

“Come on Daddy, best get the little one to her mother,” Falkirk said but didn't follow as Keading entered Selene's room.
Like Busses: Boxing Day

In the morning, Alec remained at the hospital with Keading. Allowing the others to return home. Coming through the front door.

“Daddy!” James was barrelled into by a small Omega. Andrew hugging his dad's waist.

Going to the dining room where Andrew had come from Falkirk sat at his usual place, at the foot of the table. Daniel sitting on Falkirk's right. Andrew sat beside his dad at the head.

Seeing the forlorn little Alpha studying his breakfast. Cody's head propped up on his fist and dark eyes unseeing everything in front of him. Falkirk said to his brother, “You have a little sister, an Omega.”

“Oh a Girl how nice,” Mary tried to encourage Cody.

The boy didn't react. Just poked at the sausage on the plate, and using it to smear the tomato sauce round and round.

Just as Hudson arrived with Falkirk's breakfast, he stood up. Falkirk said, “I'll be a moment. Come on, Cody.”

Falkirk held out his hand to his brother. With Sherlock and Mycroft's intense dislike for change. Cody's reaction was not unexpected. Hand in hand Falkirk led Cody to the privacy of the library.

Sitting on the couch with Cody tucked under his arm. “What's concerning you?” Falkirk asked. As expected Falkirk felt a shrug.

“Don't know,” Cody admitted.

“Your sister's name is Michelle, after Selene's first mate. When you see her you say things like 'She's beautiful', 'She looks just like you' and other nice things when in reality all babies look like squashed tomatoes. Even you, Yulian and Andrew but we love you none the less,”

“When can I see her?” Cody asked.

“Visiting is at two,” Falkirk informed.

With Cody accepting if not resolving his emotional state Falkirk returned with him to the dinning table. Falkirk's kipper was almost cold but he had become quite hungry so ate with gusto.

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“But Papa said I could!” Andrew insisted. As Falkirk had promised the day before, Andrew wanted to play with the gun Daniel had given him. James however, was preparing to go to the hospital with Falkirk and Cody.

“I could teach him,” Daniel offered. James growled at the other Alpha making Andrew flinch and duck his head.
“Stop stirring it!” Falkirk chastised the bigger of the Alphas. With Daniel having taught Falkirk to shoot, with marksmanship scores higher than any of the Double Os it had become a sore point for James.

“I could go to the hospital and you could stay,” Daniel then offered James.

“I can wait,” came Andrew's dejected voice.

James didn't like any of this. He hated the fear Andrew was showing. He wanted to be the one to teach his son. But he was a do-er not a teacher. And as long as noting else was happening, knew Falkirk had been taught better then James himself.

Squatting down, and pulling Andrew to stand in front of him. James tipped up his son's chin so he was looking in the darker blue yes, “If you're going to learn to shoot you may as well learn from the best. And that is Uncle Daniel. No matter how much I don't want to admit it.”

Falkirk took a step back and pressed his heel to Daniel's toe. Just a friendly threat to keep the bigger Alpha quiet with James' admission.

Andrew nodded and James hugged him. Daniel held out his hand and Andrew took it. A jealous Yulian grabbing his dad's other hand. Falkirk then gave his son a kiss and said, “We’ll be back later.”

Falkirk and James piled into the car with Cody holding his gift, a brown bear with cream belly. Falkirk tucked his brother under his arm and stroked his neck gently. They waved a bye, to Daniel, Yulian and Andrew on the doorstep.

Arriving at the private maternity hospital Falkirk led his brother to Selene's room. James decided to wait outside with Alec while Falkirk and Cody entered.

Keading approached his son, and taking his hand led Cody to the crib. Falkirk went to Selene's side letting Keading introduce Cody to his sister. Selene was exhausted but unable to sleep, looked at Falkirk before tuning her gaze to the other side of the room. Cody not quite tall enough rocked forward on his toes to peer over the side of the plastic crib. Both Falkirk and Selene watched the hesitant interaction intently. Keading talked to his son, quietly in a vice that didn't carry. Cody would only answer by nodding or shaking his head.

For the first introduction they didn't stay long. Falkirk placed the bag Keading wanted down and said goodbye to Selene getting a tired nod in return.

Walking back down the hall. Holding his brother's hand. Falkirk asked, “So what do you think of your sister?”

“She's bigger than I expected.” was the precocious answer.

“I thought the same when I saw you,” Falkirk mused. “I really couldn't figure how something as big as you fit inside Keading. And I was also amazed that all humans start off so small.”

Falkirk looking for some clue to his brother's thoughts. Emotional development was not a strong thing in either the Holmes or Bond lines. All had their issues, leaned, developed or hereditary. Every question Falkirk asked was given an answer then bordered on clinical.
Finally Falkirk said, “If anything bothers you. You can tell me. I'll even listen if you just want to talk.”

“Okay,” Cody said, evenly.

Returning home Falkirk and James found Daniel in the garden. A piece of cardboard had been propped up against the grange wall. Daniel was squatting down with Andrew standing in front of him, the boy's stance stable and sure. There were already a few spots of paint getting gradually closer to the centre of the crudely drawn circles.

“If you want to learn from the best go get your gun,” Falkirk said to Cody. Both returning inside.

The garden was long and narrow with a lane at the end. A two story garage(old stable) with an unused apartment dominated the end.

As James came down the steps onto the path that ran along the left hand side Yulian ran up to him.

“Hello Christmas, waiting for your go?” James said to the child.

“I had first go,” Yulian informed. “Why did you call me Christmas?”

“Yulian, Yule, Christmas, just a nickname.” James answered and he watched Andrew get steadily closer to the centre of the target with each shot.

James continued to watch as Falkirk and Cody returned and joined them on the grass. The winter light beginning to fad. Falkirk handed over the pink plastic gun of James'.

“In case you want to show off,” Falkirk said with a teasing smile.

“Come on,” James said to Cody.

Crouching down so he was eye level with Cody James showed the child the procedure of arming the weapon. As James instructed Cody he remembered all the activities he shared with Andrew. On the surface James had been spending time with his son, sharing in his interests. A deeper, more pragmatic interpretation could be he was teaching his son to run and survive if the time came where he or Falkirk couldn't protect him. Even Yulian had been subjected to the subversive training by his parents.

Just using the same target as Andrew James guided Cody in aiming and shooting. A green dot appeared in the outer circle and James gave further instruction before allowing Cody to practice on his own.

By now Daniel had stepped back allowing Andrew full control and watched his student from a few paces back. James stepped up to the other Alpha. He already regretted what he was about to say

“Teach him everything, please,” James said quietly.

“Alec came to the same decision,” Daniel said sympathetically and looked to where Falkirk sat with Yulian on a bench.

James then walked over to Andrew and crouched behind him. Andrew looked to his Alpha then back to the target. Leaning forward, James whispered, “Take a deep breath, You only need one shot, make it count!”
The plastic gun made a weak pop, and a green dot appeared just inside the centre circle. Andrew flinching a bit with the recoil.

“Perfect,” James praised in the same hushed tone.

Daniel circled round the practising boys, to squat beside Cody. Giving a some pointers Cody managed a few shots just outside of the bullseye before all his rounds were spent. “Good lad, good!” Daniel said and clapped the young Alpha's shoulder.

Returning to the lounge the group found Alec was towelling off his hair after a shower. While Mary was sitting back down after having watched at the doors. The old Omega's que of nervousness tainted the air. Mary mused, “You reminded me of your grandfather, Daniel. He taught your father just the same and of course you boys. Now the cycle begins again.”

Falkirk dispatched the children upstairs to wash for dinner as Mary continued to muse about her mate and husband's training of his child and grand children.

“What was that thing with the string?” Mary asked her grandson. It took a few prompts before Daniel remembered the exercise.

“Target tracking,” Daniel informed then briefly described the exercise.

Alec, James and Falkirk relaxed and just listened as Daniel and Mary reminisced about the past.
Like Busses: The New Year

Falkirk was preparing Selene and Keading's house for their return.

“Will you be alright?” James asked for the third time that day and Falkirk had lost count of how many times in total.

Falkirk had been at his desk, a few days ago, when Tanner came in with a lead MI6 had been chasing for a while. A problematic mercenary, who specialised in defending against assaults from special forces. He was currently in the employ of a low-level people trafficker who was scared he would be next on the hit-list for the authorities trying to stop the illegal migration from Africa to Europe.

Since the Karla affair the Double Os had been a bit idle. This allowed James to have an extended downtime, which now was at an end. Signing off on the mission Falkirk handed it to Tanner with instructions to take it to Q.

Returning home that night, was the first time James asked if Falkirk was okay. But now, Falkirk was wondering if his Alpha wanted him to say yes, so James didn't have to admit that the Alpha was the one who wasn't okay.

Finally deciding to confront the issue. Falkirk stood in front of the blond man, and took the bigger hands in his own. Gazing into the crystal blue eyes of his mate, Falkirk asked, “Are you alright?”

“Yes!” James answered a bit defensively.

Falkirk nuzzled his Alpha, and lay a kiss against the rough stubble of James' neck.

“Andrew and I will be fine,” Falkirk insisted and stepped back. “Come on. They'll be here soon. I'll do Selene and Keading's room. You, hoover down stairs.”

The only thing Falkirk really needed to do was freshen up the house after Selene and Keading had been away for so long.

As an alpha, James couldn't enter Selene and Keading’s room, so it was up to Falkirk to make the bed and prepare the crib for the new arrival. The constant hum of the hoover drifted upstairs from James' efforts to freshen up the shut up house.

Looking in Cody's room Andrew was helping him replace everything that had been taken to Falkirk's house. The little Alpha giving his nephew, millimetre precise instructions were every knick-knack, book and do-dad was to go on the shelves, desk or cupboard.

The hum of the hoover silenced and James called, “They're here.”

Cody darted passed Falkirk and down the stairs, Andrew on the small Alpha's heels. Both headless of Falkirk shout, “Be careful.”

Andrew was pop-corning with excitement as he stood by the door. An embarrassing gesture Falkirk was glad he himself had masters. This was Andrew's first time seeing the baby. Cody pulled the door open and watched as Selene carefully stepped out of the car. Daniel helped her as
Alec moved to Keading's side, who had the car seat/carrier in his arm.

Getting Selene in, she sat on the white leather couch, in the lounge of modern decor. Falkirk sat beside her and after Michelle was introduced to Andrew, James called him back. Cody took Andrew's place to look at the baby girl. Still very quiet, the boy just looked at his sister, while squeezed between his Mom and Mum. Her face a little scrunched up with wispy black hair peeking out from under the pink hat, and when she blinked her eyes open she showed her soft dark brown eyes.

“Her eyes are smilier to mine,” Cody observed.

“Why wouldn't they be?” Keading whispered and kissed the top of his son's head. “You both got them from me.”

With the new family settled, first to say their goodbyes, Daniel and Alec. Falkirk wanted to stay longer, but knew he was pushing his luck, and with James making hints it was time to go.

“If you need anything call,” Falkirk said as James guided him and Andrew out. Like a bouncer guides out a hardened drinker after last call.

Returning home Falkirk was struck once again with how empty the house seemed. For almost nine moths the house had Selene, Keading and Cody, and not forgetting Mary and Yulian for a good chunk of that time too.

“Can we practice?”

Falkirk heard Andrew say, so looked back to see his son in his full manipulative glory. Head down, neck exposed with full doe eyes looking up at his Alpha.

“Yes.” James gave in easily. Since he had learned to shoot his gun Andrew had obsessed and took every opportunity to practice.

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At bed time Falkirk watched from the door to Andrew's room.

James sat on the bed, tucking the young Omega under his arm. James nuzzled Andrew and praised his efforts to improve his aim. Andrew spent some time burrowing and rubbing against his Alpha. Calling an end to the scent bath James used his considerable strength to right the child. The dopey smile Andrew had, and happy scent caused James to give his own smile. Smoothing down the dark hair James snorted a laugh as it stuck right back up.

“I have to go away for a little while.” James said and Andrew's face crumbled. He didn’t cry or lash out like an Alpha or Beta would, he closed in on himself and pressed against his Alpha as much as possible. This time there was no play in his movements. Just pressing as closes as possible while giving a mewl.

Coming in Falkirk lay down on Andrew's other side. Enclosing the child between them. James started to stroke Andrew's neck. James had never promised Falkirk, and now Andrew he’d be back because it was a promise he could never keep. Despite he best efforts Andrew was lulled to sleep with the comforting scent of his parents.
Two days later James dropped Andrew and Cody off at school before he left for North Africa.

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In the committee room six MPs sat in a horse shoe arrangement of tables. At the open end, there was a lone table for the person giving evidence. Due to the nature of the Foreign Security Committee meeting, and who was giving evidence, the several rows of chairs for the audience or news reporters were empty.

Falkirk walked in and sat down with Tanner at his side. Smiley had already given his evidence and reported back to Falkirk. General Sir Patrick Ore, the head of the army, Falkirk knew had given a scathing report. Both of his own interactions with M and that of his predecessor.

The Navy however had sung Falkirk's praises. Both Capt. Jason Sansky, an omega, head of naval intelligence. And the First Sea Lord Nora Satie, the first woman to hold the post. MI6 had a good history with the senior service, only Olivia Mansfield and Falkirk himself not to having served. Where Mansfield had refused an honorary rank, Falkirk had bowed to the request of his Club friends and taken the honorary rank of Vice Admiral to keep the association alive. The relationship further helped by a friendship between Falkirk and, Sansky and Satie both.

Falkirk took in the nine people looking at him. There was a clear divide. Only three were actually going for him, the other who Falkirk thought would be the more hostile were just sitting back and looking bored. For the ones who tried to go for him, the questions quickly fell from Falkirk's tenure as Director of MI6 to his personal situation.

“The Prime Minister has declared himself as part of your pack,” one of the youngest of the MPs demanded.

As the MP made a statement Falkirk did not speak until he stated, “You have not asked a question.”

The young MP, maybe a few years older than Falkirk looked taken aback by the challenge from the Omega. Falkirk fixed his gaze on him until he started to stutter out something else then gave up.

Falkirk could hobble almost the entire committee with the exception of the shadow Foreign Secretary who sat to the right of the chairman. They were grasping at straws and they knew it, whatever they thought they had must not have materialised. ‘Or suddenly disappeared,’ Falkirk thought, wondering if this was Mycroft's hand at work.

As long pauses filled only with the sound of shuffling paper preceded every question, each Falkirk would answer succinctly or refuse either for reasons of national security or of such a personal nature they didn't need to know.

After about an hour since the last question had been asked. "Are we going to be much longer, I have pressing matters to attend to," Falkirk stated.

“Are we keeping you?” was the snide remark from an old Alpha whose white hair had migrated from his scalp to his ear, nose and eye brows.

“Yes!” Falkirk dismissed. Out of spite they kept him in the room for another hour.

--
Falkirk walked up the path of the terrace house and knocked the door.

It was a nice area with the houses set a bit back from the road allowing a small front garden, most of which had been converted to driveways. The house Falkirk approached still had a patch of grass and a black gloss door with brass knocker. The only light in the house, was a dull glow coming from the front room.

The door pulled open and there stood the dishevelled form of David Laws, the force behind the committee Falkirk had attended that day. The last time Falkirk had seen the man he was cradling his head, still seated to the the right of the chairman.

The shadow Foreign Secretary shuffled back down the hall, his gait suggesting he had been drinking for a while now. Taking the open door as an invitation Falkirk followed him down the red tiled hall. Turning to the right Falkirk was in a lounge and Laws sat in front of an open fire. The crackle and spit as the logs burned behind the mesh guard.

Laws' history stated there had been an affair a few years back. The wife got the house, children and a substantial alimony which explained why a senior MP now resided in a small two bedroom terrace house.

“Well sit down!” Laws snapped and indicated the chair on the other side of the fire. The green leather wing back chair was similar to what was used in man a gentlemen's club. The middle aged Alpha continued to sip his drink while not offering one to Falkirk.

Just as Falkirk was about to ask what motivated the committee Laws looked at him with a steady gaze.

“How's it going to happen? Suicide? When I'm walking the dog? I don't have a dog, you know. Or a hill walking accident? I hate the countryside.”

“You have lost me. I just wanted to know why you came for me, what you hoped to achieve and perhaps who was behind it?” Falkirk said.

Laws started talking about when he left school at fourteen to become an apprentice. How he became an Electrician for the coal mines where he joined the union.

Falkirk knew he was set in his course. If allowed Laws to ramble, he would spill everything if Falkirk waited and gave the subtle nudges in the right direction so said, “That's when you took up politics”

“Someone like you knows nothing of working from the ground up!” Laws accused and as Falkirk agreed with him the Alpha lost his far off look to pin Falkirk with a searching stare.

Falkirk knew he had made a mistake in trying to gloss over his history he wasn't dealing with the typical British politician who had never stepped out side of academia, the man in front of him was old Labour. The last time the man had set foot in a class room as a student when he was a child.

“Officially I started working at Sixteen but I was mated and freelancing for some time before that,” Falkirk said. Laws gave him a searching look and a frown came to his sagging face. “I have walked the halls of MI6 all my working days. I started in cyber security and warfare. But I was trained to be a gunsmith.”
Laws seemed to forget his reminiscing. Musing he said, “I believe in democracy. I truly do! But I know it is used against the people. The herd make poor decisions and when they don't those who control the votes start talking about things like the silent majority. I tell you boy, the silent majority are like 'terrorist boogie men' they don't exist. Answer me this, who is the greatest threat to this country, at this moment in time?”

Now that was a question Falkirk hated. First you had to separate what made up the country, was it the land, or was it the people. Because the greatest threat to the the people of a county was first it's own governance, followed by it's allies, then the enemies. The politicians out for what they could get were a constant pain for MI6, they were the greatest security weakness. They awarded contracts to foreign states and businesses when weapons and systems should be developed in isolation. On one hand they shared information while concealing it with the other.

“Our selves,” Falkirk finally answered. “For only the people of the country can destroy it. No amount of German bombs, ever did. No amount of IRA terrorists, or religious extremists. Only us.”

“He's doing what Greyman did. He knows he is loosing so is hanging on until the bitter end. And somehow, contrary to all rational opinion he will win,” Laws finally said “Now M, please leave.”

Falkirk stood at the door of the lounge, Laws not bothering to show him out. He looked at the man staring into the fire. There was a hollowness about the man, even his ques were hollow. “I do try to be a good man, Mr Laws. If there is a threat…”

Laws laughed. Humourless. Scathing. Mocking. “Urquhart, was your friend. Holmes and Mallory your whipping boys. You are the last person I would trust, M.”
Falkirk was bouncing Michelle as he paced round the lounge of Selene's house. The mother in question was dozing on the couch while Keading was in the other room, making coffee. Cody and Andrew were upstairs playing quietly.

Michelle was awake and happy to be just held. Her big dark eyes blinking slowly as she watched her uncle.

“She's getting bigger,” Falkirk whispered as Keading returned.

“Do you think so?” Keading whispered back looking over Falkirk's arm.

“It might be me not seeing her every day,” Falkirk mused.

They drank the coffee in almost silence letting the Alpha sleep. Seeing Falkirk glance to the Alpha again Keading explained, “She's up dozens of times a night.”

The peaceful child in Falkirk's arms was at odd with a restless child. In a quiet, high and excited voice Falkirk looked at the baby girl, “Are you keeping mummy and daddy up?”

“Not Michelle. Selene, she's...” Keading added at Falkirk confusion.

“Paranoid?”

“Yeah. I know the why. It's not just with Michelle. Selene prowls the house a couple of times a night at least. Looks in on Cody too. I went the the toilet, and she nearly shouted the house down when she came back and found the bed empty.” Keading said. “I just didn't think she could be that scared of us just disappearing or something.”

Falkirk carefully shifted, to hold Michelle in one arm, so he could pat the other omega's hand.

“She will relax. And it's not like before, Selene has a true pack around her this time, not just a bunch of criminals.” Falkirk said, getting a nod from the other omega. Knowing this was the worst moment, Falkirk added, “Are you coming for brunch tomorrow?”

“Do you really think it's necessary?” Keading asked. Then added worriedly, “Stupid question really.”

Falkirk had explained the training Daniel, Alec and James were giving the children. Selene, adopted by a Hungarian crime family knew the necessity but Keading still harboured reservations.

“I don't know if it's necessary and that's the scary part for me,” Falkirk said. “I hope Andrew
becomes a chef or something. But I see something in him. He relishes a challenge. Loves doing something well then trying to do it better. And the more dangerous, the more, the more Alphaish, the better.”

After a few moments of tense silence. Falkirk mentioned Darren and Mallory were coming too. The same offer had been given to Mallory and Darren but they had still not decided. Given the IRA/Organised crime connections of Darren's family and Mallory's time in Ireland. They were potential targets of both Unionist as well as Republican reprisals.

Reluctantly Keading dropped his head and exposed his neck in submission. “We'll come over about Eleven-thirty.” Keading said quietly.

“I am hoping for the best but we must prepare, we must prepare the kids for the worst,” Falkirk reassured.

--

Sunday and Daniel arrived with Alec, Yulian and Mary who had not yet returned home just after Christmas like she usually did. No, she was staying and Alec showing the strain of the extra visitor.

After greeting each other. Daniel pulled something out of a satchel and handed it to Falkirk.

“This is the exercise Gran reminded me of,” Daniel said as Falkirk looked over the wooden gun, shaped device with wires and components stuck to it.

The basic L shape of the gun had a a long wire fixed at the back, above the grip and stretched along the length of the barrel and threaded through an eyelet. There was also a micro speaker and wires attached along with a simple switch. Daniel puled on the end of the wire coming out the front of the gun and told Falkirk to switch it on. A buzz sounded until Falkirk aimed the gun and the wire no longer touched the ring of the eyelet. Daniel moved his hand up, and the buzz started again, forcing Falkirk to track the movement to stop the buzzing.

“A bit like Operation? Or BuzzOff?” Falkirk mused. Seeing Daniel reaching into his satchel again and bring out something else.

The next device was the same wooden gun shape with what looked like a laser pointer attached. As Falkirk looked at the device he aimed it at the wall and pulled the trigger.

“Infrared spectrum laser,” Daniel said, explaining why there wasn't a visible light.

Daniel then pulled out the receivers, just a block of wood with more wires and components attached. Aiming Falkirk shot one and a chime sounded. Daniel informed, “Each of the targets plays a different note.”

Looking around. Daniel said, “It's a shame we don't have a grate hall. Granddad used to do this thing with pendulums attached from the ceiling. I had to track the pendulums as they swung.”

“What dose that teach?” Alec asked.

Mary gave a weary sigh, “Unless acted upon by external force, a pendulum has predictable movement and speed. If you know the starting point you should know the path, and even the apex of the swing. What do they teach these Double Os, really!”
Alec pulled a face, miming, but only safely behind he Grandmother-in-law's back. The old omega wagged her finger over her shoulder, without looking back, “Don't think for one second I don't have eyes in the back of my head, young man.”

Thundering feet could be heard running up the stairs as Selene and Cody appeared at the door of the lounge.

“Ooh it's the new little one,” Mary said jumping subject, the moment she saw Keading holding the carrier.

Daniel and Alec moved outside to set everything up while Falkirk remained in the lounge with his other guests. Falkirk only partially involved himself in the conversation, waiting to see if Mallory arrived.

Just as Hudson called for everyone to be seated, and everyone was moving to the table in the adjoining room. The bell went. The butler let in the last guests.

“Just in time,” Falkirk said and greeted Mallory and Darren. A thundering preceded the arrival of the children from upstairs, running through the foyer. Sweeping Colum up as the pack moved to the dining room. “Follow the omnivores, I guess.”

“Is Mycroft attending?” Mallory asked as he passed Falkirk.

“No, were you expecting him?”

“No not really,” Mallory answered. “Just wondering.”

“I hear you're for the chop,” Daniel said as the Prime Minister took his seat.

“I trust in the silent majority to make a balanced judgement,” Mallory responded drawing Falkirk's attention.

“Ah, the silent majority.” Daniel said with a sagely nodding. “The biggest peaceful protest in British history was disregarded, as not to be a representation of the public. Because of the silent majority.”

“For the sake of harmony please refrain from discussing politics, religion and sport!” Mary quoted.

“But that makes for a boring table.” Alec complained. But ducked his head when the old woman just looked at him.

After they had finished eating Daniel and Alec led the children out into the back garden. Selene and Mallory joining the ones on the grass. While Keading and Darren, wrapped up in hats, scarves and thick coats, sat on the terrace.

Falkirk came up to Mary who was standing by the French doors. She whispered, “With everything Hector went through, the day he started training Daniel's father I hated it. Then he started on Daniel and Douglas. Now...”

“Needs must,” Falkirk replied.
“That was Hector's reasoning as well,” Mary said.

Falkirk and Mary continued to watch. Darren had been press-ganged and was standing several meters from Cody. The wire from Cody's gun leading to Darren's hand and Cody had to keep aim as Darren moved his arm about or the buzzer would sound.

Daniel crouched down demonstrating to aim of the exercise. With a sweep of his arm, a musical cord sounded through the garden, each of the receivers making a single note of that cord. Giving the laser gun to Andrew, Daniel guided the boy's arm on a same sweep but much slower. Each receiver played a note in sequence as each was hit by the laser. Stepping back, Daniel let Andrew have a go on his own. Andrew tried but only the first receiver played a note. After Daniel gave a bit more advice Andrew tried again. Much slower Andrew got the first, missed the second target and hit the third and forth targets. Smiling Daniel encouraged him to try again.

Alec and Mallory were doing target practice with Colum and Yulian, the youngest. Which turned into target competition between the parents. Shaking his head at the bravado on display, Falkirk moved to the sideboard opening a drawer. Pulling out James' pink plastic practise gun Falkirk readied it. Stepping out onto the terrace Falkirk took aim. Remembered the rounds didn't have much speed as the first shot of green paint hit and disappeared in to the grass. Crouching down Falkirk aimed high, so the pellets could arch down to cover the distance. He emptied the remaining rounds, covering the centre of the target at the far end of the garden in green paint.

Alec and Mallory turned to look behind them at Falkirk, quite a distance away at the open French doors of the lounge. Waving his index finger from side to side in warning Falkirk then returned inside.

The old Omega looking uncomfortable as Selene came in and nursed Michelle. Understanding Mary was from a generation and class that barely interacted with children and hardly ever in public. Falkirk took pity on her. He asked about Lady Crawly, a god daughter to Mary. Never underestimating the ability of the upper class to ignore what made them uncomfortable Mary latched onto the conversation with Falkirk like a life line.

“I'm having tea with a few of the ladies. Would you care to join us, Falkirk?” Mary asked. Hesitantly looking round she was viably relived to see Michelle in Keading's grasp as he patted and rubbed the baby's back. “Of course, Keading, you're welcome to join as well.”

“Oh, thank you,” Keading responded with a slight aura of deer in headlights.

“Tea sounds lovely,” Falkirk answered.

After a few hours Colum came in tired and fed up followed by Yulian. Knowing Cody would have the same determination as Sherlock and Mycroft, Andrew would remain for as long as he was encouraged Falkirk decided to call an end to the training for all.

Mallory and Darren were the first to leave with Falkirk showing them out. Then Daniel said they should go and packed up. Falkirk showed his guests out.

Returning to the lounge. Falkirk found Selene had dozed off.

“Let her rest,” Falkirk said. Not minding at all that they would be staying a little longer.

“Daniel's Gran?” Keading said after a while.
“The breast feeding?” Falkirk guessed. “It's a generational thing. When she was born Mary most likely had a wet nurse,”

Falkirk seeing a slight crease in the American's brow, he knew he had to define what a wet nurse was. “A woman who was employed to breastfeed the child of a well off family. Because a lady of the house breastfeeding, simply was not done.”

Seeing Keading's sneer. Falkirk said, “See, what was once acceptable is no longer and what is acceptable now may once have been unacceptable. Mary tries to accept the change so we must be tolerant of her upbringing too. But Mary and Daniel's grand father were considered radical spending so much time with their children. At one time, even the middle class would have very little to do with their children.”

“The aristocracy is weird,” Keading declared.

“Oh yes!” Falkirk agreed. “I'm sure Daniel will agree with you there.”

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Entering MI6, via the secure underground car park Falkirk stopped just inside the door. To the left was the way to the upper building and E-Branch where he had his office. Ahead was the basement levels, where his secure office and Double O section was. He went right, heading for the bunker where Q-Branch was.

When the lift doors opened onto the long corridor stretching out ahead of him. Falkirk felt a little homesick. He was M, but liked being in Cyber Division where he hacked and waged cyber warfare, and didn't have to deal with stupid politicians, or accountants and definitely no Lawyers. He even liked Ballistics, and being Q. He liked Q, it had a ring to it that suited him.

“You just had to ask me to take over, didn't you?” Falkirk complained, to the memory of a long absent women. Even as a guard greeted him with his title, Falkirk had to suppress the urge to look over his shoulder to see if the silver haired woman was behind him.

Getting to the end of the long corridor. Falkirk pushed open the doors onto the large administration office for Q-Branch. He gave a quick hello to Annie, an old friend. Going up to the balcony, Falkirk pushed open the glass door.

Daniel smiled and leaned back in his chair. “What can I do for you, Laddie?”

“That silent majority thing, what is it?”

“That silent majority thing, what is it?”

“Nothing,” Daniel said. Letting out a chuckle when Falkirk didn't get it. “Okay. I'll give an example. The silent majority say, James Bond's dance of the sugar plumb fairy while wearing a pink tutu was the best the world has ever seen. What is your opinion? On the topic of James Bond in drag and doing ballet!”

“That he wouldn't be caught dead wearing a tutu,” Falkirk said without humour.

“But what do you know? You're just the vocal minority. We're a democracy and it's majority rule.”

“I could get a couple dozen who will swear James never wears pink, let alone a pink tutu, or
dances ballet.”

“But I have the side of the silent majority of 63,182,000 UK citizens on my side. What's that compared to a dozen?” Daniel said giving a weighing look. Falkirk was looking a little miffed, and he couldn't tell if it was because of the insult to James or of he was getting it.

“There is no silent majority?”

Daniel shrugged. “That's the thing about people who are silent, they don't stand up to be counted. And if a person doesn't stand up to have their voice heard, who is speaking for them? Apathy is the death of democracy, Falkirk Bond. Did you know Mallory won his seat, on a 30% turn out. He got less than 10% of all votes cast, but got two thousand more votes than the runner up so won. So, because 70% of voters didn't take five minutes to of their day, Mallory has their silent support and anything he says they tacitly agree with. And only about a half of the residents in his constituency of Bournemouth West are registered to vote.”

“I'm still confused.” Falkirk said rubbing his forehead. He truly hated politics.

“If a person doesn't speak up, someone else speaks for them,” Daniel said softly. “But, when governments and politicians start using the silent majority as a justification. I get concerned. Because it's usually against the wishes of the ones who actually get up of their arse and try to make their voices heard.”

Falkirk thanked the man and left. Still a little confused. On the way to E-Branch he muttered about how much he hated politics, and all the sly backstabbing, double dealing and dirtiness that came with it.

“Give me a bad-guy and a Double O, and I'm happy.”

“M?”

Falkirk jumped, remembering his bodyguard behind him. “Nothing, Rey. Just complaining to myself.”
Like Buses: The second one, arrives with pain - 1/3.

Chapter Notes

Thanks for reading, comments and kudos.

This is new addition to the story. When first writing the story, Mary was just pregnant. Originally I planed on a basket being left at Baker Street, and the baby being called Hamish. Because I wanted Sherlock and John to end up together, Mary was just going to vanish. But since the latest series of Sherlock I decided to edit Seven Ages to bring it in line with Sherlock. So hope you enjoy.

Falkirk's phone woke him. He blinked open his eyes, his heart sinking seeing it was still night time. Snatching the device off the night stand, he was unsurprised to see 'Tanner, B' on the display. He made a quick bet with himself, James, one of the other Double Os, Mycroft or a major event. Falkirk chose Addison as the likely subject of the call.

“Tanner?” Falkirk said, answering.

“A call from the MET, to one of your private lines. They asked to speak to 'Falkirk Bond', M.”

Falkirk sat up, focusing. “How the hell did they know my real name? Who did I set up the line for?”

“It was the line Mary Morstan was able to reach you on. We're contacting the MET to see what's up. But I thought I'd let you know, M.”

Falkirk didn't need to issue any orders, Tanner had all in hand. Hanging up, Falkirk couldn't settle back to sleep. The police asking for him, by his real name and on a line Mary had access to was unsettling.

Getting out of bed. Falkirk tied a dressing gown closed around him, and headed down stairs. Bypassing the foyer, he went down the short corridor that ended in the stairs down to the basement kitchen. Falkirk didn't bother with the light. There was enough spilling through from the small courtyard, to the front of the house.

Filling the kettle, Falkirk placed it on the cradle and flipped the switch. While the stainless steel dome kettle warmed the water, Falkirk prepared the mug with the teabag. Pouring the boiling water into the mug, Falkirk waited until it had steeped.

Sitting at the large table, Falkirk cradled the mug in his hands. Smelling the citrus carrying on the warm steam. Watching the rectangle of glass and metal on the table, he could barely see in the the dimness. He was just waiting for phone to ring and Tanner to tell him what was going on.

A shift in the shadow made Falkirk look to the back door. A dark form lunged at the glass pane. Letting out a shriek, Falkirk jumped up. Running for the panic room. Throwing open the heavy door, his hand about to slam on the red alarm button.

“It's just me!” James called out of the darkness, between gasping laughs.
Falkirk whipped his head round, with hand poised over the button. A very real thought of shooting the bastard in his laughing arse, coming to mind.

Storming up to his Alpha. “James! You rat bastard,” Falkirk thumped the man in his muscled biceps. “You nearly gave me a heart attack, you complete and utter, fucking...twat.”

Falkirk was swept into a hug and kissed. He batted at James’ chest, not done with shouting at him. His anger couldn’t hold out much longer. His Alpha was back. The pheromones he was addicted to gave him a euphoric rush. The Alpha's solid body pressed against his like to should. Falkirk tasting the cigarette his Alpha sneaked before coming home. The deep taste of a man, mingled with the slightly stale smell of someone who hadn't washed after long travelling.

James pulled back, looking into the eyes of his mate. “Your phone is ringing.”

Everything came crashing back. Falkirk pulled out of James' arms and snatched up the device. Answering it, Tanner reported, “The Police are being cagey, M. They will only talk to you personally. PC Donna Prager is at St Bart’s maternity ward. She's in charge at the moment. PC Prager had been briefed and will be expecting you, M.”

Falkirk covered the mouthpiece of his phone. Asking James, “Are you up to a ride and playing bodyguard?”

The Alpha pulled his head out the fridge. Quickly swallowing the slice of ham so he could say, “Sure.”

Falkirk told Tanner he wouldn't be needing the official car or bodyguard. The chief of staff correctly guessing James had come back without telling anyone. James took a swig from the milk bottle and grabbed some more cheese and cold meats while Falkirk dressed.

Soon the two were heading out into the darkness of the very early hours of the new day. Falkirk opened the door of the garage that let out onto the the lane behind the houses. James slowly pulling his Aston out. After closing the concertina doors, Falkirk got into the car.

The streets of London were quieter but still many cars and vans moved about. Pulling into the car park, there were a few police cars about but that wasn't unusual for a hospital. After parking, Falkirk and James headed for the main entrance.

With a ping the lift doors opened onto the maternity floor. The woman behind the desk looked over the obviously not pregnant omega. Falkirk walked up to the desk, “Sir Thomas of MI6, I believe the police are expecting me.”

The woman seemed to sit up a bit straighter. She lifted the phone and said, “Sir Thomas is here for PC Prager...” the receptionist hung up after a brief pause, then looked to Falkirk, “The police will be out in a moment, Sir Thomas.”

Falkirk stood across for the locked doors onto the maternity wards. Waiting. When the doors burst open, a short woman, with her dark hair scraped back and pulled into a bun at the base of her skull was in the lead. Falkirk could read her like a book. She was preparing to use an alpha's harsh attitude and the authority her uniform gave, to bully him until he was off balance and pliable to her questions.

“Falkirk Bond...”

Falkirk snapped his fingers. James jumped to the single, drawing his Walther and aimed it at her forehead in an instant.
“That name, is so far beyond you it isn't even funny,” Falkirk said. “So much as think it again and you and your partner will be thrown into a cell for the rest of your natural lives. Dare to say it again and my operative will use the weapon he is now pointing at you.”

There were frantic nodding from the short woman and the taller and younger Alpha man behind her. Falkirk ordered, “Very slowly, give me your log books!”

The WPC focused on the barrel of the gun aimed at her. Carefully she pulled out her notebook, telling her junior partner to do the same.

Falkirk took both notebooks. He spotted his true name written in both. He ripped out the pages and stuffed them in his pocket. The Younger officer managed to say, “That's a crime.”

Falkirk smirked to the younger man, while holding out the logbook back. “One crime is being committed no matter what. My true name is an official secret. That means you can both be arrested for simply knowing it. But you have also distributed it, that's very dangerous for you. Your continued freedom is at my good will and your ability to never say my name again. You may call me Sir Thomas, or M. Use nothing else when referring to me.”

The younger man nodded, “Yes, Sir Thomas.”

As the younger officer was being the more civil. Falkirk stepped up to him and indicated the door, “Now tell me what is going on PC...?”

“Vickers, Sir Thomas.”

Falkirk noticed James putting his gun away and glaring at the woman. Giving a look that conveyed her death if she did something stupid again.

Vickers looked a bit bashful, “Could I see your ID, please.”

Respectfully and little impressed with the officer, Falkirk pulled out a plastic ID card. It had his picture, position as director of MI6, his cover name and even his title as M. The younger man asked, “You really are a spy?”

Falkirk nodded. “Now tell me, PC Vickers, why have I been called.”

Vickers had the receptionist buzz open the door. They entered the long corridor beyond. Vickers said, “We were called just after midnight. Louise Munroe, a new mother walked out. Less than a day after having her baby.”

Vickers opened a door onto a private room. A nurse sat in the chair, and a baby was in the crib by the bed. The officer said, “After the baby was abandoned, she was moved here so the other mothers on the ward weren't distressed. If you look at the chart, Sir Thomas.”

Falkirk approached the crib. Like most babies, the new born girl was a bit wrinkly. But wasn't quite so red. Falkirk smelling the almost absent sex que, of a beta. And he'd already been told the baby was a girl. Picking up the chart, over the columns of feeding times, weight and other recorded stats a marker pen had been used to write.

Rosamund Mary Watson.

Call Falkirk Bond 0777111111

“Shit!” Falkirk muttered. He pulled out his phone and called Tanner. When his chief of staff picked up, Falkirk ordered, “Scramble! I want the CCTV from St Bart's and surrounding area. Find
Rosamund Mary aka Mary Morstan aka, “Falkirk looked at the PC in silent demand

“Louise Monroe,” The PC said, the name Mary used when in the hospital.

Falkirk repeated the name for Tanner. “Also scan for any known associates of Mary’s. Get the Commissioner up, he has stuff to authorise. PC Vickers isn't a complete twat so you can liaise with him. And is Mycroft with you?”

Tanner gave a slightly embarrassed yes, Falkirk demanded to be handed over. When Mycroft came on the phone, Falkirk ordered, “I need you to get Sherlock and bring him and John to St Bart’s. You better get Lestrade in on this too.”

“What is wrong?” Mycroft said, sounding genuinely concerned. The emotion always took Falkirk by surprise when he heard it in Mycroft’s voice. Falkirk told his brother what he knew so far. There was a heavy silence then Tanner came back on the line. With a final instruction to get to work, Falkirk hung up.

A quiet whine brought Falkirk's attention to the bright blue eyes that had opened. The baby girl gave a grimace, showing her pink gums and tiny tongue. Without thought Falkirk lifted the small baby up.

Sitting in the nursing chair. Falkirk tried to soothe the baby, as she started to hiccups and cry. A nurse came in with a bottle and Falkirk took it, to feed Rosie himself. The baby took the bottle without too much effort. James perched on the arm of the chair and brushed the small, woolly hat covered head.

When Falkirk looked up. It was just the three of them in the room. “This is going to be bad, I can feel it,” Falkirk whispered.

“She has John and Sherlock, and us if need be.” James whispered. Kissing the top of his mate's head. “I don't think Sherlock will be as horrible a guardian as you think.”

Falkirk looked at the man above him. “You weren't there. Sherlock never meant to be cruel but his curiosity made him.”

“I think he's learned since those days.”
“I’m a father?” John Watson said, for what felt like the hundredth time. All the time he had been looking at the girl sleeping peacefully. Sherlock was beside his friend, looking down on the baby too.

Standing further back was Falkirk, Mycroft and James. A soft knock came from the door, before it was gently pushed open. Tanner asked Falkirk to come out into the hall.

In the darkened corridor PC Vickers was waiting. The young PC's more senior colleagues, including the commissioner of the MET were perfectly willing to let him be the spokesman between he police and the very dangerous head of MI6.

Falkirk glared at the smarmy twat of a Commissioner. Shaking his head, as a pack Alpha Falkirk's concern was for John and Sherlock and now Rosie, and even Mary.

Looking between Tanner and Vickers. Falkirk raised an eyebrow, to show he was getting fed up waiting. PC Vickers gathered his courage to say, “A body has been found, in Richmond Park. Female, Blond...”

“You suspect Mary Morstan?” Falkirk interrupted.

Tanner adding, “We have combed the CCTV. The cameras covering Richmond Park, aren't clear. It shows little more than a muzzle flash, between two standing people. The camera in cab Mary Morstan got into, however, shows her sitting beside a shorter than agave male, most likely of Indian or Pakistani heritage.”

Falkirk wanted to see for himself. As they headed for his car. He said to Tanner, “In my files, you should find the members of Mary's mercenary team. Ajay, I believe is the only one of Indian heritage. I want confirmation it's his him or not.”

Tanner nodded then fell away, to organise the next step in the investigation.

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With James and Vickers beside him, they arrived at the park. Falkirk walked along the fairly busy foot path for the middle of the night, mostly police officers or someone in forensic gear going to or from the scene. In the distance was a bright pool of light, illuminated by floodlights identifying the area of the crime. Only glowing tents could be seen, of the scene itself.

A distance from the tents, they came to the cordon. PC Vickers lifted the tape and spoke to the officer on patrol duty.

Falkirk looked to the side, where the vultures had scented a carcass. The cameras and reporters were making sure they got nice shots of the police activity.
“Officer!” Falkirk snapped, to the man patrolling the cordon. “Confiscate those cameras. If they cause trouble, arrest them under the special Measures act. Until more is known, this is a national security matter.”

“With pleasure.” the perimeter guard said. He then whistled to a few of the other officers and headed for the camera crews.

The three headed for the internally illuminated tent, that blocked the view of what was happening inside. Falkirk thought he recognised the head of forensics, Sherlock complained about him at length.

Once James and Falkirk were in the white overalls, with hood up so only their face was visible. Anderson pulled open the tent.

One man standing back, looked to them and nodded. Only his tanned face, and dark eyes visible. Like Falkirk, James and Vickers, his greying hair was under the hood of the overalls. James greeted, Lestrade with his given name.

Lestrade spoke in a soft voice, “Single shot, directly to the heart. No defensive wounds. It looks like she just stood and let herself be shot.”

James put his hand on his mate's neck. Falkirk thankful for the grounding contact. He squatted down. Carefully Falkirk brushed the blond hair off the woman's face. It had relaxed, so there wasn't the little lines Falkirk had come to expect.

“Oh, Mary.” Falkirk whispered. “Why didn't you come to me? I could have....would have protected you.”

“It's not your fault.” James whispered.

“Please confirm,” Lestrade said. “Is it the woman known as Mary Morstan?”

Falkirk nodded. “It is. Real name Rosamund Mary.”

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The nurses were getting annoyed with the men in suits, the police and the general chaos that had been caused. The main corridor was still being blocked by the three ring circus.

“I thought the little bitch would be at least grateful,” Came the quite, smarmy Irish voice of the MET Commissioner. Watching the Alpha PC go after being told nothing would happen after getting a gun pointed at her.

Mycroft barely raised an eyebrow. He deemed to answer the Commissioner, “One thing. M must never know what we did to save him. Or the price. It might be a good time to implement the plan. While M is distracted.”

“The bitch should be helping us,” The Commissioner insisted. “He'd be unemployed if it wasn't for us. I've not got my 'Sir' yet either. What has the bitch got? I want a more senior knighthood.”

“You really do not know M, do you? He would rather be unemployed, with his honour, than do what is necessary. As for your knighthood, Urquhart knew the relevance when he awarded M the GCMG. Do you?”

“You don't half speak in riddles, Holmes.”
“The Civil Service do like their little jokes,” Mycroft loomed over the shorter man, until his was visibly squirming, and in no doubt of the severity of Mycroft's words. “First you get the CMG, then the KCMG, then the GCMG; the Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George, Knight Commander of St Michael and St George, Knight Grand Cross of St Michael and St George. Of course, in the Civil Service, CMG stands for 'Call Me God,' and KCMG for 'Kindly Call Me God.'”

“The one t-the b-itch has?” The Commissioner stuttered out. Eyes fearfully locked on the taller man's

“God Calls Me God,” Mycroft said. It was a bad joke, but had meaning. “Now hop to it. Tell Freddy this is our best chance, while M is busy.”

“M?” The commissioner called, and jumped back a couple of feet from the scary man who loomed over him. Mycroft spun round and plastered on a tight smile, as if he hadn't been intimidating the MET commissioner a moment ago.

The sun was beginning to rise by the time Falkirk, James and Vickers arrived back at the hospital. A nurse had cornered him so ordered, “Anyone who doesn't need to be here, go!”

Vickers not too happy when James caught his arm, and had to stay while the other police got to leave. The small nod Mycroft gave the Commissioner passing noticed by all. Even as the small dark haired man ducked his head, he'd done it so many times to Falkirk, the omega no longer noticed the Alpha's cue of fear.

Suddenly looking back, Falkirk watched his brother and Commissioner, the two thick as thieves as they walked away. He turned from them the moment the security door closed behind them.

Knocking gently, Falkirk pushed open the door of the private room John and Rosamund had been using. When Falkirk saw the father, John still looked shell-socked, even as he held and fed his daughter.

Sherlock took one look at the returned group and went to sit on the arm of the nursing chair. He touched the other man's neck, to bring Watson's attention to Falkirk.

Falkirk couldn't quite look at the man, so looked at Watson's hand, the one he used to hold the bottle Rosie suckled. He knew ducking his head was an omega gesture so forced himself to look Watson in his eye.

“It's her,” Falkirk said. “Mary Morstan was murdered in the early hours of this morning.”

“Why?” Watson asked.

Falkirk had thought Sherlock would give some sort of insensitive comment, but the detective remained quiet.

Falkirk sat on the bed. He clasped his hands, he couldn't look at Watson again, or he'd just choke up. “Rosamund Mary, was part of a freelance assassination and mercenary squad. Her last assignment, was a disaster. A group of terrorists knew Mary and her group were coming to rescue some hostages. Until tonight, Mary and I thought she was the only survivor of the event. The bodies of the hostages were all accounted for, but all of Mary's squad were listed as missing presumed dead. I suspect there may have been another survivor from Mary's group of Mercenaries.”

“Was it the other survivor, who killed her?” Watson said.
Falkirk was about to answer, that they were investigating still. His phone beeped. When he pulled it out, the answer was confirmed.

“Yes,” Falkirk said to Watson. He then stood and called James into the hall. The young PC following, like he had been doing all night.

In the corridor, Falkirk looked to his alpha. “Tanner reports Ajay has boarded a flight to Algiers. Q is arranging for the plane to be delayed, so you can get there ahead of Ajay. Your plane is on standby at London City. Get the bastard, Double O Seven!”

“M,” James said and trotted off.

Falkirk caught eyes with the young PC. He gave a humourless laugh and said, “You thought I was bluffing about having you imprisoned or shot, PC Vickers? You think as an omega I can ever afforded to posture or joke?”

The Alpha shook his head in answer to the scariest omega he'd ever seen.

Falkirk asked Vickers to guard the door. The omega then entered, finding Watson sitting alone. Rosie was back in her crib and Sherlock by the window.

“You've dispatched the Neanderthal,” Sherlock said. Falkirk came up to the window, in time to see James' Aston pull out of the car park. Falkirk nodded, watching his Alpha go when he had barely even gotten back.

“How do I know she's even mine?” Watson said. Looking at the plastic crib.

“Obvious really,” Sherlock said.

A bit desperately, John said, “Not to me.”

Sherlock looked at the blond, “Well Mary was obviously not on contraceptives because she was not regularly sexually active. Tell me, you were sexually active with her, but only once were you unsafe. I deduce, only in the aftermath of the King's assassination attempt would you both be distracted enough to not consider condoms. That is when I presume conception to have occurred.”

Falkirk was about to stop his brother. But the rational deduction of the events Watson had faith in. More so, than anything Falkirk could tell the beta.

Watson nodded and looked to the crib, “I have a daughter!”
The Asian man scrambled, the strong Alpha was bending him over the balcony backwards. Ajay, clawed at James' arms. Looking to the ten story drop he was hanging over Ajay screamed, “SHE WAS A TRAITOR!”

“No she wasn't. Now a baby is without a mother,” James said and opened his hands. The smaller man fell from his grasp. James watched the man hit the pockmarked road below the apartment block. The suburb of Algiers affording the dead man no respect. Street hustlers, beggars and kids were robbing the dead body under the gaze of the uninterested police.

James turned away. Grabbing the laptop and the memory stick from the table, he headed for the apartment's door. Walking down the stairs, James straightened his light grey jacket and tie as he went. At the lobby door, the two police officers were waiting, with a bigger fish to fry than a dead man's wallet.

Hoping for the best, James pulled out his wallet, “Black Visa, gentlemen?”

The older of the officers took James' wallet. Finding the Visa Card. James said, “Pin 0070.”

“Phone! That too!” the officer demanded, pointing to the laptop tucked under James' arm.

In a rapid blast of movement James punched the younger officer in the throat. Then grabbed the back of the older officer's head and pulled it down as James brought his knee up. The older officer's nose shattering against James' kneecap. James gave a kick to the younger officer, who had recovered enough to start reaching for his gun. With the two men in blue shorts and shirts writhing on the tiled floor, James said, “You shouldn't have been greedy.”

James scooped up his wallet and credit card, that he'd been willing to part with. James slipped out of the lobby.

James pulled on the white frame sunglasses, to shield himself from the African sun. He stepped over the body he had pushed from the high balcony without glancing at Ajay again. Many looked at the foreigner walking down one of the worst areas of the city, all smart enough to leave him be.

Coming to the main road, James flagged down a taxi and asked to be taken to the airport.

--

Falkirk finished tightening the screw of the natural finished wooden crib. Alec stood back, from where he'd been bracing the end flush to the side for Falkirk.

Alec had a wistful smile as he patted the crib his son had been using. “It's good it has a new home.”

Falkirk felt the same when Selene and Keading took Andrew's old crib for Michelle. Falkirk patted the man's shoulder. There was some new stuff, but there were things donated from Andrew and Yulian's time as babies. And even some stuff of Michelle's which she had already grown out of.

The two headed downstairs. Falkirk coming to a grinding halt at the door to the lounge.

“Bloody hell! It's clean!” Falkirk wasn't sure if he said that right, it was not a phrase he associated with his brother or the flat of Backer Street.

Sherlock gave a dismissive shrug and went back to polishing the window frames. Spotting the
Bentley arriving, Sherlock darted out of the lounge. Pushing passed his brother and Alec.

“I take it they're here?” Falkirk said to Alec and followed his brother down to the ground floor, where John had set up a small practice after inheriting the building from Mrs Hudson.

Daniel was standing, leaning against his car. While John saw to the baby girl in the back.

Alec hugged Falkirk and nodded to Sherlock. Falkirk sent the blond a smile, in acknowledgement. John was still coming to terms with the shock of being a father and of Mary's death. Sherlock was excited about the baby.

“Is it my imagination,” Alec whispered to Falkirk. “Or has Sherlock gown up a bit.”

Falkirk shrugged. Hoping Rosie wasn't just a new curiosity to his brother. A beep from his phone, pulled his attention from the new family.

“What's up?” Alec asked, seeing Falkirk intently studying his phone.

“James is back. Wants me to meet him at Mycroft's office.” Falkirk mused.”I better go see what he wants.”

--

Mycroft sat at the head of a table. Down one side of the table sat Lady Smallwood. On Mycroft's right was the Commissioner of the MET, and the Home Secretary.

The atmosphere was rather stiff. Two meetings needing to be done, but not everyone cleared for both.

“What is the latest on this Rosamund Mary affair?” Lady Smallwood asked.

The sagging faced home Secretary said, “The Bitch dispatched that Double O Seven, so we'll know when it's on the front page of the Sun.”

“Record 'M', not 'bitch','” Mycroft snapped to the woman in the corner taking the minutes of the meeting. Rather uncomfortable. Mostly because the home secretary knew that Mycroft's pack alpha was the 'Bitch' in question. “Double O Seven can be desecrate. We can assume the A.G.R.A situation will be resolved soon.”

The door clicked as it opened. Falkirk smiled. Everyone smiled back. All the #bestest of friends ever, in the whole wide world.

“M?” Mycroft greeted, surprised. This, anonymous building in the middle of London was a place his brother avoided, having no respect for who inhabited it.

Falkirk greeted his brother pleasantly. He then took the chair beside Lady Smallwood. The older woman was the only one whose smile was genuine, “M, such a pleasure to see you again. I've seen you do great things with MI6.”

“Thank you. It helps I was raised in its halls. With many friends and teachers, some gone others I'm glade to say are still be here,” M said pleasantly.

Mycroft noticed his brother's mate had slipped into the room. He watched the Alpha's reflection in the windows as James moved to stand in the corner. “M, if I may ask. Why is your operative here?”
BANG!

Lady Smallwood screamed, Falkirk grasped her hand reassuringly. The others jumped up from the table. All looked to James with gun in hand, and the stenographer on the floor with the side of her head missing and the blood and brains still decorating the wall. James casually tucking his gun back into his holster and musing, “Always hate the harmless looking ones. But that's what makes them good spies.”

Lady Smallwood covered her mouth as she retched and ran from the room. Falkirk looked from the fleeing woman to his brother, “I thought it would be less of an incident if I walked Double O Seven in, rather than let him storm a building and shooting everyone in his way.”

Falkirk headed to the door. James smirking at the privileged elite, daring them to do something. Falkirk calling over his shoulder, “The A.G.R.A incident is now closed, Mycroft. You'll get the report in due course.”

James stopped at the door and looked at Falkirk's snobbish brother. “Any more spies, needing dealt with?”

“No, Double O Seven,” Mycroft said. Controlling his fear. “You have ruined enough carpets for one day.”

James shrugged and walked out.

Mycroft collapsed into his chair. After rubbing his eyes, he looked to the two terrified men in the room with him, both still staring in horror at the dead, little old woman in the corner. He said, “Our chance is over. Hopefully he won't notice anything.”

The commissioner of the MET Police straightened himself up. He fixed his black dress jacket with silver buttons and pulled on his hat. “I have no ideal what you're talking about.”

The commissioner left rather sharply.

The sagging faced man sat. Sir Edwin whispered, “We will not let that bitch get in the way.”

“Then prepare for a massacre because M doesn't know how to play fairly, or quietly, or even humanly.” Mycroft said. A weight settling in his chest. Knowing this was going to be bad. “I doubt even I could survive his wrath.”

Sir Edwin banged the table with is fist. “We are not loosing to that band of Plebs! Just because some bitch has an attack of conscience over some commie piece of scum who never had the decency to stay on the factory floor where he belonged!”

Mycroft, going very quiet, and rubbing the knot his his chest.

--

Falkirk looked around the group in the graveyard. Mycroft had not joined them. He grasped the hand of James, and his hand was given a comforting squeeze in turn.

It wasn't a big turn out for respects to be paid. But Mary Morstan, Rosamund Mary, the woman known by many names was afforded the highest honour. Falkirk had pushed, not that hard with support from G. The King insisting on being here too, the protected paying his respects to the protector.
Mary's coffin was adorned with the Union Flag. An engraver would be carving her name onto MI6's memorial wall in the coming days. And there were posthumous awards for bravery too. A girl would grow up with a hero for a mother.

The person Mary was closest to in life, Watson stood at the head of the mourners being supported by Sherlock. Lestrade stood near Watson and Sherlock. Alec and Daniel, Selene too were all given as mourners. Keading was looking after the horde of children of the pack at Falkirk's.

As the chaplain spoke, Falkirk thought about the names. One name he had authorised to be added to the memorial wall of MI6. It was only a little thing, he would have preferred to have the living person. The other name, the one to grow up with only other people's memories and stories of the mother she should have had, 'Rosamund 'Rosie' Mary Watson' being added to the pack diagram, only days after it came back from the artist to having Michelle added to it.

When silence fell. Watson accepted the flag from the coffin, before it was lowered into the earth. Falkirk watching the way Sherlock placed his hand on John's shoulder, and the shorter man accepting the comfort. The two walking away, very sombre.
Like Buses: Autonomous Actions.

Chapter Notes

Back to our regularly scheduled plot line. The Rosie Chapters were a new addition to the story and have delayed this event. There may be the odd hiccup, because Rosie was not meant to be here, and James was still away on a mission. So they have to be worked around a bit. Hope it works out okay.

As always thanks for reading, comments and kudos.

For the director of MI6 the first days of the week were uneventful. The headlines were filled with Mallory asking the King to dissolve parliament. Followed by articles on Mallory and the government's climbing approval ratings. While buried in the depths of the news paper the strikes, scandals and growing public resentment were glossed over.

Arriving at MI6. Everyone who was talking fell silent as M made his way passed. The battle lines were being drawn. Friendships strained, one or two broken. The right, the left, the liberals, and in the deepest basement one Scottish independence republican.

Entering E-Branch the room fell silent, like the corridors and rooms Falkirk had already passed. Nearing his office, he heard the PA. Darren's grumbling was down to a dull and constant muttering. Falkirk thinking he caught a 'Bastard!' in the omega's words.

“That time upon us,” Falkirk stopping at Darren's desk.

“Rat bastard Alphas,” Darren said sitting back. “I just wish they weren't so polite to my face, so I could still deck them. I can see the creepy thoughts playing behind their eyes, but they're so polite now a days.”

“A party fund raiser?”

“No, strategy meeting,” Darren spat. “God there's going to be months of this. Well if I'm gonna be the quiet.... Dutiful! Supportive! Mate. We are going out, Keading too. I want I night without the political B.S. before everything gets going.”

Falkirk nodded. He saw Darren through this every time an election came around. The other omega was not just built to be a Stepford Wife.

“Oh,” Darren said as Falkirk moved away. “Just your usual meeting and stuff, but for David Laws. As per you're sanding orders, politicians are pushed as far back as possible. He was quite insistent. So Friday.”

Falkirk wondered why the Shadow Foreign Secretary wanted to see him. Probably wanting to get to know him, because Laws would be Falkirk's boss of his party won the election.

Heading to his office, Falkirk threw over his shoulder, “Maloney owes me a favour. Perhaps he can arrange a full blown international indecent for me on Friday.”
“Ya can hope M. Just like I can hope not to be leered at by old perverts. Neither's gonna to happen.”

--

On the Thursday Falkirk entered his car and picked up the morning's paper. Cody and Andrew talked quietly on the journey to the school.

“Is something wrong?” Cody asked looking to his brother. The unusual question drew the gaze of Ray, Falkirk's bodyguard from the front of the car.

“Yes, but nothing you two need to worry about,” Falkirk dismissed and placed the paper face down. After dropping Cody and Andrew off at school Falkirk ordered the driver “Baker Street!”

Hammering the door when he arrived. Eventually John pulled it open. Barging in and up the stairs Falkirk found Sherlock slouching in his chair with a bowel of cereal resting on his chest.

“I need your help,” Falkirk said and dropped the news paper on Sherlock's chest.

“Yours too, John,” Falkirk said looking to the Beta, holding the baby and feeding her a bottle.

Sherlock flipped up the paper to see the head line.

David Laws found dead

While walking his dog along the canal bank the Shadow Foreign Secretary is believed to have fallen into the water where he succumbed to hypothermia and drowned....

“He told me, TOLD ME HOW, and I suspect the who!” Falkirk spat and paced the room in fury. Rosie giving a whine at the loud angry voice. “He didn't even own a bloody dog! It couldn't be more suspicious if they dragged him up a hill and pushed him over a cliff.”

Falkirk froze, with a sudden thought.“Is this place clean?” Falkirk not referring the the layer of dust that covered most surfaces. Well the dust that used to be here, Sherlock had been keeping it rather clean since Rosie's arrival.

“Yes,” Sherlock responded before looking to John, “Let's get dressed.”

“What about Rosie?” John called. “We promised we wouldn't take her on cases...Ah screw it!” the short blond headed out, talking to his daughter as he went.

Before Sherlock left the room Falkirk called, “Can I use your mobile?”

The omega barely catching the device that came sailing back through the door. Falkirk looked at the blank screen. Pressing the unlock button Falkirk then let the screen go black again. It would be easier to just ask Sherlock the code but he wanted the distraction. Taking a deep breath Falkirk breathed heavily on the screen. Amongst the greasy fingerprints and smears Falkirk could identify areas that had been pressed repentantly. Waking the phone he was able to identify the numbers the heaviest cluster of fingerprints related to. Considering the combination, the number would have meaning to Sherlock, but an abstract one.
Pulling out his own phone Falkirk set up a quick search on the files he maintained on Sherlock. Chuckling when he got a hit. Falkirk tapped in the unlock code, the cab driver's number from Sherlock and John's first case.

Pulling up the Messaging app Falkirk typed, 'St Barts, 20 Min, S' and sent the message to Lestrade.

Hearing Sherlock and John returning Falkirk met them at the stairs. Tossing the phone to Sherlock

“How sentimental,” Falkirk teased and heading down stairs. Reaching out to brush the little chubby cheek of the girl, in the sling that kept her to her father's chest.

Arriving at St Bartholomew's hospital. “Do a circuit!” Falkirk ordered the driver.

“There!” Sherlock stated.

“Pulling up by that man.” Falkirk ordered the driver.

John jumped out, to let Lestrade in. The Inspector cooing to the baby, in the car seat between Falkirk and John, before taking his place behind the driver and beside Sherlock. John got back in and took his original place.

“Royal London.” Falkirk ordered the driver.

“What's going on?” Lestrade asked.

“I'd like to know that as well.” John added.

“My brother believes there is more to Mr Laws' death. He wishes John and I to confirm or dismiss his suspicions. While I think you are here for your accreditation, Greg.” Sherlock said.

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Arriving at the hospital Falkirk hung back allowing Sherlock to lead the group. Finding the morgue, they were stopped by a brunette alpha woman. She stood in their way, blocking the door with the refrigerated drawers visible through the panels of glass.

“I can't let you in.” came the woman's dulcet Irish lilt.

Sherlock towered over her. His grey eyes scanning her, and making the pathologist very uncomfortable.

“Inspector Greg Lestrade.” Lestrade said holding up his warrant card. “We're here to see the body of David Laws.”

“No! I can't allow that.”

Sherlock hummed, his eyes boring into the woman's brown.

“Are you trying to impede an investigation... Professor Ryan?” Lestrade taking note of the name tag on the woman's green scrubs.

“Of course she is,” Sherlock said. “Given she hasn't even threatened to call security or the police, I
deduce she was expecting... someone.”

“Stand aside professor,” Lestrade said. “Doctor Watson is going to inspect Mr Laws’ body.”

The professor looked from the Inspector, to the tall alpha who took an instant dislike to her. She reluctantly stood aside.

John lifted Rosie out of her harness and handed her to Falkirk, before following Sherlock beyond the door to the morgue itself.

Falkirk paced while holding a sound asleep Rosie. Letting Sherlock and John examined the body of the man, in the other room.

“Are you alright?” Lestrade asked.

“No, I'm bloody furious. He saw it coming and he told me and I wasn't listening,” Falkirk hissed at the Alpha. He started gently bouncing Rosie as he disturbed her.

A sudden thought occurred to Falkirk. The pathologist making a fuss when they entered, was now nowhere to be seen.

“Come with me,” Falkirk ordered Lestrade and Ray. The bodyguard was looking a bit out of his depth, not yet used to the sudden changes of plan that occurred around M.

“Another text from Ms Corvin,” Ray informed replacing his phone.

After a quick text to Daniel Falkirk had ceased all communications with MI6. Daniel was putting about a myth that Andrew had been playing up and Falkirk was working from home. Selene was having a bit of a fit with Falkirk wandering off with a Bodyguard inexperienced with his methodologies.

Finding the pathologist's office Falkirk opened the door. The Alpha woman looked like she had been just caught red handed. With glare firmly in place Falkirk walked up to the desk and lifted the receiver of the phone out of her grasp.

“Professor Ryan?” the voice on the other end asked once then fell silent.

Pressing the mouth piece to his chest. Falkirk ordered, “Tell him we have left. The tall dark one stormed out in a huff. Inspector Lestrade apologised as did the doctor. Have you mentioned me?”

Getting a shake of the pathologist's head, her fearful eyes darting between the two Alphas at Falkirk's back then to Falkirk himself.

“Don't!” Falkirk ordered quietly and held out the receiver again.

“Sorry, sir,” came the soft northern Irish accent as the woman spoke into the phone. “Inspector Lestrade and the others have left... Yes he seemed displeased... Yes there was someone else with them a Beta who conducted the examination.”

Hanging up, Ryan returned her gaze to the Omega who had gone from tagging along at the rear of the group and giving off a distressed scent, but now seemed to be in charge.
“Professor Ryan would you volunteer to be placed in protective seclusion until nine A.M. tomorrow?” Falkirk asked pleasantly with a cold glare in place.

“If I refuse?” Ryan said mustering a challenge.

“Then instead of a comfortable safe house with take away. I use anti terror legislation to throw you in the deepest darkest hole I can find, until I remember to have you released. We will not even confirm or deny your detention to you family or friends” Falkirk said with a malicious smile.

As Ryan’s head dropped she muttered, “The first option please.”

Looking to Lestrade. Falkirk ordered, “All her electronics are to remain here. Allow Ms Ryan to contact her superior, she's to say she's sick or something. Then stash her until tomorrow morning.”

Walking back to the morgue. 'Professor Ryan?' rang in Falkirk's ears as clear as any confession.

Returning, Falkirk waited outside the examination room. John was just finishing up and Sherlock came out to started giving his report. It was nice to know the How but Falkirk had the Why and Who.

“Doctor could you correct the the post mortem,” Falkirk said to John when he came out. “David Laws deserves that.”

John nodded. He then took Rosie from Falkirk. Sherlock said, “We'll go for a walk in the park. No need for a lift.”

Falkirk was grateful. He was agitated, and probably not nice to be around. “Thank you for your help. And Sherlock, DO NOT WARN HIM!”

“Warn who?” John asked in confusion.

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Returning to MI6 Falkirk instructed the driver to go to the lowest level of the parking grange. Getting out before a cordoned off ramp, Falkirk ducked a barrier and walked down a slope. This level was reserved for Q branch use. A nice silver Mercedes was currently in the process of having its electronics ripped out while an Audi was having a wash before being assigned to a Double O for a mission.

“Where are we going?” Ray asked.

“The back door,” Falkirk answered.

At the far end Falkirk walked up to a metal door and waved his ID card at the receiver. With a clunking ringing sound the metal door opened. Falkirk stepped in. Ray looked about before entering the claustrophobic vehicle lift.

With a jolt the lift started to descend into the bowels of MI6. With another jolt the lift stopped and the door opened onto the Q branch Garage. Waving to Guy, MI6's head mechanic Falkirk moved to the internal door which lead onto the Q branch main corridor.

The lifts to the building above, were to Falkirk's left. Across from Falkirk was his first place in Q
branch, the Armoury. Turning right Falkirk walked to Administration at the far end of the corridor. The door automatically slid open to reveal Daniel.

“Why don't you go explore.” Falkirk suggested to his bodyguard.

“Off you go,” Daniel added.

Ray started to move off. “Remain in Q branch” Falkirk added.

Entering Administration Falkirk and Daniel walked to the spiral staircase at the back of the big room. Waving and saying hello to people he used to work with. Annie an Omega Falkirk who had first worked with him had resigned to become a full time mother. Hal was still about but had returned to the Cyber Division. Underwood, Falkirk's first boss still prowled the room her hawk eyes still framed by wing tip glasses. Falkirk followed Daniel to the the upper level to be greeted by the glass front of his old office.

Daniel's chunky wooden furniture had returned and again. Falkirk looked at the chair behind the desk in amusement. Like with his father, when Falkirk saw a throne like chair it was usually a display of prowess. For 6' 5” Alpha however it the chair looked massive until he sat down and it fit him comfortably.

“May I borrow your office?” Falkirk asked. He could have used his secure office but he felt more comfortable here. Agreeing Daniel said he had a meeting with the Doctor who headed up the Chemical labs.

“I'll move the meeting to her office,” Daniel threw over his shoulder as he headed out.

Falkirk called, “Could you also ask Tanner to do James' post mission debrief?

“Are you going to tell me what's up? I can see you're pissed.”

Falkirk shook his head. “Later, when I've calmed down a bit.”

The big Alpha nodded in acknowledgement and headed out.

Falkirk pulled Daniel's chair out and sat down. Very conscious the head rest was above his head and there was space all around him. He felt like a child sitting in there father place. Even with permission it didn't feel right.

Shaking his head to get his thoughts back on track. Falkirk picked up the secure land line and called home. Hudson picked up and after informing Falkirk Keading was out, and after being told not to expect Falkirk or James back connected the call to James.

“M?” came the smug voice of the alpha who wasn't officially back.

“I need a favour. Tanner will be doing your debriefing. I want you to tie him up for hours. I don't want him home before tomorrow morning.”

“Do I even want to know?” James said, with a deep roughness to his voice. Usually there for a mission, filled with danger.

“If you knew, you would want to be here. But I need you keeping Tanner out the way.”
“Will do, M.” James said and hung up.

Phoning Selene, Falkirk waited until the call connected but before she could say anything he ordered, “Leave Mr Ray alone! He needs to learn to anticipate the unexpected.”

Going on Falkirk asked if she could take Andrew for the night. As Selene became concerned Falkirk reassured, “Just asserting dominance.”

Falkirk did some of his work, first being interrupted by Alec looking for Daniel. With the head of training here Falkirk asked, “How are the recruits?”

“100%, not lost one since taking over,” Alec said a bit stunned by the statistic himself.

“Are they up for something, real?”

Shrugging, Alec threw back, “Only way they'll learn.”

“Have them ready 03:30, full tactical gear for hard entry on a soft target. With no casualties!” Falkirk ordered.

Writing down the address Falkirk handed it to Alec. “As of now only you and I know the target. Daniel will be informed and will accompany us but NO ONE ELSE! This is private.” Falkirk ordered.

As evening came around. Alec, Daniel and Ray had take out. After dinner, Falkirk moved to one of the residential apartments of the fall out shelter. They weren't meant to be used outside of a direct attack on London but one of the apartments had been retrofitted for recovery purposes. Although out on missions the faint sent of Maloney(009) and Thomas(006) still clung to the soft furnishings. Commandeering the spot Maloney preferred Falkirk pulled some blankets and pillows into an open nest. Closing his eyes Falkirk fell into a fitful sleep.
The constant bleating of Falkirk's phone roused him. Confirming the time(01:30) Falkirk straightened his clothing and headed to Q branch. In one of the private rooms at the back of the Administration section the six remaining recruits were getting ready while Alec explained the plan of attack.

Daniel took over the briefing. Holding up a hand gun and an assault rifle. “Non lethal! Aim for the body core. Each round holds an electrical charge for immediate incapacitation and a toxin for paralysis, lasting from thirty to ninety minutes.”

“M are you prepared for the gate house?” Alec asked.

“Do you have my sword?” Falkirk asked looking to Daniel who held out a steel pen.

“I'm ready.” Falkirk declared.

“Ray, Alec, M and myself will be the only ones with live rounds. Don't bother trying to use our weapons they're encoded to a specific user,” Daniel added then handed Falkirk a standard security issue Walther. The biometric weapons had been removed as field issue but had become standard for Tactical squads and security personnel. When Falkirk checked his weapon he confirmed the dull green light blinked on indicating he was the authorised user.

Putting his arms through the straps Falkirk adjusted the holster until it was in position and secure. Replacing his jacket Falkirk then slid the gun into the holster and placed the pen into his inside pocket.

“Move out!” Falkirk ordered.

Falkirk led the group through the motor pool and into the lift of the garage. When the door opened onto the underground car park, Alec shouted from the rear of the group, “I'm driving!”

“Ray, front passenger seat!” Falkirk ordered.

Daniel unlocked the black van then tossed the keys to Alec. Sliding the side door open Daniel directed the recruits in first, himself and Falkirk getting in last into the passenger area.

The van wasn't a typical diesel driven motor, it was a hybrid petrol. Alec equally hated and loved them. At slow speeds the van was sluggish and silent, when the engine kicked in it could out run most cars.

Cursing and swearing came from the recruits as Alec ascended the three garage levels to the street.
Determined not to give the electric motor a chance to kick in.

“Could we get there alive?” one of the recruits shouted from the very back.

“I concur with Mr Wardner's sentiment,” Falkirk added.

“Bloody back seat drivers,” Alec complained adding a vicious swerve for emphasis. Wheels stretching. Cabin rolling. And passengers being forced into the side wall. The driver giving a dark chuckle at the screams, swearing and general complaining form the uncomfortable passengers.

After what felt like very high speeds, and being bumping against the inner walls, the van slowed until the electric engine cut in. Virtually all noise ceased within the cabin so Falkirk pulled out his pocket watch(02:23).

“I thought we would have made better time,” Falkirk observed.

“Bugger off!” came the driver's voice from the front.

As the van pulled to a stop Daniel ordered the recruits, “Bring the keys!”

Everyone piled out with the exception of Wardner, whose grunts were intermixed with heavy scraping.

“Get out the way twinkle toes,” Alec said and after moving Warder out the way leaned in and pulled out a cylinder with two handles on top.

“Well excuse me but two battering rams are heavy,” Wardner spat.

Alec handed one of the devices to Daniel who slid his left arm underneath one handle and grasped the other.

“A battering ram won't break down these doors,” Daniel informed, settling the Key along his arm comfortably.

Alec pulled out the other one and handed it to another of the recruits, “There you go pack mule.”

The recruit tried to copy Daniel in carrying the device using only one arm and dropped it. Daniel, Falkirk and Alec winced as it hit the ground.

“See perfectly safe” Daniel said a bit defensively and slapped the back of the recruit's head.

“Do those things explode?” Wardner demanded.

“No they make other things explode,” Daniel informed as the recruit picked up the device again. This time with a firm grip, using both of the handles.

“Come on ladies this is no time for chatting,” Alec said and moved off with the recruits following him.

Falkirk led Daniel and Ray at a more sedate pace along the road and around the corner. Pulling the pen from his pocket Falkirk held it as he approached the drive of a large suburban house. Just over the threshold of the driveway there was a guard house and gate. Ray and Daniel hung back
allowing Falkirk to approach.

Tapping on the window the guard who had been reading with his feet propped up jumped and looked to Falkirk. The colour draining from his face indicating he recognised who Falkirk was. Coming over the guard slid the built proof window open. Falkirk subtly extended his arm until the tip of the pen was inside the guard house and depressed the button.

“I am here to see my brother, could you open the gate?” Falkirk asked pleasantly, making sure not to take a breath in after he spoke.

“I need to phone the house first, Sir,” the guard replied.

Nodding, Falkirk smiled politely. Still holding his breath without trying to look like he was.

The guard turned to pick up the direct line to the house, and swooned. He was able to turn shocked eyes to Falkirk before he collapsed. A chair scraped and dull thud could be heard, from out of view. Falkirk leaned his head into the guard house. Another guard was laying on the floor.

Pulling his head out. Taking a few breaths now he was clear of the confined space. “Two in one go,” Falkirk mused with a victorious smile.

Placing the pen back in his pocket Falkirk indicated to Daniel the coast was clear and walked up to the gate.

“Need a punt-up?” Daniel asked Ray.

“No,” the bodyguard answered and scrambled over the gate.

In the research Falkirk discovered the gate had an alarm. If the gate opened without the house knowing about it the alarm would sound. So it was decided they would subdue the guards and climb over.

Passing the Key through the gate Daniel then turned to Falkirk and interlaced his finger to make a foot hold for him.

“I know how to climb over a gate,” Falkirk shot and ignored the punt-up, to climb the gate himself.

“I try to be chivalrous and I get met with equal opportunity bullcrap!” Daniel teased as he climbed over as well.

Falkirk had been to the house a few times before. In the darkness it looked vastly different. You couldn't see the high apex of the roof, the bay windows or much of the features Falkirk had noticed when he and Selene had come before.

Wardner and one of the recruits were waiting in the alcove where the front door was located. Daniel walked passed Falkirk and pressed the Key to edge of the door and frame. A quiet grinding could be heard as a hole was drilled diagonally through the door to the seam where the door met the frame. Then came a quiet hissing and Daniel had to lean heavily against the Key with Wardner and the other recruit adding their weight to keep the device flush.

“Anchors, next time add anchors,” Daniel muttered, his whole body vibrating with the device designed to blow open a secure door. Finally a louder hiss sounded indicating the key was
depleted.

Everyone stood back, and took cover either side of the alcove around the door. Falkirk nodded to Wardner. Grasping his radio Wardner pressed to talk button twice and got two bursts of static back. Everyone was ready. Daniel pulled out the detonator and flipped up the guard and pressed the trigger.

Despite everyone having fingers in their ears, they were still ringing with the blast. Wardner and the recruit took point followed by Daniel then Falkirk with Ray bringing up the rear. Stepping on the intact door now lying flat Falkirk watched as the recruits ran upstairs.

“Mr Trevelyan,” Falkirk greeted a bit loudly meeting the man at the foot of the stairs.

“Wha’?” Alec teased wiggling a finger in his ear.

Walking up stairs Falkirk could hear shouting and threats being issued. Entering the master bedroom, finding Mycroft being forced to kneel between Warder and another recruit.

Seeing a dressing gown over the end of the bed. Falkirk picked it up and waved off the recruits from his brother. Handing Mycroft the dressing gown.

“Have we been a naughty boy? Acting beyond our remit? Without approval of one's Alpha?” Falkirk accused and dropped what was now the previous day's paper down.

“I'm not as good as Sherlock, but even I can't fail to deduce something when my brother says, 'Doctor Ryan?' to the person falsifying a post mortem.”

“It wasn't supposed to happen that way,” Mycroft said. “No one was meant to be hurt.”

“Were you the one to arrange David Laws' murder?” Falkirk demeaned and got a shake of his brother's head in answer. “Just cleaning up the mess?”

Mycroft's head hung forward.

“That's what you're good at Mycroft. Whoever did it will face justice,” Falkirk ordered then leaned close, the scent of alpha fear filling his nostrils. “If you ever act against the will of the country again. I will declare you and your friends, a threat to the nation. There will be no hiding from my wrath, there will be no survivors. Not even being my brother will protect you.”

It looked like Mycroft was about to say something, then his jaw clenched and lips pursed. Clearly indication he wasn't going to speak.

“Pleasant dreams,” Falkirk said. Jumping back when a recruit thought that was a single and Wardner's fist connected with Mycroft's chin.

Mycroft went down. The recruit looked around, innocently. Warder asked, “What?”

Falkirk couldn't deal with Wardner, in other circumstances the recruit's actions would be perfect. It was still Mycroft that disappointed.

So angry, Falkirk hid his emotions from his men. He headed out first, the others following. Alec and Daniel walked either side of him. One or the other brushing against him, offering subtle
support. The recruits joked quietly, after what they believed to be a successful mission.

About half way down the drive an alarm sounded. Shaking his head, Falkirk arrived to see the gate swinging open. With no more need for subtly Falkirk didn't see the point in berating whoever opened the gate.

Falkirk's heart clenching when he saw the black cab pulled to a stop outside the gate and a rumpled and harassed Tanner stepped out. The chief of staff taking a back step, when he saw M leading a contingent of MI6 personnel out of the home he shared with Mycroft.

“Would you ask Mycroft to be in my office at eleven sharp on Monday,” Falkirk said to Tanner. As everyone started to file passed, Falkirk looked back to his Chief of Staff. “I'm sorry for disturbing you but as you may have guesses my brother has done something stupid again.”

Tanner nodded. Falkirk added, “I trust that you didn't know anything about David Laws' death.”

“Death?... No,” Tanner said, unable to look M in the eye. “He... Mycroft he was trying to protect you, M. Outside of Mallory and Mycroft, you have very few friends outside of MI6. Even your predecessor knew how to play politics.”

“There are enough politicians, Tanner,” Falkirk said quietly, so they wouldn't be overheard. “I will protect this country. From threats both foreign, and domestic it would seem now too.”

There was nothing more to be said. Falkirk walked away. Tanner hurrying up to the house.

The recruits were in high spirits when Falkirk got back to the van. “I suppose I need to employ you lot now. Welcome aboard! Now the hard part begins,” Falkirk said getting a mixture of cheers and groans.

“Downing Street,” Falkirk said to Alec as they piled in.

“Is this a coup?” someone called.

“Even I hesitate at an armed assault on Downing Street,” Falkirk called back.

London was just beginning to wake when the van pulled to a stop at the gate to Downing Street.

A policeman immediately approached. “You can't stop here!” he demanded and then fell quiet recognizing a van of dangerous men.

Opening the door Falkirk slowly stepped out. Holding his arms wide with his ID held in his fingers. The officer's eyes were drawn to the holster under Falkirk's jacket.

“M, MI6. My identification!” Falkirk informed wiggling his fingers so the small card waved slightly. Falkirk could see more police appearing.

With Falkirk and the van being covered the officer reached forward. He cautiously took the card from between Falkirk's index and middle fingers.

Withdrawing to behind the gate, the officer returned a few minutes later. “Stand Down” the officer called.
Handing back the card the senior officer guided Falkirk and Ray through the security check point and onto Downing Street. The officer was too experienced to engage in chit chat. With calm efficiency Falkirk was escorted to the black door where the Officer knocked.

Inside the building. Falkirk waited in Mallory's office. Eventually the dressing gown clad form of the Prime Minister arrived.

“Should I be concerned?” Mallory asked.

“I believe there was a plot to fix the oncoming election, I have ended it,” Falkirk informed giving Mallory a knowing look.

Slouching in his chair behind the desk Mallory cradled his head. Unlike Mycroft who held little honour and generally viewed himself above everyone else Mallory viewed himself as a decent individual.

“It wasn't my Idea- that's no excuse I know. They were coming for you, all sides of parliament, the army, the MET, others. I thought,” Mallory stopped when Falkirk held up his hand.

“The road to hell is paved with good intentions. I can handle the politicians and if I can't, I have built up a nice nest egg and I have businesses and charities to concern myself with.”

“You could do it, walk away?” Mallory asked.

“I don’t see why not. I became M for James and Mansfield. I see the people before the organisation or the country. Even now, David Laws was by most measures a decent person and a saint by political measures. Everything that transpired tonight was for him, not the country or his party.”

“I'm sorry, I didn't know what they were going to do,” Mallory admitted.

“And who is this, they, everyone keeps mentioning?” Falkirk seeing a shocked and very uncomfortable look pass over the other man's face.

Mallory picked at the leather pad set into the desk. He closed his eyes and very quietly said, “Friends, and friends of friends, and friends of friends' friends. Generally sharing careers, clubs, schools, universities, family ties...”

“The old boys' network?” Falkirk said, having heard of such a thing from time to time.

“Masons,” Mallory whispered. “Like the club you are a member of. There are ones who like the friendship, and the food and the drinking...”

“But some use it to their own advantage?” Falkirk speculated. Mallory nodded. “Perhaps it's time people should be made to declare affiliations, so we can see how innocent these Masons are.”

With a humourless chuckle, Mallory said, “That has worked out so well in the past,”

“I don't think you quite grasp. I am perilously close to declaring these 'Masons' a threat to the country.” Falkirk informed. “It's nice to have a name, Tanner and Mycroft were rather quiet on the subject.”

Standing, Falkirk moved to the door. “And try to separate yourself from Mycroft. He's a
schmoozer. He knows who to talk to, when to talk to them and how to talk to them. He would make a wonderful diplomat. His problem is when it comes time for him to make a choice."

Exiting Downing Street Falkirk saw the van had moved slightly. Alec hanging out the window, no doubt winding up the beet red officer standing near it. Daniel was standing by Alec's open window trying to keep the smirk off his face while the recruits milled about smoking or stretching their legs.

Looking about the recruits Falkirk wasn't likely to see them again and it was tradition that on completion of an operative's first mission their assessor took them for a drink.

"In!" Falkirk ordered everyone. The last to enter, Falkirk. "Driver, the pub. I need a bloody drink!"
A cheer went up.

Another roller coaster style journey and the Van came to a screeching halt. Alec jumped out in boisterous mood and started hammering on the side panel to get everyone moving.

"No 24 hour places?" Falkirk asked following Daniel out.

"Na, this place is perfect!" Alec said bouncing excitedly and heading for the door at the corner of the building. He hammered and shouted through the door of the pub, until the door cracked open.

"Bloody hell!" came a strong Irish accent. "Keep it down ya bastard!"

The landlord giving the well dressed omega a quizzical look, the other rough and dodgy men were a standard for the pub.

"Apparently you did find a 24 hour place," Falkirk said to Alec.

"No Laddie this is a lock in," Daniel informed. The pub was fairly busy for Six O'clock. All were drinking. Other groups played cards with bundles of cash on the table.

A wolf whistle was aimed at Falkirk and the nine MI6 personnel turned in unison to the big Alpha with shaved head and beady eyes. Attempting to head off any trouble the barman shouted, "You shut yer fecking face!"

Automatically the bartender poured a healthy Vodka for Alec. Looking at Falkirk he drawled, "Whit can I get fer the bonnie boi?"

"I am no longer a boy, and straight bourbon!"

"Still bonnie," the barman said with a charming smile and pulled down a glass and pouring the bourbon without measure.

After a few rounds a tournament started at the darts board. Quickly it came down to Falkirk and Daniel and as Falkirk waved slightly, stepping up to the mark. Taking aim compensating for his slight sway.

"The police are outside!" Someone called and a hush filled the room. Waiting to see if they police would move on or if the illegal drinkers would have to legit out the back door.

"No worries! My Ride!" Falkirk announced to the room waving an arm in the air. Handing his
darts to one of the recruits Falkirk stumbled towards the door.

Daniel and Alec came up either side of the staggering Omega. Wincing as the winter light hit his eyes. Falkirk stumbled to the waiting car just as the door of the pub burst open again. Ray stumbled out.

“I'm meant to accompany you home!” the bodyguard said. The man was sober but had become quite bored having watched everyone else get rather drunk.

Returning home Falkirk stumbled inside giving a half hearted hello to Hudson as he passed. Collapsing into bed with a trail of cloths tracing his path Falkirk fell into a deep sleep. A strong arm coming round him and pulling him against a nice warm chest.

James’ alarm rang moments later for the start of the day.
Lips brushed his forehead, then the side of his eye socket finishing by brushing his cheek. Falkirk batted the Alpha away, his hangover demanding he sleep.

“Brewery, with overtones of smoke and hints of bad morning breath...I must say it's appealing in its way.” The annoying voice whispered into Falkirk's ear. “You know. Like on a long mission, and you barely get a chance to wash. Strange, you can smell like that in only one night. It takes me weeks...”

“James,” Falkirk whined. “Let me sleep it off.”

“What about Mary?”

Falkirk groaned and let out a whining sob. James adding, “Are you going to abandon Keading?”

With a growled Falkirk forced his hungover self out of bed and into the bathroom. Coming out, Falkirk saw his Alpha reclining on the bed, holding a tall glass with the hangover cure in it. Falkirk slugged the vitamins, pain killer and water in on go.

It was Saturday and Falkirk had to prepare for the afternoon tea with Mary and her Upper Class friends. It didn't help when Keading and Selene arrived with all the children, their own, the one who stayed with them last night, and the one they picked up en route to Falkirk's.

Andrew bounded into his Papa's room and jumped onto the bed. He was immensely relived his parents hadn't disappeared again and had just gone out for a night out. James picked up his son and carried him away, “Lets give Papa peace to get dressed.”

Falkirk came down, dressed in a good morning suite, with tailed jacket. He wore a red cravat with the diamond pin gifted to him from Elizabeth Urquhart.

Standing at the French doors. Falkirk watched James and Selene with the kids down on the lawn. Hearing the doorbell, Falkirk let Hudson deal with it so he could concentrated on Andrew as he did target practice with the laser gun that made the targets chime a muscle note. Wincing as the notes from the targets played out of tune. Then a harmonious cord went up followed by the random notes as each target was activated out of sequence again. James gave his son quiet instruction
before letting Andrew try another round.

“M?” a very posh voice said quietly from the door to the lounge.

“G, you're back!” Falkirk greeted as he turned towards the visitor.

The young blond man nodded. “Yes, I arrived yesterday. Thanks for the Christmas presents,” G said and tugged at the cardigan he was wearing.

“Oh it suites you!” Falkirk said and indicated his guest should take a seat.

“You look smart?” G said reaching for something to talk about. He respected Falkirk and appreciated the interest that the Omega had taken in him but had not built up a rapport with him.

“I'm having an Afternoon tea with the Ladies. Luckily Keading will be there to support me,” Falkirk responded then asked about G's tour of duty.

“It was good. I liked it, I didn't have to deal with the cameras and reporters,” G informed before going in to describe his time on HMS Dragon.

“Hello,” G said turning his attention to the door.

After a quick glance to his Papa Andrew responded with his own quiet, “Hello.” Cautiously Andrew approached his Papa’s side. Wary of the strange Alpha.

“You're bigger than the last time I saw you,” G said softly.

Again Andrew looked to his Papa before answering. “Thank you. I grew 1.8 centimetres in the last three months,” Andrew informed.

“That's a lot!” G responded.

“That is point one-nine millimetres a day,” Andrew informed, drawing his Papa's attention. Someone in their first year of primary school shouldn't be able to make those calculations.

“Did Cody help you with the sums?” Falkirk asked casually.

“No!” Andrew whined with a hurt look.

“That's very impressive then,” Falkirk praised and stroked his son's head and neck.

“So you like school”? G asked.

Andrew with a shy smile at the striking young Alpha gave a detailed account of his time at school. Full of his favourite subjects and worst. “Don't like gym, I have to do dancing and gymnastics. I want to do Duel and Fencing!” Andrew pouted.

“Oh, I like Fencing. Don't know what Duel is though,” G informed.

Andrew stood up and held his arms wide. “You have this big stick with pads at the end and you have to knock the other person down, by hitting then real hard!” Andrew informed, mimicking some of the attacking movements.
It didn't go unnoticed Andrew sat down on the same couch as G. Falkirk smiled and shook his head. Andrew moved on to the rock climbing, diving and various other activities he did with James. Falkirk didn't know if Andrew realised that he was flirting. At the moment Andrew's conduct was purely innocent instinct, give him time and experience and he would rival James in his ability to seduce.

The door bell announced the arrival of Falkirk's car. Going to the French doors, Falkirk called in the other omega.

Turning his attention back to G, Falkirk said, “Unless you want to woo little old ladies, I must be going.” By now Andrew was beside G looking up at the handsome young officer.

“What type of man would I be if I abandoned my Alpha in his time of need.”

Andrew took up position beside G continuing to give him shy googoo eyes. At the door he waved the young officer off from beside Hudson.

Keading was also struck by the youthful Alpha but hid his appreciation better. As they headed for the car, Keading whispered to Falkirk, “When's the wedding?”

“Well Andrew's six almost seven. So ten years after hell freezes over,” Falkirk shot back. Keading fiddled with the tight collar and bronze coloured bow tie as he tried to make a bit more room.

“Here,” Falkirk admonished and straightened the omega's tie and collar again.

When they arrived at Daniel's house. G offered to escort Mary. So the blond alpha went up to the door of the town house and rang the bell.

“She curtsied!” Keading shouted, but Falkirk couldn't turn his head in time to see the gesture. However, when a bleary eyed Daniel appeared, he forced himself to bob his head and got an approving look from his grandmother.

“That didn't look forced did it?” Keading said sarcasm dripping from every word.

“No, there is no telling His Grace the Duke of Rothsea is a republican.” Falkirk shot back.

The dowager duchesses Lady Mary Carrington was beaming as she walked to the car with her arm entwined with G's. Dressed in a tartan cape and hat she looked like something from another era. Falkirk and Keading moved to the bench seat allowing Mary and G to sit together on the back seat.

“Hope you don't mind me imposing myself but I don't get to see M as much as I would like,” G said to the old Omega.

Marry was gushing to assure the King was welcome. She then looked to Falkirk. The old omega's brown eyes scanning him from head to toe. “So what kept Sandy and Daniel out to the not so early hours?”

Falkirk just knew she would notice his lingering hangover. Forcing a smile, “Oh, just the first official mission of MI6's newest operatives.”

G asked, “I take it, it was the the celebration that kept you out?”
Falkirk nodded. They talked some more for the rest of the journey to Claridge's. G stepped out and offered his hand to Mary. “I feel a little under dressed,” G whispered to Mary.

“Want my tie?” Keading offered, desperately. Earning a polite chuckle from those around him.

The private function room was not yet occupied. With Mary hosting the event she wanted to be here when the Hotel employees set out the tiered servers and preparing the still empty tea ports. The Alpha in tails observing the preparations turned and bowed to Mary, and G without missing a beat or showing surprise. The Concierge signalled someone to come take Mary's hat and cloak to reveal a dark velvet dress and and pearls round her neck. With the Concierge at her side Mary inspected the preparations.

Walked up to G. Falkirk offered, “Final chance to run.”

“No! You're not leaving me with this lot.” Falkirk sighed. “If it makes you feel better I don't want to be here either.”

“Or me,” G added. “But for my Alpha I'll stay.”

The door opened and someone Falkirk had met several times entered. Mary moved to greet the Countess of Grantham. A tall poised Alpha female who embodied all the old traditions of the upper class ladies. Falkirk came up beside Mary to greet her as well. “Sir Thomas, you and Mrs Urquhart no longer attend the guild meetings,” she said to Falkirk.

“After the misfortune with Francis, Elizabeth decided to move to warmer climes. Out of the public eye.” Falkirk not discussing his own avoidance of the guild meeting was forgotten when Violet Crawly bobbed a curtsy as G came up and was recognised. With a prideful voice Mary introduced G using his full title to the awe struck guest.

More guests arrived and Keading tried to make conversation with a few. For the sect of Ladies and Omegas, he may as well have been from Mars. Soon he stood apart from the group with head bowed and holding a teacup. Falkirk wasn't immune to the upper class attitude either, just as he was going to politely remove himself from conversation with an Alpha talking down to him, and as if the Empire still existed, G approached the Omega. Falkirk kept an eye on the pair. G was giving an animated tale and Keading slowly came alive and responded.

A woman approached G and Keading. A Beta, Falkirk thought but unable to confirm from the distance. She engaged G in conversation with both G and Keading responded. She quickly withdrew, and G and Keading exchanged smirks before giggling to themselves.

“If you will excuse me I think I needed to remind someone of how to act in public” Falkirk said to his companion. Really rather grateful to be away from her.

“Of course,” she answered, allowing Falkirk to go over to the silently giggling pair.

“Having fun?” Falkirk accused and another round of sniggers started. The two sobered, took one look at Falkirk and their desperate attempt not to giggle failed miserably. Both omega and alpha going a little red and looking away while they sniggered.
“How strange,” Violet Crawly said coming over. “Lady Bellamy usually leaves with her pockets stuffed with cakes, silverware, ornaments....Anything not tailed down in fact.”

They group watched as the Beta made her excuses to Mary and flee. Falkirk swung his gaze from the scene back to G and Keading. Faced with his glare Keading dropped his eyes while G desperately tried to hold on to his laughter.

“We were just discussing my tour,” G explained. “You know, what it's like when you're bored. Then come up with ideas to entertain yourself and your shipmates...”

Horrendous stories of bored and immature alpha stupidity, as told by James and Alec from their navy days flashed in Falkirk's mind.

“If you don't behave, your next tour will be on a submarine. Three months in a sunless tin can with only other Alpha males for company!” Falkirk threatened the young officer. Keading slapped his hand over his mouth to prevent himself from laughing, and making a raspberry noise when it didn't work.

“I've never known Lady Bellamy to leave early,” Mary said coming up to the group.

“I believe the candour of a young officer may have had something to do with it,” Violet Crawly informed.

“Ah, Lady Bellamy was always a bit naïve,” the Mary observed.

As the Countess of Grantham was the first to arrive she was also the last to leave. Keading slouched on one of the couches the moment she left the room. Falkirk relaxed and followed down beside the other omega, letting out a groan he'd been holding in since the party started.

G looked down on the two Omegas, “You must come to the garden parties.”

“I'm not going,” Keading whispered to Falkirk.

“Oh, but you must. And bring Selene,” G begged. “They are so boring and I need back up. Please. You're my pack?”

Keading couldn't hold out against the doe eyes of the young alpha. He nodded. G thanked him. Falkirk didn't feel he needed to answer, if G needed him he would go no matter what.

Holding his hand out G pulled Falkirk and Keading to their feet. G then took Mary's cloak to place it over the old omega's shoulders. They returned to Falkirk's waiting car.

During the journey to Daniel's, G had asked to see Selene and the baby. After dropping Mary off, with G escorting her to the door they returned to Falkirk's.

Cody didn't seem pleased to have the strange Alpha near his sister so glared at G the entire time. A quiet growl issued from the young Alpha when Keading handed over his baby girl for G to cradled Michelle in his arms.

“Cody, it's alright,” Selene reassured and called Cody to sit beside her. She hugged her step son while he was feeling territorial.
A jealous Andrew made sure he was sitting beside G as the Alpha cradled Michelle.

When G admitted it was time for him to go. Falkirk saw the guest out, with Andrew. The small omega going red when G gave him a nuzzle. Falkirk then shared a nuzzle with the young Alpha.

“It's been nice seeing you again,” Falkirk said. With a bashful nod, G returned the sentiment.

Falkirk and Andrew watched G head for a police escorted Land Rover. The blond waved to them as the car pulled away.

Chapter End Notes

A note on politics. For any that are interested. You can safely ignore this. It's just an overview I forgot to add when I mentioned the political parties and ideology it in the other chapter.

Lets start with Liberal and Republican. In the UK these ideologies not Political Parties like in America. 'Republican' means any party that supports the abolition of the Monarchy, Class system, including titles(Sir, Lord, Duke etc.). e.g. SNP and at one time Liberal Democrats. 'Liberal' is an ideology of a Government having little say on private or personal matters. Including the liberalisation of drug laws, prostitution and the limitation of government surveillance and interference in a person's private life.

The main parties. In order of parliament seats won.

The right wing are the Tories/Conservatives(two names for the same party). Officially they want a low-tax, free market, small government society. Of recent they have only really supported very large businesses and banks. They presided over the introduction of the most oppressive surveillance laws(only China is less open). They are anti-union and have worked hard to impede workers rights and wage growth.

The left wing would be Labour. Very much into Nationally owned industry and shared ownership. Funded mostly by workers' unions. They push for a higher Tax/greater benefits style of state. With free access to Health Care and Education.

Centrist-Right, pro-Scottish independence are the SNP. They represent the interests of Scotland only, not the United kingdom. They share values with both Labour and the Tories, with the ultimate goal of separating from the Queen and the rest of the United Kingdom.

Representing the liberal(and at one time centre left) values are the Liberal Democrats. Pretty much a joke now. They gave up their ideals to gain power and have not recovered since being in a coalition government with the Tories.

The Greens are heavily into the environment.

Plaid Cymru(Left Wing) represent the national interests of Wales only.

DUP(Right Wing) are Irish loyalists. They want Northern Ireland to remain part of the UK.
Sinn Fein are the Irish Republicans. They want Northern Ireland to be part of the rest of Ireland. Their Members of Parliament (MP) refuse to take their seats, because they have to swear loyalty to the Crown (something they will not do).

There are more classed as 'Others'. These parties only have one seat in Parliament.
Falkirk pushed open the door to the private room of the Diogenes Club. Mycroft looked up, letting his steepled fingers and hands fall to rest in his lap, and leaned off the desk. His bruised cheek a little red, not as bad as it could have been though.

Falkirk, dressed in a soft cardigan, and trousers of tiny black and white check pattern. Showing he had been somewhere informal. He placed three foil wrapped bundles on the table in front of Mycroft.

“You were not at Rosie's baby shower... I think that's what we decided to call the celebration, there was a little bit of a debate. I brought you some sandwiches, sausage rolls and some cake. I took Rosie a nice dusky pink shawl, in your name. I made the shop re-wrap it ten times, until the paper and ribbon was to nanometre perfection.”

As if inspecting a bomb, Mycroft used his index and middle finger to peel back the foil he didn't want to touch. He looked at the plane sponge, with jam and cream in the middle and the layer of icing going up the side and over the top.

Mycroft musing, “I sent them several cardigans, in pastels colours, of cashmere.”

“Well I thought you might be a bit distracted.” Falkirk said pleasantly.

Mycroft heard the threat in his brother and pack Alpha's voice. This was the first time they had seen each their since Friday and the raid on Mycroft's house.

“I assure you. The papers will announce David Laws was...” Mycroft just watched his brother, and the open and accepting expression Falkirk wore. “The police will announce there were suspicious circumstances...”

Falkirk was still just looking at him, with the soft smile. Mycroft knew he was being given another chance. Although he was lying he said, “The police will say they are launching a murder investigation.”

Falkirk's face was dropping, becoming the face of M. Hard, emotionless, but somehow annoyed and very dangerous at the same time. “But we know who killed him, we know who ordered it. Why do we need an investigation.”

“Because there are some who do not take you for the fanatic you are.” Mycroft's heart thundered in his chest. Only a few inspired fear and respect, and he'd never spoken to his Mother, Eurus or any of the others like this. “They don't realise your only loyalty to this country is through your pack. They don't realise you will go to war with us, like you did with America, Russia and every two-bit supervillain wannabe going.”

Falkirk headed for the door. Controlling how much his brother's fairly accurate words hurt. “Am I
disloyal, when a secret organisation murders a member of parliament, one likely to have been my new boss? Mycroft, you are right. I am a fanatic. I don't really care about a politician being murdered. I care about a man who was doing what he thought was good and right. I will treat your Mason friends as terrorists if the ones who ordered and carried out the murder do not admit to their crimes.”

Falkirk pulled the door open. Calling loud and clear, his voice echoing off the walls and into the common rooms, libraries and cafeteria, all throughout the club dedicated to silence.

“The time of the Masons is over, Mycroft. I am preparing for war.”

Falkirk slamming the door, rang so loud in Mycroft's private office. The door opened again a few moments later. A rather young blond man came in. An air of privileged contempt for all, hanging around him. Despite his youth, the Alpha's eyes were hooded and drooping at the outer edge. He poked at the foil parcels on Mycroft's desk.

“The Club Committee is getting rather tired of your brother making so much noise, Mycroft.”

“I am the Club Committee, Freddie!” Mycroft stood. Taking the parcels Falkirk borough. ”And I hope you heard my Brother's little display. He dose not make threats. He states facts.”

“The whole Club heard the Bitch's screeching.”

Mycroft left the over privileged, spoiled... little.... twat was too good a description for the man. Mycroft breezed out of the room. His anger ringing through the very loud crack his shoes made on the floor.

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It was announced that David Laws had been murdered and the perpetrator was part of a secret group, the Masons. The Prime minister announced that he was part of the same group and to ensure there was no impropriety Politicians, Police, Military and any other profession where a conflict of interests could arise had to identify themselves. Then nothing. For days, the papers ignored the story, the police did nothing. Only a few put their names on the registrar of conflicted interests, to say they were masons.

Falkirk sipped his bourbon. The older and rather round omega, sipped his green liqueur. The oldest of the three sitting around the table, near the crackling fire was a little glum.

Falkirk was in fact rather surprised he was still allowed in his own club, The Hind. Sansky who was an Omega and exempt from the Masons was highly amused by it all. Roebuck less so having been inducted on the insistence of his father but had little time for it.

Others however, Falkirk could feel their eyes on him. He had threatened to declare the Masons a threat to national security after all, and no one wanted to know how far the society spread or how deep into the establishment.

“Gentlemen?” came the deep authoritative voice of a woman. Sansky stood to greet his superior, Roebuck stood because they were joined by a woman.

Etiquette meant Falkirk didn't have to stand to greet the First Sea lord. He was also the one to say, “Please join us, Admiral.”

Admiral Satie, took the indicated chair, smoothing down here skirt before she sat. Like most days, she wore a version of the dress uniform. A black skit and jacket with a gold banding round the
cuffs of to indicate her rank and a gold rope going round her shoulder. Under her arm, she had
tucked her hat.

Falkirk waved over a footman, and the blond woman ordered a vodka and soda Falkirk having it
added to his tab. As a non member the admiral couldn't order herself.

Before Roebuck could go off on a nostalgia trip with his successor. Falkirk said, “I like evidence.
It's always my brother that likes deductions, Admiral. Am I to deduce this social visit is not so
social?”

The woman laughed. She took the drink from the tray the footman carried. Addressing Falkirk,
“Some think our friendship is strong enough that I can sway you, M. I've now given up counting
the hints and outright requests to talk to you.”

Sansky suppressed a giggle, and shared a knowing glance with the woman. “I am curious to know
your opinion, Ma'am.”

Roebuck was pretending like nothing was going on around him.

The blond woman leaned closer to Falkirk. “I am told you were groomed by your predecessor. So I
doubt you will have seen this, M. But I'm sure Captain Sansky has, so have I. For me the first time,
was when I made full Lieutenant. Commander Braca was looking for a first Officer. I was the more
senior, the more experienced and to be frank the better man for the job. But Braca came out of the
interview room, gave a Sub-Lieutenant a fancy hand shake right in front of me and told me I wasn't
even getting an interview.”

“Fancy handshake?” Falkirk asked.

Sansky held his hand out to the First Sea Lord. Roebuck physically looked away as the woman
reached out for the older omega. Falkirk watched what he thought to be a rather delicate gripping
of fingers, then how the two seemed to caress each others knuckles with their thumbs as they shook
hands.

“Oh, I get it. A single.” Falkirk said.

Sitting back in her chair. Satie raised her left hand and held up her pinky. “Well, for some of the
highest, a ring is worn. You know, so they don't actually have to shake people's hands.”

Falkirk got a flash of Mycroft. He wore a pinky ring. He made a show of taking it off at one point
but it had appeared again.

“M,” Satie said. “I do not pretended to know what the Masons did to set you off. But I for one
would very much like to see their reach, limited and diminished. I'm strong, because of the battles I
fought to get to where I am. Just look at yourself, and your predecessor too. No easy paths for us.”

Roebuck looked at his hands, having listened to the impressions of what to him and his father
before him was just a club of friend. “I do trust you my boy, even if you are a bit brutal about it.
Do you believe they killed David Laws?”

Falkirk didn't care, he would be willing to tell the whole world. “Yes. He was going to come after
me. Mycroft interfered and whatever was going to happen at the committee didn't. Laws suspected
the election was going to be fixed. He told me such, accused me of being in on it. The next thing
he was dead. He didn't even own a dog, so how could he die while walking one.”

“If you need someone you can trust...” Satie trailed off. She looked at her own head of intelligence
and ordered, “I want a cross skill brigade, Captain! Gong from intelligence, analyses right to tactical implementation. Whiter than white, omegas and woman only for now, with no affiliation to the Masons. You'll take charge of them and they will be at MI6 disposal if need be.”

“Yes, Ma'am!” Sansky said, in his rather rough voice.

Falkirk saw the woman had her own reasons for forging a special unit. But in the now he thanked her and Sansky. It was nice to have friends that stretched beyond his pack. Roebuck added, “You can count on me, my boy.”

Falkirk thanked the old bald man too.

--

Hoping for but not truly expecting an ally. Falkirk entered the traditionally decorated office, for one of their regular meetings.

The older man sat hunched and looking small, in his leather wing-back chair. He cleaned his glasses obsessively throughout the meeting. After the sharing of information, the problematic people and groups moving from MI5’s jurisdiction into MI6’s and vice versa, Falkirk decided to let the Alpha sit on the fence.

“I will not raise the issue of the masons.” Falkirk said, standing and beginning to pack up his stuff.

As if waking from a dream, Smiley said, “Any group or organisation MI6 deemed a threat, MI5 would look into.”

That sounded so friendly and genuine, it put Falkirk off balance. Resting his hands on the back of the chair he had just been sitting on. Falkirk looked at the man who was now actually looking at him. There were no emotional ques coming from the Alpha, Falkirk realised. It was something that happened when in shock and he kicked himself for not noticing it before now.

“George, is something wrong?”

Falkirk was given a small sad smile. Smiley said, “I will talk to you later. Not now!”

Falkirk didn't like it, but respected the man to let the matter lie for the moment. “Well if you need anything call.”

Falkirk gave a goodbye, but got no response. Smiley had gone back inside his own head again while using his tie to clean his glasses.

--

With the latest recruits full members or employees MI6 it would be a couple of months before the next intake. So Falkirk had a little job for one of his favourite ex-Double Os

The blond swaggered in, like any member of the designation he once held. The man slouched in the chair across from M's, and gazed at the omega he knew so well he could tell the annoyed look was for the office workers on the other side of the glass.

“Soos?” Alec teased. “What have you got in store for your favourite super-spy?”

“I want you to start looking into the Masons. You can start with the list Q-Branch drew up of MI6 Employees. Give them one opportunity to declare themselves. If they don't, terminate them
immediately,” Falkirk ordered.

It took a moment for Alec's evil smile to register, as the man left. Falkirk darted to his office door and shouted across E branch.

“I mean fire them! Not kill them! Trevelyans?”

Alec made an exaggerated disappointed noise and threw Falkirk a cheesy smile and left. Falkirk was not reassured.

--

Saturday came and so did a lesson for the children, with Daniel. Selene who was regaining her fitness very quickly had joined Alec and John as teaching assistants.

Falkirk, Darren and Keading were having tea on the terrace. So, technically was Sherlock but he was just talking to Rosie who was sitting on his lap.

Falkirk watched his brother. For a sociopath who used to torture him, just to see what an omega would do when shouted at, scruffed or pinned, Falkirk had to admit Sherlock was doing rather well.

Sherlock waved a little stuffed dog. Telling the little girl, “You fail to grasp consequences. If you want Mr Dog, you must not throw him away.”

Sherlock then handed over the tiny stuffed animal, into an equally tiny pink hand. With a squeal of delight the girl waved her arm to throw the toy as far as she could. Then her face dropped and started to hiccup as she cried. It was only a moment before Sherlock reached down to pick up the toy and wave it in front of the happy girl's face and talk to her.

Keading leaned in close to the other two omegas. His own daughter sitting in his lap. “Rosie has him well trained.”

“She's too young to know what she's doing.” Darren said.

Watching the cycle continue, of Rosie throwing the toy away and Sherlock getting it, then waving it while talking to the girl. Falkirk mused, “I wouldn't bet on it. That's three times. That's an official pattern now.”

Falkirk then looked to Michelle, holding her dad's thumbs, one in each hand. And the way she made Keading's hands wave about. He said, “And I'm getting an image of Ellen Ripply in the robot-suite at the end of the movie, for some reason too.”

Keading looked down, to his daughter, waving his much bigger hands about. He leaned down to kiss the top of his daughter's head, on the rather frizzy and long black hair. The big dark eyes then turned to look at him and Keading was given a gummy smile.

Hudson came out of the living room door, “Mr Mycroft Holmes, Sir.”

“Where is he?” Falkirk asked. Sherlock giving a brief annoyed look, having been a little hurt when Mycroft had not shown up for the party to celibate Rosie's homecoming.

“In the vestibule, sir.”

Going through the lounge and out, Mycroft tried to intercept Falkirk. A warning glare from both
Falkirk and Hudson froze him to the spot and Falkirk continued to the library.

Sitting behind his desk Falkirk took a deep calming breath, “You may show Mr Holmes in, Hudson.”

The old, but still yellow-blond alpha went out. His deep voice resonated back to Falkirk in the library as he said, “The master will now see you now.”

As Mycroft entered he was baring his neck to the butler who was still out of sight.

Falkirk wasn't an Alpha so when it came time for Mycroft to bare his neck for Falkirk it was harder than Hudson. With conscious effort rather than instinctual reaction Mycroft lowered his head and tilted it exposing his neck in submission. He apologised for acting without his Alpha's consent and for circumventing the will of the people.

“You are apologising, Mycroft. I don't need or want that. What are you going do to bring justice to a murdered man?”

When no answer came. Falkirk looked at his desk. “You are becoming a sinking ship, Mycroft. Remember when I described Father like that? I'm meant to be the stupid one and you the smart one. You show ambitions far above your station and you mess up, from Coventry to Laws. You are untrustworthy and borderline unreliable. Then like with Karla you're brilliant.”

Falkirk fell silent a moment before shaking his head and continuing. “I really thought Tanner would be good for you. He is your equal and opposite. He is capable, he could have been M. He is good, loyal, practical and intelligent. As Aid de Camp he is unparalleled...”

Falkirk trailed of unable to add anything more.

“William knew nothing until the morning you raided my house,” Mycroft admitted. “I thought... No I knew he would choose you and MI6 over me so we never discuss anything from our professional lives.”

After the raid Tanner had told Falkirk a similar story. He had known nothing to do with David Laws and Falkirk had believed him.

“I should have you arrested but I'm sure the only proof is what you have admitted to,” Falkirk said and got a quiet “Yes,” in response.

“Final warning. In the future, if there is insufficient proof to convict you, it will be a kill order.” Falkirk stated.

“I understand,” Mycroft said.

Falkirk looked up to his brother for the first time. The Alpha was as he scent que indicated, under strain. Under pressure. “Mycroft, you are not alone in this. You have a pack. Me. Just give me the word and I'll be at your back, or you can even just step aside and let me at them.”

Again Mycroft gave no answer.

“Are you staying for tea?” Falkirk asked.

“Would you like me to?”

“Of course, come through,” Falkirk said and stood. “You can see the girl to be your god daughter.”
Falkirk pretended not to notice how his brother froze.

The two came out onto the terrace. Falkirk taking his original place. Mycroft stood stiffly, behind Sherlock. Looking at the girl with light blue eyes, sitting on Sherlock’s lap.


Falkirk shook his head. “You were making great strides with Andrew, Mycroft. It's a baby, not a bomb.”

“That's debatable,” Mycroft snapped. “I had to throw out the suite I wore, that day you showed me how to change a nappy. It set off toxic alarms at a Top Secret facility.”

Sherlock looked up, to the three omegas, who'd all had children of their own. “How does a baby produce green poop, when it only eats milk?”

“It's a mystery.” Falkirk usage.

“I once found a Canadian cent in Cody's diaper,” Keading said with a frown. “I know kids eat anything. But I swear that's the first time I saw a Canadian coin in my life.”

Hudson burst onto the terrace. “Sir? The hospital, concerning Mr Brayan.”

Falkirk surged up quickly, and entered the house.

Mycroft frowned, “Who is Mr Brayan?”

“Really Mycroft,” Sherlock snapped. “Falkirk's bodyguard, the injured one.”

Chapter End Notes

I wish Merry Christmas to all who celibrate it. To all others I wish you well whether you celibrate something at this time of year or not.
James lounged on the bed, watching his mate don his armour. A very dark charcoal, three piece suit. The last touch, fixing his dark hair into a mane. An old comment of Alec's, about comic book villains having larger than average head coming to James’ mind. To James it was still just his adorable omega with wild hair.

“You sure you don't want me to come?” James said.

Sighing and shaking his head Falkirk said, “Selene, Alec and I are more than enough. And we're the ones with the burden. Enjoy the day with the kids.”

Human Resources and Brayan's social worker had been trying to get the injured man's brother out of the picture. Brayan detested the man and became highly distressed whenever he would visit. HR and the Social worker had been trying to keep the matter civil but a few days ago Harry had pitched up at the hospital with a power of attorney.

Falkirk had been called and when he arrived a few hours later Brayan was still highly distressed. Falkirk had been able to approach the wild Alpha and calm him down enough for a doctor to approach and sedate him. Falkirk remained until his old bodyguard woke. At that point Falkirk decided to handle Brayan's brother the way he dealt with every other problematic Alpha he came across. Alec and Selene had volunteered to accompany Falkirk to see the brother and would be arriving soon.

“Why don't you do something with Andrew,” Falkirk said over his shoulder and seeing James reclining. The Alpha's toned chest and stomach on display, the bed covers pooled in his lap.

“Want to do something to you,” James purred.

“No, I have to go,” Falkirk replied sharply and darted out the room before his resolve gave out. The sound of a seductive chuckle following him into the hall.

“Andrew!”Falkirk called upstairs. “Daddy needs help to get out of bed!”

A thundering of small feet could be heard from the landing above, while swearing emanated form Falkirk's room behind him. Halfway down to the ground floor, Falkirk saw Andrew running passed on the lading squealing, “Daddy!”

Hidden by fake books along with his nesting supplies and bar Falkirk was rummaging through the safe. Ignoring the hard drives and flash drives. Discarding Kruger Rands, sovereigns, Dollars, Euros, Falkirk came across the bundles of used Sterling. Tossing the bundles onto his desk Falkirk also pulled out some extra bindings.

Closing the safe along with the moulded facade that look like a shelf of books, Falkirk sat down at he desk. Leaving the first bundle in its £10,000 Falkirk split the next, into two bundles of £5000 the final bundle was bound into bundles of a £1000. Placing all into his briefcase with the drawn up contract he wanted Harry Brayan to sign.
James was just coming down the stairs with Andrew clinging to his back when Selene arrived, Keading held Michelle with Cody following behind. Daniel and Alec arrived soon after.

“James offered to help you,” Falkirk said to Daniel. Ignoring the “No I didn't.”

Falkirk asked what Daniel had planned. More training was what it sounded like.

“Have fun,” Falkirk called and followed Selene out. Selene's Jaguar was going to be the mode of transport.

“It's so nice to see you in your usual attire,” Falkirk said as he looked from the woman's combat boots up to the black coat and wild black hair.

“Gothic Soldier chic?” Alec teased. Selene looked over her shoulder, one ice blue eye locking on Alec and issuing a low menacing growl.

Arriving at the deprived estate. Alec looked up at the dull grey blocks towering above them. There was boarded up windows, stains and neglect all about the buildings.

Alec mused, “I thought these places had been condemned?”

The area was in the same state of long time decline. Gangs of teens, stopped to look at the strangers. Drug dealers operated openly, with their heavy minders not far off. Skin head thugs held barely restrained fighting dogs on choke chains.

“You do know we're going to be coming back to your car on bricks?” Alec added looking at the roving gangs of hooded youths on BMXs.

“Don't be ridiculous,” Falkirk admonished from his place in the back seat. “It'll be to a neon pink cock drawn on the side.”

Selene pulled to a stop at the base of one of the tower blocks. Falkirk tried to open his door. The handle moved but the door refused to open. Alec the bastard just stood out there smirking at Falkirk being thwarted by child locks. Selene opened the door as she swatted Alec for his insensitivity.

Selene preceded Falkirk and Alec into the high-rise. Passing discarded, fowl smelling shopping trolley full of rubbish. Nothing happened when Selene pressed the button for the lift. Taking the hint Selene pushed open the door to the stairwell. Flinching at the intense scent of Alpha urine Selene issued a brief warning before climbing the stairs.

Urine scent marking was considered barbaric now a days but was sometimes still used. For Omegas like Falkirk it was little more than a warning an alpha was within the vicinity. For Selene it was a warning, intense and assaulting. Alec seemed to be taking it in his stride, either accustomed to ignoring it or due to his physiology able to ignore it better than Selene.

Arriving on the twelfth floor Falkirk felt grimy and in need of a shower. It was no wonder Social Services had not passed Harry Brayan's home as fit for his brother.

Wishing he was in the habit of wearing gloves Falkirk knocked on what once would have been a gloss yellow door. With no answerer Falkirk knocked again using the side of his fist. The sound of
a crash then deathly silence came from behind the door.

Hammering again. “Mr Brayan? It's Thomas McLair your brother's boss.” Falkirk informed. Another crash sounded before the door was pulled open in jarring yanks. Rubbish was forced out of the way and Falkirk was assaulted with a cocktail of nasty smells from the flat.

The gaunt Alpha that appeared did have a passing resemblance with Falkirk's old bodyguard. Where Dylan had shaggy yellow blond hair his brother's was matted and dingy. The striking hazel green eyes on Dylan were vibrant and intelligent, while Harry's were dull and bloodshot, shadowed with black rings.

“I would like to discuss your brother's welfare,” Falkirk stated. The man stepped back to allow Falkirk in.

The curtains were drawn letting in very little light. Something crunched under Falkirk's shoe and he didn't want to look down to see what it was. Harry collapsed on the dingy couch. Falkirk noticed the only clean thing in the room was the power of attorney sitting on the low coffee table. Syringes and bottles of cheep cider littered the rest of the table.

“I would like you to leave Dylan alone,” Falkirk stated.

Snorting and wiping his nose with the back of his hand, “No' going to happen pal!”

“Unlike those you have been dealing with,” Falkirk stopped seeing the man was having trouble following his words. “How, much, to, stay, away?”

“More money than you got, pal,” Harry said.

Lifting his brief case, Selene held out her arms to act as a table for Falkirk. Opening the brief case Falkirk picked up the smallest bundle and dropped it on to the Power of attorney. Harry tried to see into the briefcase but Falkirk blocked his view.

“You spent everything you had on that,” Falkirk said pointing to the power of attorney. Dropping another bundle of a thousand pounds, “To cover your costs, Mr Brayan.”

Harry wiped his mouth and fixed his gaze on the to bundles of cash. Like a parched man presented with a few drops of water Falkirk dropped another. Harry aborted his reaching for the money in a pathetic attempt to play it cool.

“Accessing Dylan's assets could take years. In that time you would need to take care of an invalid. Walk away now and...” Falkirk trailed off and dropped another couple of bundles on the table.

Harry's twitching hands were desperate to snatch up the cash.

“All you have to do is sign, Mr Brayan,” Falkirk said placing his own contract down, for Harry to stay away in return for cash. It would be virtually unenforceable but would likely prove the Harry didn't have his brother's interests at heart.

“One thousand, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight,” Falkirk counted the bundles on the table then added the remaining two. “Ten thousand,” Before adding a larger bundle and saying “Fifteen!”
Tipping out the briefcase. “Thirty, thirty thousand pounds, in hand, now, this very moment. All you have to do is sign!” Falkirk whispered and crouched in front of the man.

Careful to avoid the drug paraphernalia on the table Falkirk slid the contract over. Slowly Falkirk placed a heavy gold Mout Banc pen on top. Harry wiped is mouth again before reaching for the pen and signing the contract.

“Thank you,” Falkirk said and slid the contract out from underneath the man's hand as he stood.

“We're finished here!” Falkirk said to Selene and Alec and walked out.

“You forgot your pen,” Alec said as they entered onto the landing.

“I don't want it back.” Falkirk shot and followed Selene down the stairs.

“What if he ODs?” Selene asked.

Falkirk wanted to say he didn't think about that. The part that made him a Holmes, and M, thought about that precisely when he came up with the best way to deal with Harry Brayan. Falkirk answered, “The hospital knows to contact me or you, before telling Dylan anything.”

Arriving at the car Alec burst out laughing. The wing mirrors were gone, the tyres slashed and a neon yellow cock and balls had been spray painted on the side wing.

“I did offer my official car,” Falkirk said.

A nasally laugh drifted from a group of kids. The raging Alpha saw red. Selene's gaze locked on the one who drew attention to himself, she ran for him. Alec following close behind his pack mate.

Falkirk said to himself, “Oh, good work! Leave the vulnerable little Omega all alone. Who just happens to be the head of MI6.”

Jogging to catchup Falkirk saw the teenager frantically pleading to get away from the enraged Alpha. He wasn't fast enough. Selene grabbed a hand full of billowing hoodie and yanked. Unfortunately for the youth a can of yellow spray paint rolled from his pocket.

Selene with spray paint, and in full sight of the kid's friends who were scattered around the concrete paths, walkways, roads, and car parks between the buildings. She drew crude neon yellow cock and balls onto his pasty white back.

“To bad it's not pink it would contrast better,” Falkirk stated.

Falkirk couldn't hear what Selene whispered in his ear before yanking the young Alpha to his feet. With a vicious kick to the arse from Selene the clearly outmatched youth ran.

Falkirk pulled out is phone and called for his official car and a tow trunk for Selene.
“Are you armed?” Alec whispered while they waited by the wrecked car.

“No, I have two bodyguards,” Falkirk replied. Wordlessly Selene opened the car and pulled a gun from the glove box and subtly handed it to Falkirk. Casing his eyes around the area, the teenagers were gathering like hyenas, waiting until they had enough numbers to feel safe to attack.

“At the ready,” Selene whispered and nodded towards a path.

The teenager from before had returned with a few friends. It was the three big Alpha males leading the group that Selene was indicating.

The three Alphas were virtually identical, shaved heads, round with as much fat as muscle. Just as concerning was the four dogs, medium in size, they were very front heavy with muscle mass, massive jaws, longer front legs than back. All had distinct scars even from this distance you could see that, both humans and the dogs that was. All led brutal lives and knew violence well.

“You don't...” Falkirk asked and the boot clicked.

“I! Hate! Dogs!” Selene growled and pulled out her two barrettes, flipping off the safety.

Lifting the lid of the boot Falkirk saw a tab on the lid. Pulling the tab the inner moulding flipped down to reveal an arsenal.

“Good girl,” Falkirk purred pulling out the Heckler & Koch UMP9 with attached silencer. He braced the stock against his shoulder and sighted down the gun.

The three thug Alphas had stopped. Automatic weapons had been band in the UK for a long time and now they were approaching a group that wielded them openly.

Seeing the blink of LED flashes, Falkirk knew there would be a mess to clean up soon. A wicked though occurred to Falkirk. He decided, social media, awash with pictures and video of him with a sub machine gun, in the middle of London could be of use.

The group of Alphas were at an impasse. They knew they couldn't advance and retreating would look weak.

“Go make friends,” Falkirk ordered Alec. “Give them a way out. Remind them the brat started it.”

Putting a swagger into his stride Alec approached the three Alphas. He was too far for Falkirk to hear but Alec gestured towards the car then the teenager standing quite far away. The smallest Alpha, the one on the left, who was still bigger than Alec turned sharply to the teenager. The teenager froze for a moment before taking to his heels and running off, his flapping hoody riding up to show the graffiti Selene drew on his back.

Alec clasped the small Alpha's hand and they parted. Alec returning to the car and the three Alphas returned the way they came.

Falkirk's car arrived along with the tow truck, shortly after. Falkirk putting the gun back into the boot, “Ms Corvin need I remind you about unregistered weapons?”

“Make sure M, and especially Q doesn't know I stole them?”
“Precisely!” Falkirk said and handed back the Barreta from the glove box. “Hold on! Why, 'especially Q'? I'm the big bad M!”

Chapter End Notes

Happy Hogmanay!

I'm off to enjoy a dram.
The Alpha was sweating profusely as he defended Police policy. Commissioner Anderson, a weaselly Alpha had hung onto his post scandal after scandal. He was currently sitting in front of the Mayor of London, Prime Minister, Falkirk and Smiley.

Laid out in front of Mallory and the others behind the wide table. News papers. The front pages of most had the image of Falkirk with a gun, on the streets of London. The Opposition Parties were using it as proof, Mallory and the current Government had let crime get out of control.

Falkirk rather liked the profile picture of himself on the front of the Sun. Were he held the sub-machine gun to his shoulder, with the long silencer stretching out ahead of the compact stock section.

The Commissioner was trying to shift blame onto MI6, and an Omega's 'hysteria'. The word had not been mentioned, but if the alpha had said one, “You know what Omegas are like.” he had said it a dozen times. Once with a wink to the Mayor.

Falkirk passed to his companions internal emails of police officers refusing to enter the estate without armed back up. There was also union emails indicating police were not safe on the estate and should not be forced to attend incidents there.

“The estate is in chaos,” Falkirk stated. “You have know this for years.”

“That is simply untrue,” Anderson was saying and Falkirk interrupted him, it was time for the real reason for all this to come out..

“You met with Mycroft Holmes the day of David Laws' murder, at the Mason's Grand Lodge London?” Falkirk said. “In fact. Apart from the police interviewing me on the day it was announced David Laws was murdered. No progress has been made in the investigation what so ever.

Smiley decided to get up and look out the window. Mallory studied the cornicing of the ceiling, while the mayor suddenly looked very uncomfortable. The Mayor was also ignoring what was now being discussed.

“The Murderer of David Laws has not yet been apprehended and you have not declared yourself a Mason.” Falkirk said.

“That has nothing....”

Falkirk again interrupted Anderson. “Just tender your resignation by five P.M. Today. I think it's time someone more competent take over,, the police.... the investigation.... the,”
“I have friends,” Anderson threatened.

With an unholy gleam in his eyes. Falkirk pulled out a small notebook from his inside pocket. Licking the nib of his pen, Falkirk sat poised with the little notebook, “And who would these friends be? I'm most interested in knowing who will help you.”

“I suggest you take the offer, Mr Anderson,” Smiley said as he watched the people move about their daily lives.

Anderson looked to the Mayor who only shook his head before returned his gaze to the table in front of him. The Mayor was refuting to help the commissioner.

Only Mallory looked at Anderson, “You had a good run. You should know when it’s time to get out.”

Realising he was alone, Anderson stood and walked out. He forcing his head high and proud, even when humiliated.

“Could I have a moment?” Smiley asked Falkirk. Nodding, Falkirk remained while Mallory and the Mayor exited.

Smiley was still looking over the street below as he spoke.

“Control, my Control he was practically taken out of the Circus feet first,” Smiley said. Daniel had once explained the old turn of phrase, for when a person worked until they died at their post and they were literally taken out feet first.

“I don't want to go like that,” Smile continued after a moment. He spoke in short quiet sentence and Falkirk could guess what was coming. “I want a controlled, graceful, end, to my time at MI5. While I'm still able to choose for myself. I wanted you to be the first to know. To everyone else I will be just be retiring.”

Feeling like he needed to say something but Smiley was a practical man. The only emotional luxury he allowed himself, Karla had destroyed when he ordered Haydon to sleep with Smile's wife.

“I am here if you need me,” Falkirk offered at a loss for anything else to say.

--

It was less than a week after going to the run down estate, when Darren put through a call from Brayan's Physio.

The woman Brayan related to the best was a little sombre as she said, “The Police are here.” Falkirk assured her, he was on his way.

Arriving at the hospital Falkirk and Selene found the two waiting beta police officers, one male the other female.

The female officer confirmed Falkirk was acting as Legal Guardian for Brayan. Confirming he was assisting with Brayan.
Falkirk informed, “Harry got their mother to sign over the house to him. He ran up massive debts against it, the bank then foreclosed. That is the last time I believe Harry and Dylan spoke. When Harry tried to do the same trick with the Mother's new flat he couldn't, Dylan had bought it and kept it in his own name until she died about five years ago. As far as I'm aware, Harry didn't even attend the funeral,”

“We found Mr Brayan with a substantial amount of cash?” The male officers said.

“It was from me,” Falkirk admitted without concern. “I took it and dumped thirty thousand on his coffee table, and told him never to make contact again. My lawyer has a copy of the contract Harry signed saying he would stay away.”

“You had no moral objection to supplying a junkie with enough money to kill himself?” The female officer accused.

“I am not responsible for the conduct of a grown man, who was aware enough to go to a lawyer and get a power of attorney drawn up. A man who was focused enough to smell the savings his brother had amassed, and come up with a plan to get his greedy little hands on them,” Falkirk stated.

The male officer started, “You may have...”

“The bodyguard of the director of MI6 is a well paid position,” Falkirk interrupted. “In cash savings, Dylan has a hundred thousand. Not counting his city centre flat, that's worth nearly a million. There's his pension and other investments. If Harry topped himself in under weeks, with the thirty thousand I gave him. What would have happened if he got his hands on Dylan's assets. I think the exact same would have happened anyway.”

The female officer called and end to the growing confrontation. She said, “We need to talk to Mr Brayan.”

On the ward the curtain had been partially pulled round Bryan's bed. The Beta woman who had called Falkirk was sitting with him. Falkirk had told Brayan of what had happened at his brother's flat. Brayan, had remained silent not wanting to acknowledge his brother in any way.

Seeing Falkirk approach with two police officers Brayan looked away.

“Mr Brayan?” the female officer said quietly.

Brayan said something, in his hard to understand slurred speech. Before the police officer could ask him to repeat it Falkirk interrupted her, “He knows and wants you to leave.”

“I'll show you out,” the Physiotherapist said and stood.

“We need...” the male officer started but the Physio instead her patient wanted them to leave and Brayan was not in a position to help their enquiries.

Before they left Falkirk pulled out a business card and handed it to the female officer. “If you require further assistance call.”

Falkirk waited with Brayan until visiting. Neither spoke. Brayan looked off into the distance, his
thoughts a mystery to Falkirk. He didn't grieve, Falkirk suspected Brayan had cut off and mourned the loss of his brother a very long time ago.

When the nurse came along announcing the end of visiting. She said Falkirk could stay a little longer. Brayan made an, “O,”(go) sound. Falkirk offered to stay longer but Brayan insisted.

“Hi!” (Bye)Brayan said as Falkirk walked away.

“I'll see you Sunday,” Falkirk said and continued out.

--

Tanner had fumbled over his report of the third time in an hour. He was standing in front of a screen in the conference room. Directors from the MI6 Station bordering the Red Sea, where present in electronic form only, their images on the bank of monitors on the wall. Sitting around the table, were the regional analysts, researchers and experts.

Pirates had targeted three ships so far. All had been Royal navy, and had been resupplying British bases around the world. All ships were unmarked, targeted in the Red Sea and were the only ships targeted.

Coming to an end, Falkirk called Tanner to his office. Tanner immediately apologised for his errors during the briefing but Falkirk dismissed the apology, asking, “What is wrong?”

Tanner fidgeted and showed how on edge he was. He couldn't quite look Falkirk in the eye when he said, “It is not my place to say.”

“That means it's Mycroft. Is it personnel or professional?” Falkirk demanded.

Tanner refused to answer the question but did say, “When was the last time you saw Mycroft?”

“About a month. Do I need to see him?” Falkirk's concern raising.

“It's not my place to say,” Tanner said but his tone implied it was the correct course of action.

Falkirk nodded to the folder under Tanner's arm. “James has been a bit idle, could you take that to Daniel please.”

Tanner nodded and headed out.

Falkirk sat back in his chair. Decided a small dinner, while James was away would be best. Checking Mycroft's least secure schedule, for an appropriate time. Falkirk then arranged everything with Hudson and Mrs Bridges. Falkirk wrote up a formal invitation, making sure the first line on the card read, 'Your Pack Alpha requests the pleasure of your company on the...

A request from a pack Alpha was like an order to the subordinate pack members. If Mycroft truly saw himself as part of the pack, he would not dare to refuse.

--

“Why can't I stay?” Andrew asked.
“Because Uncle Mycroft and I have things we need to talk about. That is why Uncle Daniel, Alec, Keading and aunt Selene aren't here. You can say hello, then up to bed,” Falkirk stated.

Andrew shrugged and tucked into the cheese burger and chips, Mrs Bridges made him especially. He didn't get to eat in front of the TV often, so was enjoying the early dinner while watching Doctor Who. It was the previous Doctor, who Andrew liked. Falkirk preferred the new, the older one with big eyebrows.

Andrew got to see the end of the episode, where a little girl sang at a sun to somehow save the day. The story was a little far fetched, and convoluted even for Falkirk to follow.

Mycroft and Tanner arrived and Andrew informed them, “I'm to say hello and go to bed, bye!” and ran upstairs.

“You could have waited until the starter was served,” Falkirk said to the echo of thundering feet.

Showing his guests into the lounge. “Aperitif?” Falkirk asked. Pouring the sheries, before either could answer. Falkirk passed out the small glasses.

With a smell and a brief taste, Mycroft said, “Oloroso, very nice.”

“Dry?” Tanner observed. Looking quizzically at the colour of the sherry.

“That's what a Oloroso is. A dark coloured, dry sherry,” Falkirk informed. Imparting how the Sherry was made. The pleasant Beta at the shop, had gone on at length on the production. Mycroft added amendments as Falkirk spoke.

Hudson called for everyone to be seated. The starter was served and casual conversation continued. The meal reminded Falkirk of he sporadic dinners he used to share with his brother. Mycroft looked tired and a bit gaunt but he seemed his usual self. After the main course Mycroft excused himself and a shadow crossed Tanner's face. Thoughts of illness crossed Falkirk's mind.

During coffee Mycroft excused himself again and Falkirk looked to Tanner. The Beta refused to meet Falkirk's eye.

“Is he all right?” Falkirk asked.

“N... It's not my place to say,” Tanner reiterated. There was no doubt in Falkirk's mind Tanner was loyal to him professionally while personally was loyal to Mycroft.

Returning, Mycroft passed on the mints to go with his coffee. It was as Mycroft passed on the small hexagons of chocolate Falkirk noticed Mycroft hadn't added sugar to his coffee. Falkirk sipped his own sweet and milky coffee(the only way he could drink it).

Taking Mycroft's arm, at the end of the meal. “It's nice to talk to you,” Falkirk said escorting his brother to the door.

“Thank you for coming,” Falkirk called to the two getting into the car.

Closing the door Falkirk ensured it locked before returning to the lounge. Going over to the decanter on the sideboard Falkirk poured himself another sherry and sat on the couch, just looking at the curtain covered French doors. He was replaying the events of the night looking for anything
more than Mycroft not taking sugar. Constant trips to the loo, passing on chocolate, no sugar.
'Diabetes?' Falkirk thought. Looking at the empty glass Falkirk remembered that there was a lot of sugar in sherry and Mycroft would know that.

While pouring another glass, a tap came from the door and Hudson entered. Only familiarity allowed Falkirk to notice he was conflicted.

“Sir, may I have a word,” came the soft sottish brogue.

“Yes, care for one,” Falkirk said as he indicated the chair and held up his glass.

Politely refusing the drink and choosing to remain standing. Hudson said, “I could be over stepping,"

Falkirk cut him off. “I like people to speak plainly and I trust in your judgement. Please say what is bothering you.”

“Shortly after Master Sherrinford ran away. Master Sherlock started playing up. The Master and Mistress often argued, and I heard of the first mention of you,” Hudson said. For a butler the conduct of the family was privileged, and Hudson when asked, even on innocent events had often refused to speak.

“When it became clear Master Sherrinford would not return the mantle of eldest son fell to Master Mycroft. He had always been drawn to academia, an Oxford Don was his desire if memory serves,” At this a wistful smile came to the Alpha's face before he straighten his features and continued. “Suddenly there was immense pressure placed on Master Mycroft. He changed school, schedule, he was given lists of names of other students he had to befriend. The Mistress insisting he get to know the right people...” again Hudson fell silent.

“He had no control over his own life?” Falkirk said.

“None what so ever, Sir. He had a sudden and immense pressure placed upon him,” There was a fairly long pause before Hudson added. “Master Mycroft found a way to gain some measure of control in his life.”

Sherlock had always made digs about a fat boy. A fat boy, Falkirk had never known. In his time, Mycroft had always been rake thin. Falkirk asked, “Anorexia? Bulimia?”

“I do not know the name and at the time it would most likely not be recognised in men, at least not Alphas. From a, plump boy he had a sudden drastic weight loss. During the summer recess, the family took a holiday to France. I believe Master Mycroft was taken to a clinic during that time,” Hudson informed.

Continuing before Falkirk had to asked, “When I was bringing the Coffee up I heard, hacking, coming from the lavatory.”

“I did think Mycroft looked gaunt. He's not ill though is he? Well not in the way I first thought.”

Hudson offered a silent shake of the head. Standing, Falkirk gave the glass to Hudson. “Thank you,” and passed the Alpha to go up stairs.

--
Medical and Falkirk bypassed the row of naked people, who jumped to cover themselves with his sudden appearance. They were waiting to be called in to the largest examination room. Going to the head of the queue Falkirk pushed open the door where each recruits was going to be literally checked from head to tow by the dozen doctors.

“Dr. Dean, a word!” Falkirk called. The head of medical came out of a curtained off cubical. “Could I get your advice on a personal matter?”

Indicating he should go on ahead of her. Dean took them to her private office. Inside the square windowless room, Falkirk took the guest chair, while the beta sat behind the desk.

Falkirk said, “Exact details are hard to come by. An Alpha male relapsing into self distinctive behaviour. Possible prior undocumented treatment. Eating disorder, reducing calorie intake and suspected vomiting. First time approximately aged twelve years. Second time a little over a month ago.”

“Precipitating events?” Dr Dean said starting to take notes.

“The first time. Older, the eldest brother ran way and was disowned. He became heir apparent in an ambitious household. Sudden changes in Schooling and expectations placed on him...”

Dr Dean asked several clarifying questions before asking, “The current episode?”

“He acted autonomously and did something wrong. Severely rebuked by his Alpha,”

“By you?” Dean interrupted. Falkirk nodded.

Dean continued to write as she said, “I am aware of your pack and as a psychologist it is beyond fascinating, I have only ever come across a few comparisons in the journals. I take it I can't get more details?”

“No,” Falkirk stated.

Dean sat back and interlacing her finger and resting her hands on the desk. The jet black hair pulled into a tight pony tail and wearing rectangular rimless glasses. Her olive skin looked washed out under the fluorescent lights. Her black almond eyes fixed on Falkirk. She was a Beta but could stare down virtual every Alpha in the place even the Double Os were wary of her.

“I suspect this, 'he' was forced to undergo therapy which helped the symptoms but not the underlying cause. If 'he' is ordered to undergo it again the same result will occur. He will manage the symptoms for a time until something causes a relapse,” Dean informed. “Control is the key. Your best bet is someone close to him, persuading him to seek help.”

“Can you get the names of some professional help? Full vetted to the highest security clearance.” Falkirk asked.

Falkirk stood as Dr Dean was agreeing. Just as Falkirk reached the door She said, “I'll bring the names to you,”

Stopping Falkirk looked back at the doctor, “It's alright, Tanner knows. Send the names through the usual channels.”
With only half a mind on what he was doing Falkirk moved the draft(checker) piece. All the pieces had little handles so it was easier for Brayan to pick up. The game helped improve his motor skills. Brayan still got frustrated with the imprecise movements of his hand and arm. Falkirk could see a vast improvement since the first visit where Brayan had no control.

“Bugger!” Falkirk said as he noticed his move. A snorting laugh sounded from his opponent, as Brayan slowly removed the last four of Falkirk's drafts.

“You only won because I was distracted,” Falkirk said with a half smile.

“Wah ron” (What is wrong) Brayan asked.

“I gave someone a bollocking and they reacted badly,” Falkirk said.

“R'as oh oo” (Perhaps not you) Brayan said.

Falkirk let the “What?” slip out before he could stop it.

“I understood you,” Falkirk quickly added. Brayan getting upset when people didn't understand him. “I just didn't think... perhaps I'm not the only one putting pressure on Mycroft.”

Still wondering about Mycroft. Falkirk asked if Brayan wanted another game.
Knocking and entering Tanner's office, the beta looked up sharply to Falkirk. Falkirk said, “I hear Mycroft’s out of the country, would you join me for dinner?”

As Tanner had never been invited to Falkirk's house on his own, it wasn't unexpected that he was suspicious. Choosing to allay the Beta's concerns Falkirk said, “Pack business.”

An order from a person's Alpha was as good as an order from M so Tanner agreed to come.

The meal at Falkirk's passed in casual conversation. Sending Andrew to shower and change for bed Falkirk and Tanner entered the lounge. Sitting down Falkirk offered Tanner a drink which he refused.

“Could we get to the point?” Tanner asked.

“How's Mycroft been doing?”

“It's... not my place to say.”

Falkirk taking the sombre reply to mean Mycroft had not improved or worsened. The literature on doctors and clinics had not made it to Falkirk, when he knew Dr. Dean had sent them. So Falkirk assumed they were in Tanner's possession.

“There still has been no progress on the Murderer of the Shadow Minister,” Falkirk continued. As expected Tanner knew nothing more of the incident. Mycroft having kept his mate in the dark on the matter.

“As Mycroft's Alpha, Brother and as head of an Intelligence Service there is no justification for him to continue to keep it a secret from me,” Falkirk said rhetorically. “Unless there is a reason?”

Falkirk seemed to change the subject, going into detail of his last visit with Brayan. Coming to the point of his story, “Mr Brayan said, 'Perhaps not you' and I got to thinking. I was vicious but nothing Mycroft shouldn't be able to handle. As Mycroft's Brother, Alpha and head of an intelligent Service I put immense pressure on Mycroft's shoulder, but what if someone else was putting equal pressure on his other shoulder. Is Mycroft crumbling under our combined weight?”

Falkirk fell silent but kept a close eye on his guest. A knock came from the door. Falkirk called, “Enter!”

Andrew entered with his bear under one arm and dressed in soft pyjamas. “Good night uncle Bill,” he said before giving Falkirk an nuzzle and kiss.
“You can read for a while,” Falkirk said as Andrew left, closing the door behind him.

“What do you want?” Tanner asked when he was sure Andrew had gone upstairs.

“I want to prove or disprove my theory,” Falkirk informed. Taking a moment, “I need to know everything about Mycroft’s phone, the private one I can’t hack. I will then need you to infect it with a virus so I can hack it.”

“No,” Tanner stated and surged to his feet and paced the width of the room.

“Well that’s that,” Falkirk said and Tanner came to a grinding halt to looked at him.

“You're giving up?” Tanner asked sceptically.

“I have no illusion. If I offer help, Mycroft will refuse and I will have tipped my hand to him. So I'm left with betraying my brother's trust and asking you to betray him as well. Even if it is for his own good,” Falkirk answered.

“I should go,” Tanner said.

Accepting the Beta’s desire to escape Falkirk asked Hudson to get a taxi. As they waited Tanner looked to Falkirk again, “Asking? Not Order?”

“As Pack Alpha, or as M I can make it an order if it helps you. I would not be expected to be obeyed though,” Falkirk informed.

When Hudson announced the arrival of the Taxi Falkirk escorted his guest to the door and out. Retuning inside Falkirk went upstairs. A small lamp illuminated Andrew's bed where he was curled round a book. He didn't notice his Papa's silent approach and jumped slightly as Falkirk sat down beside him. Lying down Falkirk looked over Andrew's shoulder.

“What are you reading?” he asked softly.

“Batman,” Andrew informed holding up the comic book.

Kissing the top of his head. “Not too late, school tomorrow,” Falkirk said and stood to go to his own room.

--

It was a few days after the meal when Falkirk arrived to a stressed Tanner waiting in E branch. Tanner was sitting in one of the waiting area chairs for M's office. Opening his office door, Falkirk let Tanner enter first.

“It looks like an Blackberry. No make, insignia, model number, IEM, or serial number, and completely sealed not even a USB port,” Tanner informed.

Coming to sit Falkirk mused over what Tanner had said. It sounded more like the phones Q-Branch made, ones that looked like commercial models but were made in house. Falkirk asked, “Where dose Mycroft keep the phone, when not in use?”
“On the mouse pad,” Tanner replied with a bit of confusion.

“Is the mouse pad connected to the computer?”

“I don't think so. The pad is just piece of leather embedded in the desk.”

“Is the desk plugged in?”

Tanner was becoming confused and sceptical at Falkirk's question but answered, “Yes, there's a safe on the left hand side. The desk has a cable, thick and armoured connected to the wall.”

Falkirk continued to ask question and making notes. Suspecting the deck and phone were parts of one communications system.

When they had finished talking about the phone. With Tanner's sudden cooperation, Falkirk sat back in his chair. He needed to know.

“The pamphlets on the clinics and doctors, did they not help?”

Tanner shook his head. “Mycroft refused to hear me out,” he said and walked out without another word.

--

Walking into fabrication it was hard for Falkirk to see the person he was looking for. He moved down the isles of technicians producing the custom electronics MI6 used. Like everyone else, Falkirk needed to put on the white, anti-static overalls that only exposed his face. Then being assaulted by the fast moving air in the dust chamber, to make sure not even a single particle of dirt could enter the clean room he was now in.

A sudden scent of masculine Omega caught Falkirk's attention so he followed his nose, through the maze of high workbenches where the technicians stood. Coming up behind the gangly Scots lad in his mid twenties. The boy started and turned to Falkirk, his blue eyes comically big behind the strong magnifiers. He was covered head to toe in the white overalls too.

“Mr Fitz?” Falkirk greeted and was rewarded with a sting of Scots in an accent so thick he was barely able to understand it.

“May I be of assistance,” The Alpha who was head of the Fabrication demanded.

“Not unless you have become an expert in experimental telecommunication technology,” Falkirk dismissed. Waiting until the Alpha was out of ear shot Falkirk turned back to Fitz.

“Could you identify something for me?” Falkirk asked the nervous Omega.

“Aye, I can have ago.”

At least Falkirk was able to understand that rushed sentence.

Fitz became a bit more nervous when Falkirk said, “The case is in a Blackberry form factor, seamless, induction charge and data transfer,” Falkirk continued to list the key points until Fitz made a nervous little squeak.
The stream of noise Falkirk couldn't comprehend as a thick accent, speed, and nervousness culminated to make the young Omega incomprehensible. After Falkirk reassured Fitz he asked him to repeat himself slowly.

“Of the companies I know who are developing the technology. Only Stark Industries and the Carrington Institute have done it successfully and for select clients will copy the form factors of other companies,” Fitz informed.

“Lucky we have a Carrington,” Falkirk said.

“Oh, Who's that?” Fitz asked.

“Q.”

Fitz gulped and held his hand, high, above his head, “The Q?”

Falkirk couldn't help his chuckle, and nodded. “Have you met him?” He asked, and Fitz gave a frightened shake of the head.

“Come with me,” Falkirk ordered and started walking to the exit of the clean room. Out the corner of his eye, Falkirk saw the department head gesturing Fitz should follow.

In the antechamber, at the entrance to Fabrication, Fitz froze seeing who was under the white suit. He had only ever seen M in passing and now he was right beside the omega who ran MI6.

As the pair, the Omegas entered the main corridor of Q branch. Falkirk watched his companion. Fitz was a jumpy, nervous and skittish Omega. It brought back Falkirk’s own memories of his first few months and years here. Entering Administration, Falkirk felt his hand being grasped and Fitz pressed himself closer.

Giving an encouraging smile. “He won't bite,” Falkirk reassured, thinking how his M would have reacted if he had clasped her hand.

Leaning in closer. Falkirk whispered, “Q's actually got a bit of a soft spot for Omegas. Double O Six and Nine have Q wrapped round their little fingers.”

Ascending the spiral staircase, hand in hand was a bit of a challenge but Fitz wasn't letting go. A small squeak sounded from the younger omega, when Falkirk opened the door without knocking.

“Ladd..” Daniel trailed off seeing the Omega trying to hide behind Falkirk.

“M, Mr Fitz,” Daniel greeted, professionally.

Fitz tensed at being recognised and took some guiding to get him into a guest seat. Falkirk asked, “You've met?”

Daniel nodded and did a subtle gesture with his hand, like a tree falling. “Yes. First person to beat you for nervous introductions, M,” he said.

Finally free of the nervous Omega Falkirk took the other guest seat.
With his guests settled, Daniel asked, “What can I do for you, gentlemen?”

“Well Mr Fitz helped me deduce the manufacturer of a piece of equipment. One of the possibilities being the Carrington Institute,” Falkirk informed.

After a short conversation with his brother Daniel switched to speaker phone. The voice of Duncan came through along with that of a woman. By the authority and certainty in her voice Falkirk would guess an Alpha but it was hard to tell unless the person was in front of you.

The woman wasn't pleased to be discussing the technology over a phone, despite Duncan's assurances and Daniel just telling her to. After Falkirk described the equipment. Helena Shan confirmed the Carrington Institute did supply the described set up, of highly secured mobile phones, and agreed the only equivalent was Stark Industries.

Falkirk said, “I require your client list, full specifications and any information you have on the Stark model.”

Both Duncan and Shan refused, Daniel agreed. Fitz cowered down as Daniel and Duncan argued. Falkirk placed his hand on the other Omega's knee to help ground him. When Daniel threatened to go get the information personally, Fitz grabbed Falkirk's hand and held it to his chest like a security blanket.

Falkirk was used to the interactions Daniel had with his brother. For a strange Omega the interaction was aggressive and highly confrontational. When Daniel caught the Omega's scent his eyes flicked to Fitz and the grasp on Falkirk's hand became crushing.

“Please help us,” Daniel said his voice losing his anger.

With resignation, Duncan said, “This had better be important. I'll have the information couriered over.”

Clearing his throat, Falkirk said, “I would prefer this to be done as quietly as possible. Could I make use of your London offices?”

When Duncan realised the information wouldn't be leaving the Institute he became more open to the idea of helping. He said, “The London office can access the information immediately.”

Disconnecting the call. Daniel sat back and looked to his guests.

“Up for a field trip?” Falkirk said looking to his companion and got a desperate a shake of the head from the omega. “Good! Let’s go!”

Falkirk decided Fitz would accompany him while Daniel would make his own way. Out of Administration Fitz didn't calm much sending wary glances at the guards dotted about Q branch.

“How are you being treated?” Falkirk asked.

“Alright. There are a lot of Alpha males,” Fitz said quietly.

“We do tend to recruit from the more aggressive career paths. Military, Police, even the diplomatic core is fairly Alpha centric. Only the specialist like yourself and myself tend to be Omegas,” Falkirk responded as they entered the lift to ground level.
Only when it was just the two of them, Fits started to run at the mouth. He described his time at an all Omega school. At university, Omegas like Fitz had been segregated until later years, “On my masters course there was only one Alpha, five Betas and ten Omegas.”

“So this is the first environment where Alphas are in the majority,” Falkirk stated as the door pinged and opened.

Fitz froze again as they stepped out and Rey approached. Falkirk introduced his bodyguard, but Fitz didn't lift his head. Ray fell into step with Falkirk as they made their way to the parking garage where his car was waiting.

Daniel's Bentley flew past at speed, with the requested Peter in the passenger seat. Getting in Falkirk's car, it pulled out at a more controlled pace.

Arriving at the glass and chrome building Ray opened the door, and Falkirk stepped out offering his hand to Fitz who followed. The Carrington Institute had more Betas and Omegas than MI6 and Fitz felt calm enough to drop Falkirk's hand.

Entering the room that had been set aside for them Fitz tensed again, when in a confined space with unknown Alphas. Falkirk, looking to Peter the head of MI6’s Cyber division, and Fitz, “Familiarise yourself with the technologies involved.”

The Alpha and omega acknowledged and got to work. Helped by the institute staff.

In front of a bank of displays including a nice table top interface Fitz started pouring over the schematics of the phones and the secure systems that supported them. While Peter started looking over the software side of things.

Falkirk commandeered another computer and started looking through the customer base of the Carrington Institute.

“Why am I here?” Daniel whispered from his position beside Falkirk.

“I'm not staying, and I want a pack member here,” Falkirk said. Calling for the attention of the others, Q said, “I want to infect Someone’s phone. I wand a Virus, a software bug to record and upload all audio to us, and potentially video too. We’ll have to be careful of the battery, the target is perceptive and will notice a shortened lifespan.”

Fitz and Peter acknowledged and got back to studying what they had to hack. Fitz looked back to Falkirk, “Will we need to listen in live. Or can we record audio and upload it in packets.”

“I don't think we will need to monitor the phone live,” Falkirk mused. “The option to do so, might be good though. You're thinking of uploading the recordings to us, when there's an active connection, like a call, or message or something?”

Getting bored while the others talked technicalities, Daniel brought up the weapons development archives and started reading.

About an hour into his reading own Falkirk called to Peter and Fitz, “Concentrate on what they have on the Stark version. None of these customers have links to Mycroft.”
Wishing the others luck, Falkirk headed back to MI6.

--

Over the days, Tanner was reflecting the change in his mate. Calling the Beta into his office Falkirk asked Darren to bring a pot of tea. The virus wasn't ready and Tanner was refusing to discuss Mycroft's condition. Falkirk had extended another dinner invitation to Mycroft but he had refused.

After his tea Tanner returned to his own office. Getting up Falkirk moved round E-Branch, to the row of private offices along the side of the room. Tapping on one of the doors, Falkirk entered. Selene looked up from her desk. She had returned from maternity leave, on a casual basses for the moment. She mostly reviewed Falkirk's security arrangements.

Closing the door Falkirk sat in front of her.

“How are you?” Falkirk asked casually. Selene dropped what she was doing and stared at Falkirk accusingly, she knew him too well to be taken in by the polite act. Falkirk cut the crap, “Tanner needs some of the work load taken off him, just for the short term.”

“I'll do what I can,” she said. She knew the troubles all round. “Not sure what a Chief of Staff dose.”

“Oh, that's simple,” Falkirk said with a teasing smile. “The Double Os bother you. If it's important enough, you bother me.”

Falkirk got to the door before Selene twigged. She demanded, “That means I'm going to have the those trigger happy morons bothering me at all times of day and night!”

“I do believe so,” Falkirk said and ducked out of the office quickly.

Falkirk's sharp eyes fixed on the Double O perched on Darren's desk. Moving through E-branch Falkirk passed his PA's desk.

“My office! Now! Mr Addison!” Falkirk said sharply.

The debriefing and ceremonial bollocking, followed a well rehearsed script. Falkirk hoped Selene would get a call from an irate father at some point. Addison had a knack of sleeping with, girls on the most part who fell in love with him and had fathers that could get their grievance right to M. Luckily for Addison, not during this mission.

With everything done Falkirk dismissed the operative. Seeing Addison preaching on Darren's desk again, Falkirk pressed the intercom, “Remind Double O Five he still needs to go to medical!”

The handsome, sandy haired Double O gave a quick salute to M and headed off. He gave a wave to Darren which was returned by the omega.

After a meeting at Whitehall with the Ministers Falkirk arrived home. Colum was already gone, and Keading was just waiting for Falkirk's return. Selene and Keading left and the evening progressed as usual. Andrew described his day over dinner. After Andrew had his bath Falkirk lay down beside him and together they read a book for an hour.
Giving his son a nuzzle Falkirk switched off the light and said, “Goodnight.”

The fresh scent alerted Falkirk before the bed dipped and he was pulled against a bare chest. “Welcome home,” Falkirk mumbled and turned into James’ chest. “Start World War Three?”


Falkirk wound his arms around his Alpha's neck. Feeling the bigger body settle over his. The Alpha still smelled of sweat, gunpowder and adrenalin. James always smelled right after a mission. He was a man of action.

Every time James came back he was a bit untamed and Falkirk liked it. They ended up exhausted and panting, with the Alpha tied to the omega. Both coming down form the high.

The panel by the door chimed. Falkirk looked to the control panel flashing a status code for the doorbell, for the front door. The chime came again.

“Let Hudson get it,” James grumbled.

“Hardly in a position to to get it myself,” Falkirk said and gave his internal muscles a tense, James giving a groan as he was given an intimate squeeze.

A knock came at their bedroom door a few moments later. James shouted, “Bugger off!”

“Sir,” Hudson called in a rather unsure voice. “Eh... Dr. Watson just dropped of Miss Rosamund.”

James growled. Falkirk pulled himself out of the bed. He grabbed his silk dressing gown. Pulling open the door, he found the butler standing in a burgundy dressing gown. In one arm was a baby, in the other was the baby bag.

Taking Rosie, Falkirk asked, “What's going on?”

“I do not know sir. Dr. Watson was rather... livid.”

Falkirk looked to the sleeping baby. “What are your parents up to?”

Chapter End Notes

You may have noticed the use of a 'Blackberry' and in the next chapter there are dates. The writing, and editing of this fic has taken some time. So that's why I'm using the older technology and keeping the dates as first written.

There is a timeline at this point in the story, that doesn't begin to break own until a bit later.

God!(sorry for taking the name in vein), this turned into a monster of a fic. At least 'The Sixth Age' is much shorter but covers more time, and 'The last scene' will only be the original seven chapters.
Like Buses: Okay! We might not be, not gay.

Walking down the corridor, of the brand new and state of the art hospital. Falkirk glanced at the small round alpha being led away in handcuffs. For some reason getting a flash of his own father's disgrace. Shaking off the memory, Falkirk continued on.

Passing Lestrade, the inspector said, “John asked for a minute, with Sherlock. When he can't escape.”

“Oh, very nice of him,” Falkirk said, a bit crisply. Given the argument from the room up ahead, someone was about to get a severe talking to. And it wasn't Sherlock.

Continuing along the corridor. From a room up ahead, came the sound of John's angry voice.

“...HOW COULD YOU? YOU HAVE A FAMILY! WHAT ABOUT ROSIE?”

Falkirk arrived to find his bother hand cuffed to the hospital bed and glaring out blankly. He had shut down, because Sherlock couldn't escape the situation. Falkirk interrupted, “What about Rosie?”

“Well, he's...” John foundered, with Falkirk's sudden appearance. “Do you know your brother nearly got himself murdered, just to catch some psycho?”

James mused, “What's that got to do with Rosie? As far as I know, Sherlock has no legal standing with her.”

Sherlock blinked out of his daze, and looked to his brother and his brother's mate. “I can handle this.”

James laughed. Falkirk said, “Neither of you have handled anything.”

Waving to his brother, Falkirk shouted at John, “Why the hell shouldn't he chase after every deranged maniac he wants. He has no partner to concern himself with. No children that depend on him.”

“Rosie,” John said. Desperately adding, “He has Rosie.”

“No he doesn't,” James said. “You do. The friend of a father has no responsibility to care for a child.”

“He dose,” John argued. “He's every bit the father to Rosie that I am.”

“Really?” Sherlock asked.

“Yes,” John said turning back to the man still handcuffed to the bed. Something twigging deep in the doctor's mind. “Didn't you know?”

Sherlock shook his head. “She's your daughter. I'm only the 'friend' of her father.”

John swallowed dryly. His light blue eyes flicking around all those in the room. Almost on the verge of panicking.

James grasped the hand of his mate and pulled Falkirk out of the room. Both hoping it was time the two were given a moment alone.
Only when alone, did John take the hand of the man in the bed. “I suppose we haven't talked about this, have we?”

Sherlock wanted to say, every time the topic of emotion came up. Someone would say, I'm/we're not gay! and walk away. He answered, “No we haven't.”

“I suppose...” John was a bit nervous. “You could, no, you should adopt Rosie. She should have two parents.”

“Won't that be a bit complicated?” Sherlock said. “We're not a couple, after all.”

John shook his head. A clink made him look to Sherlock's hand trying to reach out to him. Sherlock shouted, “LESTRADE! WHERE ARE YOU AND THE KEYS FOR THESE THINGS! A PAPER-CLIP WILL DO!”

“Oh, shut up!” John said and took Sherlock's hand again.

As the traditional line from John was yet to come. Sherlock dared to ask, “Why are you so opposed to us being together.”

John shrugged. “I didn't want to be... you know...”

“Parental pressure?” Sherlock deduced. John shrugged, unwilling to admit the answer was yes. “You’re a doctor, you know that there is nothing wrong with you. No psychologist is allowed to say homosexuality is wrong. Conversion therapy is classed as abuse by all medical bodies....”

“I know!” John hissed. “I never wanted to admit I was Bi! My father he would have... never talked to me again. He never spoke to my sister after she came out. Made sure our mum never talked to her either. She was only seventeen, and alone, and that's why she turned to the drink.”

Out in the hall. For all he was an Alpha, bigger and physically stronger, James was having a tough time getting his omega away from the door. Falkirk was batting at him, squirming out of the alpha's grasp, so he could eavesdrop.

James whispered, “They are working things out. Time to leave.”

Falkirk yanked his hand away from his alpha's grasp and hit him in the chest. James threatened, “If you don't leave I'll put you over my shoulder.”

“You wouldn't...” Falkirk squawked and he was spun and his feet left the ground. Getting an upside down view of his Alpha's rather nice arse, encased in tight denim. James left the ward, with his mate held in a fireman's lift.

“I'm gonna send you to Siberia,” M threatened.

--

Andrew was fascinated by the baby beta. Rosie on the other hand wasn't sure at all about the human. Her face scrunched up and she let out a hiccuping cry. Which in turn made Andrew rather nervous.

Falkirk lifted the baby out of her seat and cradled her, while he walked about. Picking up the stuffed dog, he tried to copy Sherlock. Waving the dog, he spoke in a harder tone of voice, “Now Rosie! Why are you making all this fuss?”
The girl sniffled and watched the grumpy dog. It was always giving her into trouble while bouncing about. This time the voice was a littler higher, but familiar enough.

In the background the news was breaking about Culverton Smith. Another person who was given too much free rein, without scrutiny. They were already talking about exhuming hundreds of bodies, from people who'd died at his hospitals. And now, without the threat of being sued everyone was coming out about the man's true nature.

Sitting on the couch, with the now content Rosie in his lap. Falkirk leaned against James. Just the TV and the distant sound of Andrew in the back garden to disturb them.


Falkirk told him the latest on his brother. He then said, “This Culverton Smith thing could be another distraction. The public have a very short memory. The scandal today, makes them forget about the one yesterday.”

“You're not going to forget though,” James said and kissed the top of his mate's head. “You know, all you have to do is give me the word. I'll find the murderers, and the ones who ordered it.”

“And blow up half of London during the course of your investigation,” Falkirk teased. James gaining that dangerous little smile, thinking of all the adrenaline fuelled mayhem. “No. I want them to know. When I say 'jump!' the do so. And ask, 'Is this high enough, sir?' They will turn over the murderers themselves. And if I get even a hit they're trying to fix the election, then I will send in the Double Os for the leaders.”

“That's my little megalomaniac.” James said and gave his omega an extra squeeze.

Hudson announced Sherlock and John. Rosie started to whine, wanting to see her parents. Handing over the girl to John, Falkirk asked, “So everything worked out?”

“Not yet,” John said. Taking his daughter, he sat on the other couch beside Sherlock. He admitted quietly, “We are talking. We'll start with Sherlock adopting Rosie, so he's her dad too.”

Falkirk nodded and sat up. Both Sherlock and John stiffened in readiness. The Alpha of the pack snapped, “Good! It's time you both started acting like grown ups. I've arranged for a housekeeper who'll live in, and will be able to take care of Rosie.”

Sherlock and John ducked their hands like scolded school boys. Rosie squealed happily. Her Pack Alpha was even more entertaining than her stuffed dog. Falkirk pointed to her, “Sherlock you need to stop giving her into trouble, she thinks it's all a joke.”

When Sherlock nodded. Falkirk added, “And if you haven't noticed, our brother is in a bit of trouble.”

That got Sherlock's attention. His grey eyes darting about, as if trying to deduce something. He said, “Why don't you just fix it?”

“Because,” Falkirk sagged a bit. “I want to give Mycroft the power to fix this himself. But he's stubborn...”

“He thinks he can do it alone?” Sherlock said.

Shaking his head, Falkirk said, “I think he feels alone. I don't think he realises he is part of a pack. Or who is in that pack.”
“Or that we would help if called?” John said, showing a bit of worry himself for the pack member. “So what is up with Mycroft?”

Falkirk stated to lay everything out, from the time he asked his brother and John to look at Laws’ dead body.

--

The black Fiat Punto with tinted windows pulled to a stop. James shut off the engine and looked between Falkirk and the entrance to the Diagoness Club. Falkirk had requisitioned the car from Q branch as a more subtle approach. It had been weeks since he had seen his brother. Tanner was now openly concerned and expressed it to Falkirk. And an on the case Sherlock was reporting in on Mycroft's movements.

“He's here,” James nodding to a car sailing passed. It stopped in front of the Club. Falkirk could hardly believe his eyes as a skeletal thin Mycroft exited. Mycroft had to put a hand out to steady himself as he climbed the few steps up to the club entrance.

Getting out Falkirk approached the entrance. The door guard dressed in livery of the club stood in Falkirk's way.

“I have walked into this place more times than I can count. I can be announced to Mycroft Holmes or my associate can clear my path,” Falkirk spat. He wanted to be respectfully of Mycroft but wasn't willing to deal with brutes without common sense.

The guard took one look at James and dismissed the shorter and older alpha. Falkirk stepped aside and James approached. The guard readied and ended up face down on the marble step quicker than he could imagine.

Stepping around the kicking legs, of the guard being pinned by James. Falkirk pulled the door open to see a footman man approaching. Being presented a small silver tray, Falkirk removed his business card and wrote 'Mycroft Holmes' on the back. Letting the footman see his brother's name then placed the card face up on the tray.

The footman scuttled off as another appeared. Bypassed Falkirk the second footman went outside. The second footman returned with a smirking James, then waited with them. On some hidden cue the footman gave a sweeping gesture and moved deeper into the club. Following, they were escorted to Mycroft's unofficial office.

The circular library was just as Falkirk remembered. The large table in the centre had Mycroft sitting behind it in a green leather wing back chair.

“What may I do for you?” Mycroft asked briskly.

“You don't look well. If I were to ask you 'Is something wrong?' would I get an answer and would it be truthful?” Falkirk stated.

“I have been feeling under the weather and I'm immensely busy. If that is all, I have work to do.” Mycroft said and the footman appeared, to escort Falkirk out.

Arriving back at MI6 Falkirk headed to Q branch. Stopping in Cyber division Falkirk pulled Hal up, and demanded to know where his boss was.

“Fabrication,” Hal offered.
Moving on to Fabrication Falkirk entered the clean room. Two individuals sat apart from the rest of the workers and Falkirk guessed they were his targets.

Fitz, the smaller of the two was hunched over the bench with wisps of smoke appearing every now and again. Catching Peter's attention Falkirk pulled him to the side.

“Time is becoming an issue,” Falkirk snapped. To the Alpha dressed in the white coveralls.

Looking to Fitz and back to Falkirk. “Tomorrow, possibly. With out proper testing...” Peter said before being interrupted.

“I know. The dangers in the lack of testing. I need it tomorrow before Seventeen-hundred hours,” Falkirk ordered.

--

Quarter to five and Peter entered E branch. Red faced and a little out of breath he entered M's office and handed over a thick steel disk about 4cm in diameter and 1cm in height. A small status LED in the shape of a ring was on the top.

After the explanation on how it worked Falkirk thanked and dismissed him.

Going to the door Falkirk could see Tanner pulling on his coat and heading for the exit. Calling his chief of Staff back Falkirk returned to his office. When Tanner sat down the device was sitting on Falkirk's desk in front of him.

Indicating the device Falkirk said, “Hacktool. Just place it on the induction surface of Mycroft's desk. The status ring will show you the progress of the virus upload. Don't get caught and try to be subtle.”

Picking up the Hacktool Tanner placed it in his pocket. Long past arguing the merits of spying on his partner. Concern had become Tanner's overriding emotion.

“Good Luck,” Falkirk called as Tanner exited the office.
Like Buses: Espionage, and days off.

Sliding out from under James' arm Falkirk pulled on a dressing gown and slippers. Heading downstairs Falkirk picked up his laptop before continuing down to the kitchen. Powering the laptop Falkirk then set the kettle to boil.

Staring at the remote server, Falkirk was monitoring its connections. If Tanner did as he was meant to, the remote server was where the audio logs would be uploaded to. Currently the only connection was his remote session, with no uploads from Mycroft. Falkirk alternated between pacing, sipping cold tea and checking the computer.

Standing on a stool. With a long feather duster in hand, poking it into a high ceiling corner. While dressed in slippers and dressing gown. James found his mate.

“How domestic,” James drawled.

“I'm surprised Hudson and Mrs Bridges stood for it!” Falkirk said as he finally destroyed the hard work of a spider.

James placed a foot on the cross bar of the stool to steady it while Falkirk used James' shoulder as a hand hold. With James' assistance Falkirk's decent from the stool was far more graceful than the climb up. Safely back on the ground Falkirk moved to the laptop to find his session had timed out. Logging back in to the server, there was still nothing from Mycroft's phone.

Reaching over his mate James pressed the power button until the laptop blinked off.

“Bed,” James ordered. Just as Falkirk was about to protest James lifted the Omega and carried him up stairs. Falkirk, winding his arms about the Alpha's strong neck and resting his had on James' shoulder. He was tired and worrying wouldn't help.

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Waking up Falkirk reached across the bed to find an empty space. Checking the time Falkirk confirmed it was a few hours before he usually got up. Pulling on his dressing gown Falkirk went in search of his wayward Alpha.

Not finding the alpha on the ground floor, or the basement. Falkirk climbed to the second floor, being careful not to wake Andrew when he passed his son's slightly open door.

Entering James' study. Study being a slight exaggeration for the room. It was boxes of stuff James had accumulated and refused to sort through. A surviving leather chair from their flat was the centrepiece, with one of the larger boxes now acting as table.

James sat in the chair. A wire, stretched from the laptop sitting on one of the boxes to the bulky headphones James wore. A clipboard rested in James' lap with times and notes filling up the paper it held in place.

Realising James was monitoring Mycroft's feed, Falkirk sat on the chair's arm. Pulling one of the earpieces away, trying to catch the audio. James batted away Falkirk's hand and shook his head. James then tapped his wrist, in a time warning. So Falkirk headed off to see to Andrew and his own
morning routine.

When Falkirk arrived at the office the Hacktool was sitting on his desk. Tanner refused to discuss what he had done and Falkirk didn't ask. It was clear, Tanner had uploaded the virus to Mycroft's phone.

Returning home that evening Falkirk looked at the closed front door in confusion. So used had he become to Hudson pulling it open the moment his foot hit the top step.

“Something wrong?” Selene asked.

“I shouldn't think so. Hudson is allowed to be busy,” Falkirk replied patting down his pockets.

“I don't have a key” Falkirk realised. Pressing the porcelain button in the centre of the brass frame Falkirk waited for someone to answer.

By now Selene was cautious of the odd occurrence and placed her hand on the gun under her jacket. The door swung open and Andrew smiled up at his Papa. Falkirk, relieved when he saw a dining chair propped up so Cody could see the door's security camera.

“Where is everyone?” Falkirk asked.

“Daddy, Uncle Keading and Mr Hudson are taking a board up the stairs,” Andrew answered.

Reaching passed Cody Falkirk taped in the code for all clear, after the door was opened without authorisation.

Upstairs Falkirk saw Hudson and James manoeuvring a long piece of wood into James' study. Keading was acting as navigator making sure it didn't gouge chunks out of the wall on the way up.

“James I don't think cardboard boxes make a good building material,” Falkirk said as the board was placed on top of a row of boxes.

“It'll be fine,” James said with a shrug. With the board in place Hudson took his leave, Keading following.

James moved the chair back into place so it was now pointed at the make shift desk. Falkirk's laptop took pride of place on the desk followed by an old monitor and the power cable was led to the laptop.

“I'll make a techie out of you yet,” Falkirk teased. Watching the Alpha make half decent job of setting up the workstation.

“'ave you tried switching it off and on again?” James said.

“See you've already mastered the lingo,” Falkirk teased.

--

The next day after Andrew had gone to bed James presented Falkirk with a memory stick. Plunging it into the computer in the library. There were three audio files present along with a plane text file. Opening the text file there was a full date time and a brief description of the audio files.
Falkirk played the audio file labelled 2014-02-15-10-22-32.mpeg and the sound of Mycroft and Freddie, speaking softly came from the computer's speakers.

“You do look bloody awful!” the unknown 'Freddie' said, he went on, “All this because you can't bring one bitch to heel.”

“Yo-you do not know your enemy. Do you forget Francis Urquhart so quickly? M was his friend, M was the one person in the whole country Urquhart respected. There was a reason for it, they were both... extremist,” Mycroft hesitantly shot back.

“If you don't bring the bitch to heel we will,” Freddie threatened.

There was a short break before Mycroft hesitantly said, “We need to give him someone. He won't let go.”

“No!” Freddie stated and the recording ended.

Falkirk wasn't sure how James knew the other man was Freddie. Perhaps it was on a part James had edited out. He moved on to the next recording.

'2014-02-15-14-32-11 - Unknown Location - Holmes, M, Unknown(#01), Unknown(#02) - Meeting with Murderers.'

“I 'ear you want to turn me in?” #01 demanded. He had a harsh London accent with a slur to his words.

Mycroft answered, “The plan was stupid, you were sloppy, and we are beseeched because of it.”

“Just one bitch, needing a good knot!” #02 said with a nasty laugh.

“We'll take care of him,” 01# said after his chuckle had died down as well.

“Proving why you're paid to act not think. Move against M and every Operative of MI6, some of MI5, Naval intelligence, the CIA, Everyone he has helped will tear London apart. Just so they can tare you apart,” Mycroft growled before adding “Surrender, he is coming for you. Take the jail time and be thankful you will survived the wrath of M.”

The two other men laughed and the recording ended. Falkirk checked the summery of the final recording,

'2014-02-15-16-00-00 - Phone call - Holmes, Unknown - Assassination.'

Falkirk clicked the corresponding audio file. Mycroft' voice came form the speaker.

“M's expertise is in tempering unstable Alphas. Removing that influence will be like releasing the hounds. Trained Spies, Killers and Assassins will have free play...” Falkirk was curious about the pause, and realised it was where someone was responding to Mycroft. Mycroft said, “They will not care about subtly... JUST LOOK AT WHITEHALL WITH M'S PREDECESSOR! That was just
one renegade, do you wish a team of them coming after you because that is what will happen!”

A bang sounded as the call ended. The bug picked up Mycroft whispering to himself Falkirk assumed, “Shit.”

The last recording ended. Sitting back Falkirk looked to his mate and said, “Bugger, the cellular bug isn't working. We should have heard both sides of the conversation.”

“Can't have everything,” James said from his position on the small uncomfortable settle.

Getting up, Falkirk folded down the bar cover and poured himself a bourbon and a Scotch for James. Sitting beside James on the fabric and wooden bench Falkirk handed his mate the glass before leaning against him.

“So what else dose Mycroft get up to?” Falkirk asked.

“None of your business,” James said.

--

“Thanks for the advice, it's working out,” Falkirk said as he set up the drafts board.

“Hohay,”(Okay) Brayan said. Falkirk wasn't sure Bryan remembered as he had become quite good at covering his lapses in memory.

The still recovering Alpha winced when a group of soldiers around another patient cheered. Brayan wasn't the only one to flinch at the sudden noise.

Subtly Falkirk looked to the bed with the Alpha in the centre of the group of soldiers. The injured alpha was trying to act normal in front of his friends. As an omega, Falkirk picked up on the distressed scent permeating the room. Again a nurse walked up to the small group to instruct them to remain calm and quiet.

Brayan took his turn, finally happy with the placement of the draft. Falkirk deliberately made his own movement slow an careful, on his turn.

“What's wrong?”(what's wrong) Brayan asked after Falkirk shook his head again. Before Falkirk could answer another cheer went up causing Brayan to wince.

“Excuse me,” Falkirk said to Brayan and stood. The Alpha que of deep stress, fear and anger was distracting to say the least. Going over to the bed Falkirk looked at the four visiting soldiers.

“Gentlemen?” Falkirk called drawing their attention. Three made a comments about Falkirk but only one addressed him. With the self appointed leader identified, Falkirk asked him, “May I have a word?”

“Sure,” the leader drawled earning sniggers from his friends and comments about being hit on by the omega.

Walking passed the other beds. Brayan called out aggressively, in his slurring speech. The lead Alpha wanting to know what he said. Falkirk reassured his old bodyguard, “Don't worry, he's softer than my usual mounts.”
Brayan watched nervously as Falkirk left the ward with the soldier's predatory gaze on his boss. Brayan's concerns were allayed when Falkirk returned moments later. The Alpha trailing behind like a kicked puppy.

Falkirk returned to Brayan's side. “My turn?” Falkirk asked looking over the board. Bryan wasn't sure, so Falkirk took a turn anyway.

After a brief rise in noise from the group of visiting soldiers, they fell quiet.

“Wha'pen”(what happened) Brayan asked as he took his turn.

“Oh I just politely informed Corporal Flynn, that he and his friends were causing distress to the residents of the ward. And if they couldn't act civilly. I could always bring up their behaviour with General Rodgers.”

Brayan clearly didn't recognise the name so Falkirk described the Sexiest Alpha approaching his late fifties who put his hand on Falkirk's thigh whenever they sat close enough. Finishing by saying, “I really hate it when sexist twats like Rodgers are otherwise decent people. It makes it so hard to blackmail them.”

The nurse came round announcing the end of visiting and quietly thanked Falkirk for quieting down the boisterous soldiers. Falkirk was tidying away the draft board as the group of soldiers filed out. Putting away the box Falkirk said goodbye to Brayan.

Instead of heading to the exit. Falkirk walked back up to the Soldier in the bed.

“Hello?” the soldier said, like they were old friends.

“We have never met before,” Falkirk said softly. Scanning the alpha in the bed, there didn't seem to be anything visibly wrong. He looked like any young man with shaved head, fit in body. Only his scent ques and eyes betrayed him.

“Oh,” the soldier responded and dropping his eyes.

“You didn't recognise your friends?” Falkirk asked and got a shake of the head.

“I'm M, Mr...?” Falkirk held out his hand.

It may have been the gentle tone or the relaxed pheromones of an Omega, but the distress the soldier usually experienced when he didn't know something didn't occur. The soldier admitted, “I don't remember.”

Going to the end of the bed Falkirk lifted the chart. “Apparently your name is Triston Bloom,” Falkirk said and replaced the chart.

“Sir, Time,” the nurse said coming up to Falkirk.

“It has been nice speaking with you Mr Bloom,” Falkirk said and nodded to the Alpha.

Catching the nurse's arm Falkirk waved at Brayan in passing. Telling nurse of Bloom's distressed state and how he was disguising his memory loss.
The nurse informed, “It's a coping mechanism. People expect Private Bloom to recognise them, so he acts like he dose.”

“It's putting him under excessive stress. I could scent his emotional que across the room,” Falkirk insisted.

“I'll make a note of it for his Psychologist,” said the exasperated and overworked nurse.

“Thank you,” Falkirk said and let go of her arm.

--

From visiting Brayan that morning, Falkirk now watched the little girl on the floor. Rosie had gotten herself onto her stomach. Soon she'd be getting her knees under herself, in order to start crawling. Sherlock sat on the floor, on the far side of the girl. He was reporting on the latest movements of Mycroft and who he'd been meeting.

“Dr. Watson, dear?” called the little old woman coming in from the kitchen. Passing a china teacup to the blond sitting in the chair she asked, “Can you smell almonds off this?”

Taking the cup, John gave it a sniff and shook his head. The beta woman gave a curious frown, “I'm sure it smells strange. Would you mind taking a sip?”

“No!” Sherlock snapped and launched to his feet. Stepping over Rosie and up to John he took the cup. “The milk's probably gone off!”

“It doesn't smell off dear,” the little woman said, to the man darting into the other room. Turning back to the others still in the lounge, she looked through the little round glasses perched on the end of her nose. “He reminds me of a naught boy I once looked after. One day, I went to pour my tea and found a poor little frog in my tea cup. I was most impressed, he managed to find a Hyla arborea, or the European Tree Frog if you wish to use the common name. We kept in in an aquarium for a few days to study it. When we freed it, I took the boy to the pond to find other species.”

John looked quickly to the kitchen door and shot towards it. The three remaining in the lounge heard John in the other room arguing with Sherlock, demanding to know if he'd done something to the housekeeper's tea.

“So?” Falkirk asked the little old beta standing and looking down on him and Rosie.

“Cyanide,” the old beta said. “You brother dose like his little tests. I don't think he can get a read on me.”

“You could just tell him you were an embedded agent for MI6,” Falkirk said. Picking up Rosie when she started to complain about being on her tummy and not able to roll back over.

“And where would the fun be in that, for Sherlock or myself, dear?”

“You do seem to take a particular delight in being here,” Falkirk said. Sitting Rosie in his lap and leaning her against his raised knees. Falkirk held the little girl's hands and clapped them gently, while making goo-goo noises.
“Oh, being in the home of the 'Great Detective' is a thrill. Our little duels of intellect are marvellous, dear. And the cases! The people come in and sit in that chair over there, and tell their stories. Your brother is a wonder to watch, very rude though and not always right. I did have to correct him the other day. Sherlock said the man was left handed, when he was in fact ambidextrous. You shouldn't rely on a wristwatch being on the off hand, to deduce the dominant hand. I was told to get out.”

“Ms Marple,” Sherlock said, coming back in like a scolded school boy. John nudged the taller man. Through gritted teeth, Sherlock added, “I'm sorry for... your tea.”

“That's alright dear,” the old woman said, oh so pleasantly. Moving passed the two men, saying she would try making another cup and see if it turned out better.

When Ms Marple was gone. John looked to Sherlock and demanded, “Why don't you like her? She's good with house keeping. Great with Rosie. She's perfect as far as I can tell.”

“Precisely!” Sherlock snapped. Rosie in Falkirk's lap squealed her delight and watched the detective avidly as he paced and ranted. “The grey hair, up in a bun. The little round glasses, always perched at the end of her nose. The tweed skirt. The square healed shoes. The white blouse with frilly collars and cuffs. A hanky stuffed up the left sleeve. The 'pinny' with frilly edges, and boiled sweets in the pocket. She's just too perfect a little old lady. It has to be fake. And! She notices everything! When she dusts, everything goes back perfectly. In ten years Mrs Hudson never figured the skull always pointed east! Now even if I move it, Ms Marple moves it back!”

Rosie was giving that evil little giggle, that only babies could manage. Sherlock the funniest thing in the world to her. Falkirk offered, “I could just tell you.”

“DON'T YOU DARE!” Sherlock snapped, making Rosie give an all out cackle. “No this is between me and Miss Marple.”

“Miss Marple and I! Who taught you to speak, my lad?” corrected the woman from the other room. John whispered a warning, about some silly competition, and warning Sherlock not to frighten off the woman. Falkirk kept quiet, little could frighten off one of MI6's best ex-spies.

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Falkirk's day off ended in the late afternoon, having a quiet cup of tea. Just letting the silence of the house fill him. No distant phones or people talking. Nothing.

Inhaling he hints of citrous as hot water slid into his mouth, Falkirk swallowed and let out a sigh. Using the blade of the pastry fork Falkirk sliced the Schichttorte wondering how Mrs Bridges got the fine layers in the cake, before devouring it. Soon the entire slice of cake was gone and all that remand of the tea was a cold over steeped liquid.

Jolting awake at a bang, Falkirk calmed as he heard the general ruckus of children and equipment. Coming out of the lounge he found two mud caked children along with three mud caked parents.

“Where's Selene and Cody? DON'T sit there! Stay on the tiles!” Falkirk added as Andrew was about to sit on the carpeted bottom step to take off his shoes. The small boy sat on the tiles, to take off his shoes, with Yulian doing the same.
“We dropped the others off on the way back,” Alec informed.

James peeling off his shirt, to show the mud had soaked right to the skin.

“What the hell were you doing?” Falkirk asked.

“A little gorge walking,” James shrugged. As if he was talking perfect sense.

“I'll take care of these two while you lot clean yourselves up,” Falkirk stated and guided Andrew and Yulian upstairs. His green eyes focusing on the muddy foot print that they left on the red carpet. Twin sets, so perfect outlined you could see the five little spots of the toes.

“Why do you have to be a child to get your back washed?” James lamented.

Daniel smirked at the man, “I'll wash your back.”

“Do, bugger off!”
Falkirk listened to Mycroft courting favours. He was attempting to usurp the man known as Freddie. From the list of conversations Falkirk had been given it was not going well. Most believing in the immovability of the Masons.

It was like a perverted Pack with 'Freddie' as its head. There were no contracts or formal affiliations. All deals were whispered and actions implied.

Falkirk listened as an unknown male casually mention a name, Peter Tower. The man then waxed on about how good his friend, 'Peter' was and hinting he would make a wonderful Met Commissioner.

“Uncle Keading's here,” Andrew called.

Locking the computer Falkirk came out of the Library and took Andrew's hand.

“Bye, Daddy. Uncle Keading,” Andrew called as he pulled Falkirk towards the car. Keading waved them off, while dealing with Yulian, Colum and Michelle.

In the car Selene and Cody sat across from Falkirk and Andrew. Cody had his nose buried in a book with a macabre cover entitled 'True History of Weird Crimes'. Falkirk took a little comfort in the juvenile title meaning the book was at least partially age appropriate.

Stopping at the school Falkirk took Andrew to the side gate. Meeting up again with Selene at the car they headed to MI6.

The day passed, a debrief and bollocking for 009 thankfully he had not bonded to anyone on the mission. Assessments of various situations around the world. Accounts meetings again, payroll and Q branch the two most expensive sections. “We really need a way to recoup our R&D spending” Falkirk mused to the head accountant.

Lunch at a restaurant with James followed by a meeting on UK security with Control, the Police with the acting Commissioner, Navy and Army intelligence divisions. Falkirk having to hobble the army for grossly overestimating a threat in Afghanistan.

“Vigilance will keep your men safe,” Falkirk said before ripping apart the General's intelligence and his conclusions. When in truth the army wanted an excuse to unleash an expensive new toy, a drone. He wanted to deploy its precision missiles on a compound. No matter the words used an explosion is an explosion, and the neighbours with children and families would die along side the Taliban.

Arriving back at MI6 Falkirk was in time to see Suzi Kew(001) getting into some hot water in China. Selene was in charge of the tactical room. A satellite image of the pursuit was displayed on the main screen. Falkirk watched from the back as Selene monitored and guided the situation.
“Head east,” Selene ordered and Falkirk stepped in. He said, “No, North. Go to ground in Beijing, get lost in the masses then make contact with our people there.”

001 acknowledged the order and Falkirk looked to Selene. Whispering, “Sometimes it’s safer to go deeper into enemy territory than make a run for it.”

Falkirk retuned to his office reading over reports until Selene came in an hour later.

Selene said, “Double O One made it to Beijing where we lost contact. We're waiting for her to reach Station B to report in.”

Falkirk nodded in acknowledgement. Only half paying attention, more focused on the report of a business man and humanitarian, who was actually a nasty piece of work. Debating on whether it was a case of monitoring the bad guy to gain information, or if it was a job for a Double O.

A beeping sounded from his computer then Falkirk and Selene's phone issued the same alert.

“Home:Panic button, front door,” Falkirk informed pulling up the alert.

Going to the situation room Tanner joining them along with Darren. Without doubt Daniel and possibly Alec were also monitoring from Q Branch. The House's CCTV system came online. The big screen split to show the images from each of the house's cameras.

Falkirk's eyes immediately fixed on the camera mounted above the front door looking down to the pavement. The MI6 chauffeur driven car was at the top of the screen. On the pavement, kneeling on a man with one hand fixed on the unknown male's neck was Hudson, while pointed a gun at the pinned man's head.

Then Falkirk noticed movement from the kitchen cameras. Keading was leading all the children to the panic room. Still scanning the images, Falkirk said, “James should be there!”

“Pull up the logs,” Tanner ordered. On an auxiliary screen the feeds where scanned.

Moving his attention from the live feed to the historical Falkirk looked for the camera covering the front door.

The car pulled up and Keading opened the door. Cody exited followed by Andrew. Cody, the first going up the stairs, froze then cringed away from the front door of the house. Out of the bottom of the screen(Front Door) Hudson lunged from the top step as a man entered the frame from side, running along the pavement. Falkirk winced as Hudson slammed into the man, the force sending them into the side of the car.

Another man appeared from the left of the screen aiming for Andrew. Hudson launched himself off the first man and into the new one, dragging him down. The first man pushed himself to his feet while Hudson grappled with the second man.

The first man gave a sharp look to the car as it rocked violently. He ran towards the front door of the house. Keading had recovered from his surprise and was pushing Andrew towards the house. The first man following them froze and then ran away, a moment before James barrelled out the front door.

The chauffeur flung open the passenger door for some reason, to get out of the car. He helped Hudson. The butler was pinning the second man and pulling out his gun. In a sweeping, twisting movement Hudson somehow gracefully looked 360o around him while maintaining a secure hold on his captive.
Looking to the live feed again. Falkirk watched Hudson being relieved of his prisoner, by a police officer. Falkirk nodded to the prisoner, “Make him an appointment with Alice!”

Tanner had a comforting hand on Darren’s shoulder. Falkirk told them to stay. Falkirk, Rey and Selene headed for the grange. Stepping out into the underground space the distant sound of screeching tires, indicating Daniel was already on his way. Addison and Maloney were standing by his his car.

Maloney stepped forward, “M...”

“Thank you gentleman, all is in hand,” Falkirk snapped and passed between the two Double Os

Arriving home Armed police and MI6 Tactical squads were everywhere. Further down the street out of view of the house’s cameras, a black Mercedes had T-boned a BMW to force it off the road and into the fencing of the park. Two Iranians surveillance agents, that sat in the Mercedes were talking to the police near the scene.

Daniel’s Bentley had been parked and abandon with its engine still running.

“Go!” Falkirk ordered Selene and she ran into the house.

Heading for James, Daniel and Hudson, Falkirk also waved over the Captain of the MI6 Tactical squad.

Intercepting M, the Captain fell in step with his boss. Falkirk ordered, “This is our jurisdiction. Get the police out of here! And I want to talk to the Iranians.”

“M!” the captain snapped and went to fulfil his orders.

“Report!” Falkirk said to James and indicating the Iranians, but suspected what had happened.

“The BMW picked up the assailant I was chasing. As the BMW pulled away the Mercedes rammed it. The BMW driver and passenger made a break for it on foot. I got the guy I was originally chasing. The passenger of the Merc. got the driver of the BMW,” James informed clinically.

“Condition of assailants?” Falkirk asked.

Giving a righteous smile James boasted, “Broken and dislocated jaw along with fractured eye socket. Defiantly fractured skull, I smashed his head against the pavement, several times. Right wrist, arm and I think shoulder socket, broken...”

Falkirk interrupted him “Did he survive?”

“Yes,” James growled leavening Falkirk in doubt his alpha wanted a few more rounds.

Hudson cleared his throat and nodded to something behind Falkirk. Tuning. The Street had been cleared of police and the Captain was approaching with the two Iranians.

“The Driver, Report!” Falkirk snapped. The two men middle eastern Betas looked intensely uncomfortable, as they should be. “You are the only state to have assisted. You have earned my undying gratitude. Now speak before you lose it.”

Falkirk wasn’t sure if it was the driver who spoke or not. The Iranian spoke describing seeing two men jump out of the BMW and run towards the children. The BMW moved swiping the side of the
chauffeur driven car to stop the diver from getting out. Then moved on and pulled in to retrieve the assailant. The Iranian finished by saying, “As the BMW was pulling away we rammed it.”

“You have my personal thanks, Gentlemen. However, there is a procedure that must be adhered to,” Falkirk informed. Both men nodded in understanding. Falkirk ordered the Captain of the Tactical squad, “Return the car to the embassy and escort these gentlemen to the airport. Put them on the first available flight to an Iranian friendly nation.”

Looking around for Tanner. Falkirk let out an annoyed breath, a vague memory of telling the Beta to remain at MI6 coming back.

“Hudson, Contact Tanner I want a meeting with the Prime Minister and the Iranian Ambassador,” Falkirk ordered and the butler moved off to comply.

Walking up the steps to the house. Falkirk asked James, “Have you learned anything new about Mycroft, today.”

“Nothing relevant,” James replied.

“What are you thinking?” James hissed. Falkirk just gave his mate a cold half smile and continued down to the kitchen.

Mrs Bridges was making a fuss of the children while plying them with hot chocolate and cakes. Her exuberance and nonchalance having a great effect at calming the children as she spoke. Noticing Falkirk she gushed, “Oh what excitement, sir. I must say the day Master Sherlock made nitro glycerine is still the more memorable...”

Only Cody didn't seem to believe her. Aware something dangerous had just happened even if he didn't quite know the facts yet.

“Papa, Mr Hudson jumped over Cody and got into a fight WITH TWO ALPHAS. Then Daddy...”

Falkirk chuckled at the exited voice of his son. “Mr Hudson is a very strong Alpha,” Falkirk agreed and James made an annoyed huffing sound beside him.

“Daddy too,” Falkirk added giving James a nuzzle

Alec arrived with Darren. While the omega saw to his own son, Alec tossed a set of keys to his mate, “You forgot something. You're lucky it's a good area or your car would be gone by now.”

Hudson came out of his pantry. “The Prime Minster and Ambassador will meet at MI6 in two hours, Sir.”

“That gives me time,” Falkirk mused and went upstairs. “James, come. Everyone else stay here.”

Coming out the front door of the house, where his bodyguard, Rey had taken up station. The three moved to Falkirk's car. Falkirk ordering the driver to take them to the Diogenes club.

With restraint Falkirk waited until he was shown into Mycroft's private library. Mycroft was looking worse than Falkirk had ever seen him.

“I have just heard,” Mycroft started before Falkirk held up a hand.

“I no longer trust in the Metropolitan police. I want Inspector Lestrade to be promoted up,” Falkirk stated.
“Commissioner is a big leap,” Mycroft warned.

Nodding his agreement. “I was thinking more along the lines of an opening at the assistant Commissioner level,” Falkirk said coming to sit in a chair opposite his brother. The manoeuvrings of Mycroft coming to mind rather easily for Falkirk.

“Manageable,” Mycroft mused. Hesitantly he said, “Assistant Commissioner Peter Towers has shown promise.”

“As long as he supports Lestrade, do it!” Falkirk ordered.

“It would help if we had Control's support, for the appointment of the commissioner,” Mycroft added.

“I'll see to it,” Falkirk said standing. Falkirk could see Mycroft's shoulders relax slightly and his scent improve. The move would let Mycroft pull in some favours with the masons and Falkirk would have a trusted pack member nearer the top of the Met.

Mycroft called his name when Falkirk reached the door. He asked, “Your que is strange. Why are you...”

Falkirk smiled sweetly, “I'm not doing anything, because I'm just a weak little bitch who's afraid of his own shadow and the big bad secret organisation. They just tried to kidnap my son, I'm so, so very afraid. As far as I'm concerned, they've won.”

Falkirk closed the door and headed out of the club. James giving him strange, slightly concerned and frightened looks as they walked. James whispered, “What are you up to.”

Falkirk sent the alpha an evil smirk and shrugged.

With James at his side Falkirk entered MI6. Instead of heading to E branch Falkirk made for the brig then interrogation. Entering the observation room Falkirk watched the small Omega female working on the Alpha twice her size. He had already lost his bravado and his naked body was a patchwork of wounds.

A little green looking, Tanner, handed Falkirk a file. Name, National Insurance Number, employment history everything was listed. Tanner said, “Alice is getting what is not covered by documentation. He's already given over a few names, but is holding out. Has said, 'My friends will come for me.' True to his word, MI6 has received a court order to hand over the suspects to the police.”

“An attack on the Director of MI6, is outside the MET's jurisdiction. Bring in the judge for questioning. He should know he's interfering with national security. Unless...” Falkirk sent a nasty smile to Tanner.

“Unless he's involved and is helping?” Tanner said. He didn't wait for confirmation he ran to go see to M's orders.

James was watching proceedings in the other room with his own cruel smile. He'd gotten to pound one into the pavement, there were another two who deserved the same treatment. Although, for the one in the other room, being pounded into the pavement was looking like a mercy at the moment.

“Remain here,” Falkirk ordered. Coming out of dark observation room, Falkirk opened the other door and entered the interrogation room.
A chair was at the far end in which Ian Miller was currently restrained to. Alice was standing in front of him. Alice continued to caress open wounds with a gloved hand. Something shiny, like oil, on the gloves reflecting the bright lights as her hand moved.

A table was at the bottom of the room where Alice had laid out all her equipment. Ignoring the screams and crying from the man Falkirk perused the equipment. Finding a bottle of olive oil, a small hand blender and something that looked a little like salad dressing in a small cup. Falkirk lightly touched the concoction with his pinky and pressed the tiniest amounts to his tongue.

Coughing and hacking as his mouth burned Falkirk's eyes started to stream. “MILK!” Falkirk wheezed at the mirror. Alice sniggered at Falkirk but didn't let up on her victim. James brought in a small sealed carton of milk then left.

After swilling and swallowing the milk around his mouth. Still Falkirk had trouble breathing, “Ghost Chillies?”

“Infinity Pepper,” Alice corrected. “I cultivate them myself,” she added having to speak loudly to be heard over the suffering Alpha.

“Don't tell Alec about them. His curries are hot enough as it is,” Falkirk wheezed. His tongue felt oddly numb and in severe pain at the same time. His breathing was also troubled and his eyes were still watering.

“Play time's over,” Falkirk stated and Alice stopped.

Walking up to the crying and whimpering Alpha Falkirk tilted the man's chin up. His eyes were rolling, not fixing on anything while bathed in his own suffering. Talking to Alice as Falkirk looked at the suffering Alpha.

“I want to know his Mason friends, where they meet, who ordered the hit. Then you will do the same for is two accomplices, to make sure the information is accurate.” Falkirk ordered.

Alice let out a dark chuckle, “I'll need to let him recover before he can talk.”

“Play with the driver then,” Falkirk ordered.

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With the scent of the distressed, pained, suffering and frightened Alpha clinging to him Falkirk entered his office where Mallory and the Ambassador were waiting. Between Alphas scent was used for identification unless it was very intense, no doubt Miller's scent was intense enough. Both Mallory and the Ambassador took subtle scenting, a calm Omega under the mixed scents of a single Alpha.

To the agitated and barely controlled Prime Minister. Falkirk said, “I take it you heard what happened at the house?”

“Yes,” Mallory growled.

The Ambassador was protesting the innocence of his country when Falkirk politely stopped him.

“Yes I am aware Iran was not responsible. I invited you here to personally thank you and to extend my thanks to your Intelligence services.” Falkirk said. The Ambassador was taken aback with this turn of events, having prepared to defend himself and country.
“As parents of those effected, perhaps there is a way we could show our gratitude to Iran. A gift,” Falkirk said to Mallory.

“The sanctions make it difficult but I'm sure something could be arrange,” Mallory said, as confused as the ambassador.

Falkirk said to the Iranian, “On a personal note, I would be furious if one of my agents revealed themselves. Personally I'm thankful they did and would hope leniency is shown to your agents for exposing themselves.”

“I will convey your request,” the Ambassador reassured.

Tanner and Moneypenny escorted the Ambassador out and Mallory rounded on Falkirk slamming a fist on his desk. “What the bloody hell is going on! My son was at that house! In Keading's care!”

“I started a war. One of our pack members is in trouble, Mycroft is caught in the middle. Today was an attempt to force my, or even our compliance. It will not work.”

“SO WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?” The barely restrained Alpha father roared. “You're not one to pussy foot around. Who are we going to kill?”

“I need a proposal for the Iranians as quickly as possible. I will deliver it to Tehran personally. You have an election to concentrate on,” Falkirk insisted.

Mallory took a deep breath, smelling only intense Alpha fear in the room, coming from M. He managed to calm himself, to think rationally for a moment and not on the blood lust.

“Are we separating ourselves from something, M?” Mallory asked and Falkirk gave a slow nod. Quietly and cautiously Mallory moved to the door before Falkirk called him back.

“One more thing, Prime Minister. I think Peter Towers would be a good choice for MET Commissioner.”

Not wanting to know what Falkirk was up to. “As my Alpha commands,” Mallory replied and walked out.
Maloney and Addison were teasing the latest batch of recruits. They had taken over Alec's duties while the ex-Double O was dealing with the Masons. The two current Double Os looked like they were playing a school yard game Falkirk had seen Andrew playing. Addison and Maloney were standing between two sets of lines. The new recruits would try to run from one line to the other and the Double Os would try to catch them.

There was only one remaining recruit as Falkirk approached. The other recruit nursing bruises, black eyes, and sprains. With full bravado the last recruit charged both Double Os and hit the floor with a deafening thump and a groan. He attempted to wrestle but was no match for the Double Os. At this point it stopped being the school yard game, real punches, kicks and the odd headbutt being exchanged.

“You were trying to offer your assistance earlier,” Falkirk said as the Double Os approached. Both nodded to Falkirk's assessment. “If you are still willing...” both agreed before Falkirk could finish.

As endearing as the offer was they had to know. “This is off the books, purely personal,” Falkirk insisted and again both agreed. “If you're caught Double O status will not protect you.”

“Understood,” both responded without backing out.

“You were trying to offer your assistance earlier,” Falkirk said as the Double Os approached. Both nodded to Falkirk's assessment. “If you are still willing...” both agreed before Falkirk could finish.

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“Understood,” both responded without backing out.

“Get cleaned up and come have dinner. I take it you both know my address?” Falkirk asked. When he received affirmative responses, he added, “I have a brief stop to make but you are expected.”

Meeting James at the car Falkirk instructed the driver to take them to MI5. Arriving at the building Falkirk was met by a 'mother'. He knew the routes by now but still needed the escort whilst in the building. On the Fifth floor Falkirk was led into Control's office. There were fewer personal touches about the room and a box sat by the door with a small bronze statue and a few books inside.

“I was talking to Mycroft,” Falkirk started

“I'm the one dying and he looks worse.”

“Hopefully his health will improve soon,” Falkirk returned. “Assistant Commissioner Peter Towers,”

Smiley gave Falkirk a sceptical look, “Someone else mentioned that name to me. A someone I thought you would take exception to.”

“I'm not foolish, I know the game. I am forced to make this move to make the one I really want,”
Falkirk returned.

“Very well. I will support this Peter Towers.” Smiley conceded.

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Arriving home there was the general uproar of a full house. Stepping into the lounge, Falkirk saw Addison wore a look of mild terror. Andrew was beside the visitor and by the way his arms were moving was telling a very animated tale, to the handsome Double O. Most likely describing the excitement of yesterday.

Maloney was a little more comfortable. He had Michelle in his lap. Talking with Keading, between cooing to the baby.

Cody was more engaged than usual beside Alec. Of everyone Alec was the only one other than Sherlock, Cody related to for some reason. 'Odd?' Falkirk thought thinking how Sherlock related to Alec as well.

“Darren took Colum home,” Selene informed from beside Daniel and Yulian.


In due course Hudson called everyone to the table. The meal passed in careful and casual conversation. Glossing over the events of the other day whenever(Mostly Andrew) brought it up.

After Dinner Keading took charge of the children, ushering them up stairs. Falkirk, going to help too, called to everyone still at the table, “I will be going on a diplomatic mission to Tehran, in a few days... before you ask James, I won't be needing you.”

When the kids and omegas were gone. James, Alec, Daniel, Selene, Maloney and Addison sat round the table looking at each other.

“I'm confused?” James said.

Alec teased, “Oh, come on. Even I've worked it out.”

Addison, the most nervous of the group actually put up his hand to speak, “I'm confused too.”

Alec sing-songed, “When the cat's away...”

“Who's here to stop us!” James twigged.

“You know,” Daniel mused, “Darren would be perfect. He's an artist when it comes to home made explosives.”

Selene added, “I saw Mallory afterwards. He was as pissed off as any of us.”

James asked about a plan. Alec saying, “I like big bangs! With lots of fire. As Danni-boy said, Darren's an artist.”

Selene said, “I want them to be afraid.”
Hearing the sound of low talking getting closer, they dropped the topic of conversation. Falkirk and Keading arrived, gossiping about some reality show Keading was really into. Falkirk looked over the group, “I hope you’re not up to something.”

“Me, us, never,” Alec lied.

James adding, “Like we would ever do anything without your approval.”

“Oh, how as M I would love that to be true,” Falkirk said with a wistful smile.

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Hearing a knock on the door frame Hudson turned sharply to Falkirk, automatically reaching under his jacket given the recent events. Still a little jumpy from the other day.

“Oh?” Hudson said sitting up straighter and putting his feet on the ground.

“Please don't get up,” Falkirk assured, coming in. “I saw the footage. Your conduct was impressive and Andrew seems to agree.”

Falkirk could tell the old alpha was a bit embarrassed by the praise. Hudson was too experienced for regrets but Falkirk could see them mounting.

“I saw the car, noted it and moved on,” Hudson admitted.

“Like you do every day with the Iranian and Italian vehicles. Not to mention the neighbours. Foreign powers watch this house twenty four hours a day. Its hard to tell the difference between all the suspicious people, the ones who are going to act and those who may act, or are just here to watch.” Falkirk mused sitting in the soft floral chair that scented of Mrs Bridges.

“I am aware of the logic in the situation but alas emotions are more complex, Sir,” Hudson said.

“Well as long as you know James and I are grateful, and Andrew has a new superhero,” Falkirk said.

The older man gave a soft smile, at the description. Falkirk said, “Goodnight Mr Hudson. I for one could never manage the times James is away, if there wasn't a good man, a trusted alpha about.”

Hudson, gave a nervous smile and nodded. Being of a generation that didn't discuss things like biology.

Coming out of the basement corridor, intending to go his bedroom. Falkirk's phone rang. Answering it, Mycroft said, “There's something in the wind. Many are unhappy with this softer stance on Iran, and blame you. Along with making a judge disappear. I don't know what is coming but something is.”

As it always did, the concern in his brother's voice was a surprise. “Thank you Mycroft, I'll be careful.”

“Control's endorsement of Towers has just come through... thank you.” the line went dead.
Looking at his phone as the screen went black. Falkirk said to himself, “What's coming for me will be nothing compare to what's coming for them.”

“Will this be enough?” Falkirk asked. The proposal of the British Government didn't seem much to Falkirk. Medial technologies, Drug supplies, student visas, Inter University cooperation and a less severe stance with the UN were the primary benefits.

“I've already had President Bartlett on the phone about this,” Mallory snapped. “Not to mention my own party and the opposition. Not many approve of this.”

“If you lose the election. I may have an Idea,” Falkirk said placing the document in his brief case.

“Oh wonderful, as my Alpha commands,” Mallory mumbled as Falkirk walked out.

On the way back to MI6 Falkirk's mobile rang. Picking up, Roebuck drawled in an overly loud fashion, “Ah my boy! Could you come to the club.”

While Falkirk tried to make his excuses. Roebuck continued, this time in a whisper. “Beware the ides of march.”

“Et tu Brute?” Falkirk responded.

Letting out a hearty chuckle and, “YES my boy, that's it!”

“I'll be there immediately,” Falkirk said. A fleeting thought of pitching up with a few loyal to him and see how they coped when confronted with an armed and devout opposition. Shaking his head, he wanted that scenario to play in his absence.

Arriving at the Hind Club Falkirk stepped out of his car. Roebuck was in one of the large lounges with a few others including Captain Sansky, the rest Falkirk didn't recognise. Before he could approach, a footman came up to Falkirk.

"Vice Admiral, Sir Thomas McLair, your attendance is demanded. Please follow?"

Escorted into a library with a wide rectangular table. The far side sat comfortably a dozen people with Falkirk's indirect predecessor in the centre. Hargreaves. To the right of Admiral Hargreaves sat one of Falkirk's own deputies, Rhett Butler. There was a single empty chair amongst the group, for Roebuck. Rufus Sixsmith, the MI6 archivist sat at the end of the line, and trying to look very small. A woman, Victoria gave Falkirk a nod, in greeting. The only other he knew was the odd Beta who ran a secure containment institution known as the village, 'No.1'.

This was the council dubbed the Trustees. They oversaw MI6 and more specifically M's conduct. If the worst came, Falkirk would be leaving with No.1.

Taking a deep breath, scenting the ques of those in the room. Falkirk was reassured with the nervousness of some of the Alphas.

“Sit down!” Hargreaves ordered.

Stepping up to the chair indicated, noticing it was lower than the rest. A power play, like the
elevated judge in a court room. Taking a step closer to the table and another until Falkirk could rest his finger tips on the surface.

Ignoring the admiral in the centre, Falkirk move to stand in front of Butler. A small thrill went through Falkirk. When M used to subdue Alphas twice/three times her size, it always amazed Falkirk. Under Falkirk's gaze the Alpha, Naval Commander, Deputy Director of MI6 and ex Double O crumbled. Dropping his gaze and pulling his hands into his lap Butler exposed his neck.

Moving on, Sixsmith didn't even last a fraction of Butlers time. Hargreaves now going quite red “SIT down Admiral McLair!”

To Falkirk's far right sat No.1. Moving to stand in front of the man.

“Oh Hello?” No.1 said as if seeing Falkirk in front of him for the first time. The cold blue eyes, unnerving smile and pleasant attitude were just as Falkirk remembered.

“Hello. How are the birds?” Falkirk asked pleasantly as he suppressed a terrified shudder.

In hushed unhurried wistful tone. “Oh. Only crows and black birds, and seagulls this time of year,” No.1 lamented.

“Well spring is upon us and our visitors will be returning,” Falkirk reassured.

“SIT DOWN!” Hargreaves bellowed.

“How rude.” No.1 said turning his cold eyes on the red faced admiral.

“Quite.” Falkirk said pleasantly drawing No.1’s attention.”I must come see the birds and I do so enjoy our chats.”

“Oh, lovely,” No.1 then waved Falkirk closer. Only speaking when Falkirk's head was by the Beta's “I hope you are not offended by my coming. I so wanted to see your style first hand.”

“Not at all,” Falkirk said and got a bright smile from the insane man. Falkirk then asked about Pushkin, and how the Russian was settling into the village. All to the backdrop of an enraged Hargreaves.

Walking from the far right where No.1 sat, Falkirk paused in front of each of the twelve members. Two were down, One was ranting, and the other was insane while being rather pleasant. The Betas Falkirk couldn't get a scent que of, but the alphas were all nervous with the exception of Hargreaves who was furious, and Victoria who looked impressed and could read what Falkirk was doing like a book.

“Victoria,” Falkirk said extending his hand to the Alpha. The mane of white hair and perfectly poised posture, she was the epitome of a refined model Alpha woman.

“Hello, again, M,” came the cultured voice. Falkirk had a brief discussion with the woman on her prize winning roses.

The Beta beside Victoria held herself like she could permanently smell something bad. If she had been an Alpha she would have reminded Falkirk of his mother. Black hair, a woman of her age shouldn't be able to maintain. Above all she bore a striking resemblance to the cover of Andrew's
book, 'The Grand high Witch' came to mind. Falkirk moved on not speaking to her.

Only once Falkirk had stood in front of each Trustee in turn. Introducing himself to some ignoring other did Falkirk take his chair. Crossing his leg and placing his clasped hand on his knee. “I am quite busy could we make this quick.”

As Falkirk suspected Victoria was the second of the trustees. When Hargreaves spluttered she spoke up, quickly. “There is concern you are using MI6 for you own personal ends.”

“Yes?” Falkirk stated. “A good man was murdered and I have uncover an attempt to rig the upcoming election. I became very concerned when I learned the perpetrators and the individual police officers investigating the murder were identified as being part of the same organisation. I became further concerned that unlike other affiliations, there is no legally required compulsion to identify yourself as a member or declare conflicts of interest.”

Falkirk looked at each of the the Alpha males who were masons and waited. The three men remained silent. Either ignoring, or hoping Falkirk didn't know about their association. He added, “Since my son was targeted by the group, I have decided to be more cautious.”

The Mason members of the Trustees, tried to hide their smiles.

“This is a personal vendetta?” Hargreaves demanded having gathered himself.

“It was never personal.” Falkirk responded professionally. A twitch from Hargreaves, Victoria as well as Butler and Sixsmith. Indicating to Falkirk they were concerned about something. “At all times, Justice, this country and a murdered man were my guiding concern.”

“We do not know that these masons were involved. You forced the police out of both investigations,” one of the Alpha who was a mason spat.

“I could not afford to trust the police. Control and I are now preparing to declare The Masons a threat to National Security,” Falkirk stated, glaring at the Alpha. During Falkirk's statement the Alpha was trying desperately to hide his growing discomfort.

“Is there something you wish to tell us?” Victoria demanded of the Alpha Trustee.

“No!” the man snapped too quickly.

“And there we have a problem, and a conflict of interest,” Falkirk stated.

“I don't know what...” the Alpha started before No.1 spoke up.

“Paul Evans, inducted to Manchester Lodge, April fifteenth, nineteen seventy-five by his Uncle Harold Evans,” As he usual did No.1 looked around expectantly, as if waiting for a teacher to tell him he was correct.

“Maxwell Barns and Oliver Hardy are also member of the Masons,” No.1 added absently.

Victoria mused, “Paul, Max, and Oliver, three people pushing to have M removed as quickly as possible. Before their organisation is declared a threat to the nation?”

“Perhaps those named should step out,” Butler stated with Victoria agreeing.
The named men left, along with a few others including the Grand High Witch. She had Falkirk's admiration, he would have wagered money on her putting in the boot given a chance. She was a vocal critic of his. But as the saying goes, it's not the ones that hate you to your face that you need to truly worry about. And she was hissing furious words to the one named Paul, about not doing the dirty wok for his 'old boys network'

No.1 made a disappointed little noise, “And I so wanted to see M's style of intimidation first hand. Oh well, it has been nice seeing you, M. You must come for a visit.”

The declaration stunned the the room and Victoria call No.1’s attention. “Do you supporting M?”

“Oh yes, he's my friend,” No.1 Confirmed. “I could never allow someone like M into the village. His pack is too resourceful, intelligent and diversified, and M is the one holding it together,” giving an excited smile at the idea, “Removing M would be like a pack of rabid dogs being let loose.”

Victoria looked from the insane ramblings of the bald beta, to the two who still worked for M. “You're whipped?” Victoria said to Sixsmith and Butler. Both nodded.

Looking to Hargreaves Victoria continued. “You may not like it but I know you support M, reluctantly. I support M so no majority can be reached to have him removed. This meeting is dismissed!”

Standing Falkirk approached No.1, “That was unexpected, I'm honoured you think of me as a friend?”

“Oh good, I like being unexpected,” No.1 Declared with his unnerving smile still in place.

A startled and very un-Alpha like “Oo!” sounded as Victoria opened the door.

The other Trustees filed out after Victoria, wary of what was on the other side. When it came to Hargreaves' turn the Old Alpha stopped and came back in. A really old Alpha hobbled in, Roebuck and Sansky holding an arm each. Falkirk had seen him a few times at Mycroft’s club. Hargreaves reverently pulled Falkirk's chair for the Old man's use.

“Vice Admiral, Sir Miles Messervy KCMG,” No.1 whispered to Falkirk.

“Didn't think he was still alive,” Falkirk whispered back. He had not seen him peering out from a chair the last few times he had stormed through Mycroft’s club.

The old man flapped his lips a moment as his head bobbed, looking to Falkirk then Hargreaves.

Sitting in front of Falkirk was M, thee M from which the title M came. The man who founded the concept of Double Os when a minor SIS division from World War Two became the early MI6 of today.

The old Alpha's nose twitched and he looked from Falkirk to Sansky. Deciding on his target a gnarled arthritis riddled finger pointed in Falkirk's direction. “M!” he declared. Swinging his head to Hargreaves “Chairman!” he said the gnarled finger following. To Falkirk it looked like the old man was identifying the characters before the play started.

“I'm told you need help?” the old man sneered, looking back to Falkirk.
“No,” Falkirk stated and the sneer disappeared.

“No Miles, the meeting collapsed!” No.1 Informed as he approached the seated man.

“Colin?” M rasped squinting to see No.1.

“Yes,” No.1 responded.

“I thought you were locked up?” the old M mused.

“Oh, I am. I am Number One now,” No.1 informed.

“Bugger me what damned fool allowed that?” M said.

“You I believe,” No.1 said

“I knew it would have been some damned fool,” M muttered.

It was clear to Falkirk, the two men were old friends. “As fascinating as this is. I am busy,”

Falkirk walked towards the door. Hearing No.1, “He's going to Iran, Miles.”

“What the bloody hell is he going there for?” the oldest M grumbled.

Shaking his head Falkirk walked out. Trustee members were milling about, particularly the old MI6. Butler and Sixsmith were waiting down the hall for him.

“My Boy?” Roebuck called and Falkirk stopped to wait for him to catch up.

“It sounds like you handled them from the back foot?” Roebuck said quietly.

“I did,” Falkirk stated.


Passing Butler and Sixsmith. “Suspended, I will see you both on my return!” Falkirk snapped, not breaking his stride.

Arriving back at MI6 James, Daniel, Alec and Selene were waiting in Falkirk's office. Demanding to know why Falkirk diverted to his club and why Rey was so nervous.

“Just a meeting with the trusties of MI6,” Falkirk reassured before looking to Daniel and Alec and ordering “Loyalty test for Rhett Butler and Rufus Sixsmith. Make it a difficult one.”

Alec mused, “Butler's got a wife we can use. What's Sixsmith got?”

“He's gay,” Falkirk said, “Full Alpha-male leanings. He had a lover, a musician. Robert Frobisher.”

“A fag hunt, got ya!” Alec said.
Everyone but James filed out after that. Daniel and Alec to coordinate the test to tempt Butler and Sixsmith out of some information. Selene returning to her office.

“Good luck, and remember to return all my equipment in one piece,” James teased giving Falkirk a predatory look.

“It's just a short diplomatic mission,” Falkirk reassured before adding, “I'm always careful of my equipment, Double O Seven.”

--

Meeting Tanner in the garage along with Rey and the extended bodyguard team. Falkirk got into his car and headed for London City airport. Where a modified BAE146 stood. Part of the RAF the plane had the Lion and the Unicorn motif of the British Crest on the tail, and decked out in burgundy and dark grey livery. The fleet was usually used for the Royal Visits but in this case Falkirk was representing the Government on a diplomatic mission so got to use it.

As Falkirk wanted, there was no disguising who, what or why he was going to Iran. It was almost being sung from the rooftops. It led the evening news, with those for and against all getting air time.

No James, Alec, Daniel, Selene, a trusted Double O, or even Brayan. The old fear was clawing at Falkirk as he took his seat. It felt like someone was reaching into Falkirk's gut and was squeezing with all their might. His head was swimming and vision greying at the edged. Falkirk hadn't felt a full attack in years but recognised the symptoms. With the presence of a known Alpha, Falkirk had learnt to mange his fear. With Ray and Tanner the only known people and the mix of strange scents from the Bodyguards and crew Falkirk's world was spinning.

“M?” Ray called from his seat across the aisle.

“I'm fine, I just don't like flying!” Falkirk snapped.

Someone charged passed and Falkirk felt the plane sway. The walls seemed to close in, the noise of the engines tore through him. Every rattle, clunk and bang sounded like the precursor to an explosion. Visions of the plane disappearing around him, and falling through the air strapped to his seat filled Falkirk's mind. Old fears resurfaced of strangers coming, forcing him onto the scary vehicle followed by pain, humiliation and vulnerability.

“M?” Tanner said coming to sit beside Falkirk. Hesitantly the Beta placed a hand on Falkirk's back, who had his head between his knees.

The steady thump and sway indicating someone was approaching. “He needs to sit up for take off!”

“Fuck off! If it's good enough to crash with you head between your legs it's good enough to take off!” Falkirk's muffled voice spat. Suddenly a hand darted out catching the crew member “Scratch that, Bourbon, large!”

“We can't serve...”

“Listen to me you sorry excuse for a glorified trolley dolly! You're no use as eye candy so go get the drink!” Falkirk snapped.
The Alpha male was a moment away from losing his cool when Falkirk looked around him, “Stop that bloody sniggering this instant!”

Rey stopped the sniggering at his boss tearing strips off the RAF officer but couldn't hold a straight face.

“You were given an order,” Tanner reiterated to the Cabin crew member who most likely held a military rank.

Reluctantly the crew member returned with a comically large straight bourbon. It took Falkirk a couple of gulps before he handed back the empty glass. “Good lad,” Falkirk said and returned his head to between his knees. The Alpha looked at the biggest, and empty tumbler they had and returned to the tiny galley.

By the time the plane took off Falkirk was pleasantly buzzed and feeling a little drowsy. After a stop off and refuelling in Turkey the plane touched down in Tehran. Falkirk used the tiny toilet to freshen up as best he could before stepping out into the blinding sunlight.

The effects of the alcohol had worn off hours ago and had left Falkirk with a mild headache. The British Ambassador stood by a Iranian man in full robes. The brief introductions passed and Falkirk was able to get into the car beside the Ambassador.

The ambassador, Keith Davis, a short man who Falkirk suspected in future years would become quite round. He was a Beta with dark hair. Eyes almost black. With a milky complexion, even after being in the middle eastern sun. He had an accent Falkirk had come to associate with a certain type of upbringing, Privately educated and either Oxford or Cambridge.

Sitting across from Falkirk and beside Tanner was the Ambassador's Aid De Camp, Neil Tilly. An Alpha who Falkirk knew had more than just a passing resemblance to Mycroft, Blue eyes, sandy blond hair (receding), tall and thin. He had a hint of an Oxbridge accent over something more crude, indicating he had brains rather than up bringing.

First the car passed into a gated community then into a compound with houses within their own compound. Only one house within the compound advertised its self as the house of a diplomat, the Union Flag clearly flying behind the perimeter wall.

Pulling up to a solid metal gate and high concrete walls the car slowed but didn't stop. The gate pulled back and closed behind the car. In front of the dusky pink two story, and rather blocky shaped house, a dark haired woman was waiting.

Getting out. The Beta female extended her hand to Falkirk, “Hello and welcome to our humble home. I'm Jennifer, Keith's wife”

Falkirk had been lied to enough times to recognise an act, Jennifer hated it here and possibly her husband. Falkirk nodded and introduced himself along with thanking her for the hospitality.

Stepping inside Falkirk followed Jennifer into the wide foyer with a sky light. A stair case at the far end went up then split going to the two balconies either side. Jennifer led Falkirk up and to the left, and opening the first door she came to. Falkirk complemented Jennifer on the décor but her smile and gratitude was hollow, because the room was basic to say the least.
“Bill is next door,” Jennifer informed as one of the bodyguards brought in Falkirk's case. “Lunch is in an hour. I'll leave you to settle in.”

Falkirk dropped his briefcase on the bed and started to pop the buttons of his waistcoat. One wall had a large window looking over the ample garden where security patrolled. The opposite wall had fitted wardrobes and the centre door led into a bathroom. A king sized bed and a dressing table made up the only furniture.

Unpacking, Falkirk laid out a fresh shirt before washing his face and torso in the bathroom. A tarts bath Daniel and James had called it.

Coming downstairs a bit fresher, Falkirk found the Ambassador and his Aid De Camp in a quiet but heated discussion. Tilly was hissing, “They don't send the head of MI6 to deliver a letter!”

“It is a personal debt, from the Prime Minister and Myself to the Iranian Inelegance Service,” Falkirk said, making both jump and look at him.

“Ma- may I see this document?” Davis asked.

Pulling his clasped hands from behind his back, where he held the offer. “I should sincerely hope so, as you are to officially present the package,” Falkirk stated handing a folder to the Ambassador.

“Thank you,” the Ambassador said, sharing a glance with his aid de camp.

Over the lunch, Tilly continued to grill Falkirk and Tanner over the package, while the Ambassador and his wife attempted to talk to each other without starting a fight.

“Have you managed to trace the two men I sent back?” Falkirk asked the Ambassador.

“Yes. They have fallen from favour but are safe,” the Ambassador informed. Before going on, “Tonight, The Intelligence Ministry has invited us to a dinner. Where you will meet them, a Mr Djalili and Mr Jobrani.”

“Imodioum at the ready,” was Tilly's snarky comment.

“If I can stomach the charred lumps of wood an Afghan warlord can serve, I'm sure I can stomach whatever is being served,” Falkirk responded.

Chapter End Notes

I've changed slightly how the Masons are dealt with, and have had Falkirk step back much further than originally written and made Mycroft more prominent. So next chapter is completely new, less than a week old. And the meaning behind the Trustee meeting has changed a bit. I didn't want to get rid of it completely, because I wanted to remind people of No.1, Victoria and Sixsmith, as they will be cropping up again with their own story lines.
The ample garage, was a little tight at the moment. Andrew, sitting in his uncle Daniel's lap, slowly guided by the big alpha ground some chemicals in a mortar and pestle. His Uncle telling him to go very slowly and evenly. James and Alec worked with Yulian at the other end of the table, packing tubes with the produced chemicals.

"So this is what's inside a firework?" Andrew asked innocently.

"Aye it is, little laddie," Daniel said. "Slowly and even, stirring." Andrew kept moving the pestle gently.

Mallory, looked over his own omega along with his son. Darren was in an out of the way corner of the garage. The table he worked at, full of electrical wire, components, soldering iron, mobile phones that had been cannibalised, and batteries. The Irish omega giving a constant stream of eloquent swearing as he worked to build dozens of identical circuits.

Colum asked, "What are you doing, papa?"

"I, ah, well..."

"That's what will make the fireworks go off," Mallory said to his son.

A knock came from one of the two big car doors. Two quick, two long, and one quick thumps. The door opened a crack after the signal, without James shooting whoever it was coming in. Maloney came in, holding the end of a garment rail, with Addison bringing in the other end. Sherlock followed them in a moment later, with Cody who held long, rolled up, pieces of paper.

Sherlock said, "We got the plans form the councils."

Cody went to the empty table and unrolled the first blue print, showing a triangular shaped building with rounded turret at the front.

Addison and Maloney then went out the the slightly open main door, and returned with several holdalls. Maloney said, "Selene says she'll stash the van until needed."

They worked for a while longer, when from the small door that led to the garden and house the secret knock came again. It was pushed open and John entered, "I picked him up."

Behind John was a young blond man. Who smiled nervously. Daniel having to keep a tight grip on the pestle when Andrew got a bit distracted by the new arrival.

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The blond man, pulled in his jaguar convertible to the front of the Grand Lodge. The building was in a V shaped intersection. It would look like the Flat Iron building if it wasn't for the turret shaped front to the wedge shaped building.

The Valet took his keys. The blond's droopy eyes widened. He only saw a bright flaming flash, and
the windows of the grand lodge bursting outwards before everything went dark.

Coughing. Everything hurt and there was an annoying ringing in his ears. Opening his blood shot eyes. The blond man quickly recognised a hospital room around him. A tall man just seemed to appear in front of him, the appropriately named Towers. Dressed in his band new uniform of the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

"Freddie, both Westminster Lodges were completely destroyed. A dozen more across London too." Towers said.

"You know who did it!" the man in the bed snapped.

Giving a slow nod, "Officially we are investigating. Until then you will be under guard. Ta'ta Freddie!" The tall man then headed out.

Smelling omega, Freddie looked around. There was a young police officer by the door, lean faced and blue eyed. Turning his head, to the officer by the window. He was broad, and rather sold. Freddie let out a horsey snorting laugh, "You look like a good fighter, but one ugly bitch."

The officer ignored him. Freddie looked to the junior officer. "Anyone tell you, you look like the king?"

When the junior officer looked at him, Freddie had a dark feeling. The young man's voice was privileged, upper class and made Freddie's feeling worse.

"One must live with one's appearance, alas."

Suddenly Freddie was grabbed. His hands secured to the frame of the bed, by the ugly bitch. The one who looked like the king came over and stuffed something in Freddie's mouth, to gag him. The ugly bitch then drew a gun and pulled back the hammer, while pressing the barrel right between Freddie's eyes.

"Now, be a good little boi and be quiet as a mouse," The bitch said.

The alpha pulled up Freddie's blanket, right over the top of his head. The bed was pulled away from the wall and the back lowered so it was flat. Freddie whimpered, feeling something hard press to the crown of his head. He assumed it was the gun.

With a jerk the bed started moving. Freddie breathed heavily. He tried to move his arms and legs, the soft restraints kept his wrists and ankles secured. At one point it felt like he was in a lift, going down.

They stopped. The sheet covering him was ripped away. The two men untied him. Before Freddie could run he was grabbed by the bitch. The Alpha pushed open the fire exit and the bitch shoved him out, into a damp alley.

"Ta'ta," came the upper class goodbye from the one who looked like the king. The door slammed closed. There was no handle on the outside to open it, and Freddie didn't want to open it even if he could.

Freddie stood, barefoot in the damp alleyway, dressed in nothing but hospital gown. Looking around the alleyway, it was narrow, with red brick walls either side. One end was blocked by a
concrete wall, about twelve foot high. Heading for the open end of the alley, the gown fluttered open showing Freddie's naked arse.

"A, no ya?" came a rough voice, making Freddie jump. He looked at the homeless man sitting amongst the bins. Freddie only had a moment to recognise the watery-grey eyes of the man, before the bum lunged up. Freddie screamed as he was punched hard in his gut. The Prime Minster hissing in his ear, "My son was in the house of my Alpha. The same house your goons went for. The only reason I'm not killing you now, is your night has only just begun."

Another punch, and Freddie couldn't scream again, he had no air in his lungs. He was yanked and thrown out of the alleyway.

The bum came to the open end of the alleyway. Walking hunched over, like a question mark. His trousers held up by a belt made of orange rope. And a dirty denim jacket and a woolly hat. None would recognise the Prime Minister. Before leaving, Mallory waved at him and said, "Ta'ta, Freddie."

The prime minister shuffled away. Every bit the world weary homeless person, to anyone who cared to look. Freddie scrambled to his feet and limped onwards. His gown ripped and dirty, showing off more of his naked body after the fight.

Stumbling on. Crossing the road, a car hit him. Splayed over the Jaguar's wide bonnet, he gazed into the piercing blue eyes of the woman behind the wheel. With a smirk, she shifted into reverse and the car just seemed to vanish from under him it pulled back so fast. Hitting the road, Freddie gasped. The car stopped and the woman stepped out and came over to him. The woman's heavy combat boot crushed his hand against the tarmac.

"Ta'ta, Freddie." She said and ground his hand against the road, like she was trying to snuff out a cigarette. He was still screaming and looking at his mangled fingers, while she got into her car and drove away.

Pushing himself up, Freddie tried to head for safety. Hoping the hospital was safe, if he surrounded himself with enough people. He saw the entrance and hobbled for it, cradling his mangled hand as he went.

Amongst a large group of officers. Freddie saw one standing out, an officer in the black dress-uniform and silver buttons and peeked cap. Freddie hobbled up to the officer, seeing the fairly high rank of Chief Super Intendant, which was why he wasn't in the high visibility vests or had the bulky utility belts of the others.

“People are trying to kill me,” Freddie said.

The officer leaned in, “Oh, no sir. We have all night sir. Ta'ta Freddie!”

Backing away. His eyes fixed on the pale blue, of the handsome Alpha's. Absently noting the smattering of freckles over the Alpha's cute nose and cheeks.

Escaping the hospital lobby, Freddie saw a Black cab coming down the road. Freddie stepped out in front of it, forcing it to stop. He went round to the rear door and got in.

"Where to pal?" came the Scots voice.
"Eh, eh, eh..." Suddenly Freddie thought of one hope. A fixer. Oh so loyal. And hopefully able to protect him. He and gave the address. The cab pulled away.

They pulled to a stop about half an hour later. Freddie told the cabbie to wait for him. Getting out, he climbed the steps of the town house. Cradling his mangled had as he went. Using his good, left hand, he knocked and the door swung open a bit.

He heard the voice. Martin's. Shuffling down the hall, "Martin, it's Freddie. Something's goin..." Freddie came round the door of the lounge. He saw his friend, standing on a chair, with his hands tied, and a rope around his neck and going up to the light flex. Freddie was looking his friend in the eye, when a man came out of the shadows and kicked the chair away. Martin dropped only a few inches, and his whole body started to jerk and struggle as he was strangled.

"Ta'ta, Freddie!" the man said and pulled out a gun. Freddie ran, hearing a thump and the plaster by Freddie's head exploding.

Running back to the cab and jumping in. "Drive! Just Drive!" he screamed at the cabbie.

He was trembling. His heart was racing. And it felt like he was going to be sick. Clear blue eyes, blond and round faced, he realised he knew the man from Martin's house. He was the Bitch's alpha. Freddie looked to the big man driving the cab and gave him an address.

When they arrived. Freddie reached out for the handle, noticing his mangled hand. Reaching out with his left. He didn't want to admit to not being able to pay, so said, "Wait here, I won't be long."

"That's alright pal," the cabbie said. Something in the man's tone made Freddie to look at him. The bearded man had turned and was pointing a gun through the small window used to exchange money. The crack of the gun was so loud in the small space. Freddie felt the rear window shatter, spraying him with glass. He managed to get the door open and jump out.

"Toodle-oo, Freddie!" the cabbie shouted and pulled away.

Breathing deeply, pressing against the wall. He saw the red break lights of the cab come on, then the reverse light. He started hobbling towards the gate of the house.

The cab pulled to a stop and the cabbie leaned out the window, "Sorry, that was meant to be Ta'ta, Freddie, not toodle-oo." In a screech of tires, the black cab floored it and drove away.

Freddie was moving somehow, he felt like curling up in a ball and dying. Just give up. He shuffled up to the gate house and went to the narrow window.

"Frederick Threepwood, 10th Earl of Emsworth, to see Mycroft Holmes." he said to the man on the other side of the glass.

With obvious scepticism, the guard picked up the secure line to the house. As requested the guard said, "If Sir could look directly at that camera."

With a jerking head movement, Freddie managed to tilt his head up and look at the camera.

"Will sir require assistance getting to the house?" the guard asked.

Freddie shook his head, he didn't want anyone near him. The guard pressed the button and the
black gates swung inwards to the property. Freddie shuffled along the drive and up to the dark house, with only a single light illuminating the bay window.

By the time he reached the front door, a tall and thin man was waiting, silhouetted by the hall light. He's knees buckled and the tall man caught him and held up, while helping him into the hall. Mycroft closed the door behind them.

On his knees, Freddie looked up at Mycroft. "He can have whoever he wants, just call off the bitch!"

"Too bloody late," Mycroft hissed. "M is in Iran for the next four days-"

Ding-bong! Both men jumped and looked to the door. Freddie started crying and begging, while clinging to Mycroft's leg. Mycroft's heart raced now too. No one should be at the door, without the gate guard alerting him, unless they were truly exceptional.

Edging closer to the door, Mycroft looked through the peep-hole. Cautiously, Mycroft reached for the handle. Alpha fear hung heavily, as Freddie begged him not to open the door.

Pulling open the door. Like a school boy, hanging his head and glancing up at him, while kicking at the dirt, Alec asked, "Can Freddie come out and play?"

"Please don't send me out!" the man at Mycroft's feet sobbed.

"Please Myc. pretty please!" Alec whined. "I promise I won't kill him."

Freddie pulled himself into a ball and cried.

"What are you going to do when I say no," Mycroft said to the killer on his doorstep. "I doubt M even likes me. So he'll probably forgive you. But I'm not getting out the way!"

Alec kicked the dirt hard and plodded away. "Stupid Mycroft... playing the hero... knows I can't shoot his bony bum... Don't even get to say Ta'ta Freddie... stupid... should have shot his wobbly arse..."

Mycroft closed the door, and sagged in relief. He looked to the crying man on his his floor.

--

Lestrade leaned into Mycroft, "Is it wise having him here?"

There were so few he could call on and they were all here. Sherlock was in the lounge, bored by being called out in the middle of the night. John was patching up the man on the bed.

Mycroft shrugged. Lestrade said, "You know Sherlock's been trailing you?"

Mycroft looked at the man beside him."He's part of this?"

Lestrade nodded, "Every time I reported back to you. Sherlock was always skulking somewhere. Those two you wanted me to tail, they've been as good as gold. Not so much as a parking offence."
That was all Mycroft needed. He hoped the murders could be picked up for something else and they could be exposed by 'accented'. It was just his luck that they were keeping their noses clean.

Seeing John, finishing wrapping the blonde man's hand and start to pack up. Mycroft fully entered the bedroom. John said to the blond on the bed, "You need to go to the hospital."

"No," Freddie whined. He hissed to Mycroft, "The king will get me there."

Lestrade and John wore matching forced smiles. Freddie's claim would be a paranoid delusion, but for the make up of their mutual pack did actually included one King George.

Sherlock swanned in. Demanding to know how much longer it would be. John patted his patient on his shoulder. Mycroft's razor sharp perception saw the miniscule tensing in the doctor as he braced himself. John forced himself to say, "Ta'ta, Freddie."

The blond on the bed started screaming. John walked away, with Sherlock's arm around him. Lestrade pinned the trashiny man to the bed, telling him he was safe over and over.

Mycroft shot after John and Sherlock. He stood on the landing, looking down to his brother and John. "What does 'Ta'ta' mean?"

Sherlock glanced up to his brother, "Just, hammering home, he's not the only one with people everywhere."

--

Freddie woke, warm and comfortable. His whole body throbbed, the worst coming from his right hand. Sliding out of bed, he noticed he was dressed in blue pyjamas. Embroidered with a 'W.T.' on the breast pocket.

Pulling up the hems of his trouser legs, the skin beneath was livid and swollen. He managed to get to his feet and shuffle out of the room and along the corridor, heading for the sound of a TV.

Entering a lounge. The TV on the wall showed the burnt out remains of the Grand Lodge. The one Freddie had been outside when it blew up. He jumped when the image switched to that of the Prime Minister, the man promising to get to the bottom of events. Freddie's gaze was locked on that of the Prime Minister's cold watery-grey eyes.

"Would you kindly come here a moment," Mycroft said, from where he stood by the window.

Shuffling over to the bay window. Freddie searched for what Mycroft was looking at. He saw it in a tree, a strange shape. Leaning forward and squinting his eyes, he made it out a person with dirty blond hair and holding a sniper rifle. A sharp pinging crack sounded. The small pane of glass in front of Freddie went opaque with a spiderweb crack. He started to tremble again.

"Do not fear, Freddie. This glass can stop most sniper rounds available today." Mycroft mused and headed through to the kitchen.

"They're going to kill me," Freddy said between gasping breaths.

"Unlikely. Many, however, have already died," Mycroft said, starting to make something. He fancied kippers, so that is what he would have. He was petty, so felt a bit better because he could
say, "I did tell you. M's greatest skill in honing unstable Alphas. If we can keep you alive until he gets back, M can be reasoned with. It will be a negotiation though. He will only rein in those alphas, as long as you submit to him."

The blond nodded. Mycroft said, "You know the conditions he already wants. It would be... a show of faith if he arrived and they were already fulfilled."

"Then what will I have at the negotiation table, if I've already given the bitch everything he wants?"

Mycroft looked up from the grill, where he was watching the fish to make sure it didn't burn. "Respect, or even just politeness might help. M, or Sir Thomas, not Bitch. Knowing, he doesn't care in the slightest about politics, or diplomacy, so that's why he has to be a bully to get his way."

Freddie watched the thin man in grey suit eat. Then watched Mycroft prepare to go.

"No," Freddie begged. "If you go he'll come inside and get me."

"I can't spend all my time here. So you will have to come if you don't want to stay."

--

In Mycroft's car, Freddie cried quietly. The two steps from the front door to the car taking all the bravery the blond had. Alec not helping by taking a pot shot and making a new hole in the red sandstone of Mycroft's house.

Freddie whining in terror, when he saw the pale building they pulled up at. Mycroft got out first, and even offered his hand to Freddie.

Shown up to E-Branch. Freddie jumping when anyone moved. The office at the front of the building had a big alpha in it, in the absence of the little omega.

"How'do Mycie-boy," Darren said pleasantly. "Ya like my handy work? It's like my grand-da use to say. 'Blow the fecking British bastards ta hell!' And, 'The only time you don't piss on'm, is if they're on fire!' "

"Ah, yes. The unique education only a terrorist organisation can give. I must say. The Grand Lodge was a rather impressive display," Mycroft said and the little Irish omega beamed a bright smile and nodded.

When called into M's office. Darren called to the blond trailing Mycroft, "Ta'ta, Freddie!"

Freddie didn't hear him. He recognised the big Alpha behind the desk.

Mycroft said, "Your Grace, I would appreciate it if you called off Mr Trevelyan."

"Where would the fun in that be?" Daniel smirked.

"I know you're not going for the kill," Mycroft deduced, from all the little near misses and the fact James and Alec would have come in guns blazing if they truly wanted.

"Yet," Daniel corrected. "We aren't going in for the kill, yet. There's still a dozen or so on our hit
list. Freddie, gets to see them all die before it's his turn."

Mycroft's hand was snatched and held like a lifeline by the terrified alpha.

"I would me most appreciative," Mycroft said. "Freddie has agreed to submit to Fal- M."

"So we only have three days to clear up the rest," Daniel mused.

Seeing the big Alpha was in no mood to negotiate. Mycroft headed for the door, dragging the smaller Alpha behind him.

"Toodle-oo, Freddie... BUGGER! Ta-fucking-ta!" Daniel roared.

Passing Darren's desk, the omega laughing, "Ta-fecking-ta?"

--

Arriving at Naval Intelligence. Mycroft was careful to avoid his brother's man, the omega who was head of it. He met his own contact, a Lieutenant Strange. A short, white haired, Alpha.

In Lt. Strange's office Mycroft asked, "I heard a rumour the king was in the country?"

"All hush-hush," said Lt. Strange. Studying the terrified Alpha hanging on Mycroft's coat tails. "He was recalled from HMS Dragon, for a special operation..."

"At the request of MI6?" Mycroft said.

The white haired man shook his head. "On the orders of Captain Sansky and the First Sea Lord herself."

Back room favours. His Alpha's pack was like the Masons in its way.

"Holmes," Strange whispered, concerned about the man in the room with them, still he asked, "Are you, you know, taking over?"

Freddie looked up, "No, I'm still the Grand Wizard."

Mycroft gave a brief, twitch of a smile. Too quick for anyone but Strange to notice. The white haired man gave a subtle nod. The deal done, alliances made and not a word spoken.

Moving through the halls of the Admiralty, they passed a slightly older blond woman. The First Sea Lord nodded a greeting to Mycroft then said, "Ta'ta Freddie!"

The blond man clung to Mycroft and stood, so the taller man was between him and the woman.

--

James sat in his study. The rough wood supported by moving boxes in front of him. His mate's laptop, had a wire going from it to the bulky headphones he wore. Clicking play on the latest audio log from that day, he listened as Mycroft said, "Peter, how are you settling in?"

"Oh, good, Holmes. Good." the aforementioned Peter said.
"So glad to hear," Mycroft said. "I was wondering about your support. You see, Freddie's unwillingness to respect the power of his enemy has caused us great suffering."

"I quite understand Holmes." Peter Towers said. Then dropped his voice, as if afraid to speak even when James thought it was just the two men. "I was told, M was one of the supporters of me getting this job?"

"He wants Inspector Lestrade to be made a Deputy Commissioner," Mycroft said. "Something, I hope you will accommodate. You see, M can be reasonable when we cooperate."

"Yes, yes, Lestrade can have the promotion," Towers said. "I take it, some will be sacrificed so the rest can be saved?"

“I'm glad you're seeing things in a new light, Peter....”

James stopped the playback. He took off the chunky headphones and came out of his study. Going down to the ground floor, he found their guest telling Andrew of his time aboard HMS Dragon.
Like Buses: M in Iran

Chapter Notes

A bit of an homage to 'Yes Minister' in this one and Mr Haig with the dimples. And an under rated TV series The Ambassadors.

Thanks for reading, comment an kudos

As Falkirk had travelled the world he had found something to love or like with each country he went to. In the Muslim nations it was the teas and coffees that appealed most. Sipping the hot amber tea, honey sweetened and intensely fragrant. The scent masking the Alphas for a moment as Falkirk brought the glass to his lips.

Sitting around a low table everyone was picking at the food. Lamb was the main meat available lightly spiced and soft as anything.

The two men who had interfered with the kidnapping were opposite Falkirk. Speaking to them Falkirk spoke loudly as he thanked them, being very open and honest. Only them and another two Falkirk knew of, an Alpha and Beta. They were high ranking members of the Iranian Inelegance Ministry.

“You spoke with the new surveillance team,” the Beta, who was commonly considered to be the second highest ranked member of the Intelligence ministry asked. Parviz Sayyad. He was older, in his fifties, and gaining weight round his middle. He had a pencil thin moustache the width of his top lip. His English was also too good, for having remain in Iran for his entire life as his biography indicated.

“I speak with all the surveillance teams,” Falkirk looked to the two Betas from his home's surveillance team at this. “They should know what would happen if they pick the wrong target, or heaven forbid there's collateral damage, like my son, or other innocent pack members.”

The Alpha, a religious consult held no official power in Iran's Intelligence Ministry. He was loyal to the Supreme Leader and made sure so was everyone else. Tall and thin with a long beard and turban, he had been introduced as Yazdani. He finally spoke “What happened to those who do pick the wrong target?”

The two Betas that had watched Falkirk's house, shuddered at the prospect.

“That is an uncivil conversation for a civil table,” Falkirk informed. When Yazdani was about to ask something more Sayyad muttered something in the native language that Falkirk couldn't understand.

After the meal, in the car on the way back to the British Ambassador's house. The Aid De Camp of the Ambassador was giving a rundown on the subtleties for his boss. After a quick glance to Falkirk Tilly translated what Sayyad had muttered to Yazdani, “He said, 'They went in and have not come out.' there was an inflection of a warning threat to the words.”
Falkirk chuckled before looking at the two men with a pleasant smile. “Of course they came out... at least the liquidised remains came out,” Falkirk said. The Ambassador and Aid De Camp froze looking at Falkirk, he bust out laughing.

When Davis and Tilly joined in Falkirk's joke and started to chuckle. Falkirk added, “There was a big thing at the sewage treatment. London Water found a piece of thigh bone. We had to cover that up, pretty quick!”

Both men fell silent as Falkirk continued to chuckle.

Arriving back at the Ambassador's residence. Tanner had already gone to bed and Falkirk made his excuses. Climbing the stairs Falkirk could hear the hissed argument between the Ambassador and his Aid De Camp. Trying to decide if Falkirk was pulling their leg, or being deadly serious.

During the night a door slamming woke Falkirk. Another argument could be heard this time between the Ambassador and his Wife. Falkirk could hear scathing of words 'Promotion' and 'hell hole' and a final 'job in London' followed by another door slamming.

Looking to the center of the ceiling. “Is it always this, dramatic?” Falkirk said then covered his head with a pillow. Visions played in Falkirk's mind, of a room with a couple of Iranian Inelegance staff listening to the fights, like they were watching a soap opera.

--

At a long conference table Falkirk sat beside the Ambassador, who sat across from the Iranian Foreign Minister. The head of the Army sat across from Falkirk glaring. Fastidiously Falkirk ignored him as if he was a tramp who'd wandered in off the street. In Falkirk's experience the inhabitants of the Middle Eastern, European and Asian continuants especially understood when their presence was being dismissed. He put it down to a cultural understanding on class.

For certain things Falkirk had endless patience. He could look at lines of code for hour after hour. He could study someone else's cyber security to find all the little holes that allowed him access. Practical analysis, Interpretation of events, and deducing possible motives based on actions, Falkirk had learned to have a passion for. Listening to the debriefing of Operatives, picking through fact, truth, absolute truths and outright lies to disguise facts. Falkirk loved it all.

This however was Mycroft's area of expertise. Falkirk's negotiating style was fixed. From superior position beat your opponent into submission, and if possible without humiliating them too much. Falkirk was suppressing the desire to bang his head against the table with this slow, laborious, tedious, crawl, between the Ambassador and Foreign Minister.

After hours the Ambassador and Foreign Minister stood and shook hands.

In the car, the Ambassador and Falkirk were on the back set with Tilly and Tanner facing them.

“I need a bloody drink after that!” Falkirk declared.

“This is a dry country,” The ambassador informed. His Aid De Camp handed across a bottle of water.

Sipping from the bottle Falkirk savoured the burn in his throat. “Nice water,” he said.
“Oh bloody hell!” the Ambassador snapped in an exasperated tone.

“I don't know how you do it. That was enough to make me suicidal, perhaps more homicidal,” Falkirk teased and took another swig of the bottle and handed it back.

“That was wonderful, the play, the subtly. It will stick in that Frog's throat even the Americans,” The Ambassador informed with glee. “Both still want the oil, but the sanctions are difficult in the negotiations. The Americans are very hard line. The French are very sneaky, trading only in secret. And we’ve just given more than the Iranians were expecting, and it was with the whole world watching.”

“A bit of friendly international rivalry?” Falkirk mused.

“You could say that,” Tilly wheezed after having taken a swig himself.

“Oh give me that!” the Ambassador said snatching the bottle. When the bottle was handed to Falkirk he offered it to Tanner who took a small sip for show.

--

Getting ready for bed. Falkirk was thrilled, in one more day and night he'd be back home. The evening meal had passed in utter silence. The Ambassador seemed a bit happier but his wife was having trouble maintaining the facade of the doting or even civil wife in front of the guest.

All in all this was one of the most peaceful trips Falkirk had taken. Due to where he was Falkirk and Tanner were in a complete communications blackout. There were communications but it was considered unsecured so Falkirk could only speak to Andrew with nothing important being said. Falkirk remembered something about a surprise and fireworks, before Andrew was hushed by James.

Climbing into bed Falkirk found himself at a loss. There were no reports or anything else to read. He had not bought a book in years. So here Falkirk was awake with nothing to do. Getting back up Falkirk tied his dressing gown and headed down stairs.

Finding the Ambassador working in the Dining room Falkirk tapped on the door frame.

“What?” the ambassador said looking to his guest. Inviting Falkirk to sit the Ambassador offered Falkirk an Apple juice.

Sitting down Falkirk accepted the juice and wheezed through the burn, “Good Apple juice.”

The Ambassador continued to work as they chatted. After a while the ambassador pushed back what he was reading and looked at Falkirk. Under the gaze of the Ambassador Falkirk straightened his back and crossed his legs. In a posture of M, controlled and observant.

The gesture just seemed to focus the Ambassador's attention.

“I can't help feeling you are familiar some how?” the Ambassador mused. Looking to Falkirk's interlaced fingers resting on his crossed over thigh. “Mannerisms! A general disregard for those you wish to be beneath you. When POD told us of your arrival he extended some choice stories.”

The Ambassador had to explain POD(Prince Of Darkness) was the Whitehall contact for the
Falkirk suspected there was more to come so patiently waited.

“When Neil Tilly arrived he was caught in a honey trap. Some waitress. He supplied the Iranians with nonsense for months before they cottoned on he was playing with them. The waitress was 'arrested', they threatened to behead her, and Neil let them. He didn't care, nor did you. No other attempts have been made to turn him,” The Ambassador informed

“I have seen that look you had in the car, Neil wears it all the time. You flushed those men down the toilet and you wanted it known,” The Ambassador stated pointing to the ceiling of the room, indicating the men likely to be listening in.

Falkirk asked, “Are you asking about how far I will go? Or my similarity to your friend?”

When The Ambassador answered, he was asking about the similarity with his friend. Falkirk added, “I cannot discuss this without Neil Tilly present. It's a personal matter to him and is for him to decide what he wants to know.”

The next morning the Ambassador asked Falkirk to join him at the embassy. Tilly was waiting for them and the Ambassador tapped his ear. The signal must have been a common one as they both headed in the same direction in silence.

Recognising a secure room. Falkirk stepped into the windowless concrete box. A small table and a screen at the end indicating it was also used for secure communications. Secure being a relative term when they were in one of the most hostile countries on Earth.

Falkirk mentally prepared. He'd had this conversation a few times now. Setting the context of the Ambassador's suspicion it became clear the two men had been arguing about the subject before hand. Falkirk gave the option to drop the subject but Tilly, although not liking it wanted to know. Tilly confirmed his birth certificate listed his father as unknown.

Falkirk stated, “The real name of your Father was Siger Holmes, he used the professional name Percy Alleline.”

The Ambassador asked “As in Mycroft Holmes?” while Tilly asked “Head of MI5?”

Instead of answering Falkirk said, “My name is Falkirk Bond nee.... Holmes.”

“As in Mycroft Holmes?” the Ambassador said, like he was a stuck record.

“We're brothers?” Tilly asked, doubtfully.

Nodding, Falkirk then described his father's history. How Falkirk had found quite few illegitimate children of his father's, and even how his own Papa was a servant in the Holmes household.

“Three brothers, and two sisters were murdered by a Sebastian Moran, many more were injured. Moran's omega was one of our brothers, like you abandoned by our father. Moran had a vendetta against every Holmes, after his omega's death.” Falkirk informed. He explained everything Tilly wanted to know about the events of Moran. Tilly confirmed the hit and run he had suffered during
that time was Moran. Falkirk said, “You were lucky to have survived.”

Tilly exited the room with the Ambassador looking quite concerned. “You've been friends for a while?” Falkirk asked.

“Since Cambridge. Deep down, he's always wondered about his father,” the Ambassador supplied and followed his friend out.

--

The reception hall was an opulent cavernous space of marble and pillars under a domed ceiling. The Iranian Foreign Minster presented Falkirk with a selection of tea leaves along with a traditional tea service. Brief pleasantries were exchanged and everyone split up to mingle.

The French Ambassador approached Falkirk first and flirted shamelessly. Not having experienced anything so obvious since his early twenties. Giving a false smile Falkirk made his excuses and moved on, very quickly.

“Expertly handled,” An American voice said.

“Your Excellency?” Falkirk greeted Petra the American Ambassador. An imposing African American Alpha Female with an intelligent commanding demeanour, she took Falkirk's arm.

“I'm most surprised, and curious to your presence here?” Petra asked. She was trying the Alpha angle, dominant, and commanding, while speaking down to him.

“Just extending the thanks of myself and a few others,” Falkirk said and could see Petra wasn't buying it. The ambassador attempted a few more forceful attempts to get some more information out of Falkirk.

The moment the slightly taller woman leaned into him, Falkirk snapped. Hissing, “I am sure Director Ryan and Secretary Wade have briefed you. You technique his as obvious and haphazard as The Perverted Frog!”

Falkirk yanked his arm free of the stunned Alpha and walked off.

Approaching the member of the Intelligence Ministry, Falkirk had met a few nights ago. He seemed apart from the crowd, even the Iranians present were wary of him.

“Mr Sayyad?” Falkirk said coming up to the Beta.

“M?” Sayyad returned.

“My motives are true. If my surveillance team broke cover I would be furious and their time with MI6 would be over. However, your men helped save my son so I felt gratitude towards them,” Falkirk explained.

“You are not concerned you may set a precedent? Save your child and earn your favour,” Sayyad asked.

Falkirk gave a nasty smile. “We have noticed a nice old couple have just taken in there nephew. A fit young man, coming to study in England. We also know the unit he trained with arrived in
London as well. They however, have taken a flat, pay rent by cash and are trying to arm themselves. I'm just deciding how to best to deal with this terrorist threat. Something public to demonstrate I am fully aware of them and their master's plans, perhaps?"

Sayyad nodded in understanding before dropping his gaze and gestured to a group. “I believe your associate has had a call from Mr Haig in the communications room,” Sayyad informed

It took Falkirk a moment to see what Sayyad was pointing out. Amongst the group of mingling guests was Tilly talking to someone. Every so often he would make a flouncy, overly effeminate gesture with his hand. The same one Mycroft, Sherlock, Shane and Falkirk himself made when they were completely rat arsed.

Excusing himself Falkirk caught the British Ambassador and Tanner's eye. They approached the inebriated Alpha. Tilly's voice and eyes were sharp enough to fool most people. Only the three of them and a high ranking member of the Iranian Intelligence noticed Tilly was drunk as a skunk. Falkirk took the man's arm as Tanner cleared a path. The Ambassador fell behind, to cover their exit. The Ambassador's car pulled up and Falkirk bundled the man inside with Tanner following.

“Keep him quiet,” Falkirk ordered Tanner and closing the door.

Intercepting the Ambassador when he followed a few moments later. Falkirk explained Tanner would take care of Tilly. Adding, “They're going to your house by the way.”

The Ambassador nodded “We had better get back,” the Ambassador said.

“Yes, you sill have to lord it over that French twat and I want another go at Petra,” Falkirk said.

Just before they returned to the reception room Falkirk asked, “What dose Mr Haig and communication rooms have to do with anything?”.

The Ambassador stopped and looked to Falkirk “That's one of the old euphemism for dry countries. A communications room is set up and throughout the evening messages come through. 'Captain Morgan to speak with you', 'Call from Jack Daniels', 'John Walker from the Scottish Office, you know old Johnny' and of coarse your 'Mr Haig'. The locals were completely fooled, why?“

“So it's a colloquialism restricted to the British Foreign office?” Falkirk mused.

“From the eighties, why?” the ambassador reiterated.

“Just a hunch,” Falkirk responded and entered the marbled and pillared reception room. Indicating the French ambassador “Go have fun, We are all here on a step towards diplomacy and it's all British!”

Despite what he said. Petra was not Falkirk's target. His true target, Sayyad, was nowhere to be seen and Falkirk cursed himself. He hadn't brought his glasses with HUD and camera becuse the wireless interface could be hacked and Falkirk didn't want to risk them. Now he was regretting the decision because there was no decent images of Sayyad and Falkirk was getting the impression there was more to him than what was known.
At the end of the evening. As they waited for the official car. The Ambassador's wife said, “What happened to Neil?”

“He wasn't feeling well so I told the driver to take him home, our home,” The Ambassador informed and earned a sudden glare from his wife.

Arriving at the ambassador's residence Jennifer walked in and breezed passed the open archway to the lounge. Going up stairs, a slamming door resonated off the tiled walls a moment later.

“You're sleeping on the couch!” Tilly sing-songed from the lounge.

“You bloody fool how could you pitch up, drunk?” the Ambassador hissed.

“I'm not,” Tilly started before three variations of 'yes you are' sounded. Tanner was forcing another glass of water onto the inebriated man ignoring his growled protests.

Sitting on the couch Falkirk watched the three other men bicker. Like Mycroft, Sherlock and apparently himself there was a switch. They could maintain an appearance of sobriety until a switch was turned at which point they acted like any obviously drunk person. Tilly was showing the extent of his inebriation, swaying, slurring and hiccuping.

The moment Tilly switched from his anger Falkirk placed a hand on his shoulder pulling the Alpha down. With Tilly's head resting in his lap Falkirk stroked along the hair line, focusing on keeping his own scent calm. The Ambassador tucked a blanket around his friend and pulled back with Tanner following.

“The next time you're in London you are welcome to come see me,” Falkirk said in hushed tones. The omega's calming pheromones were working, all Falkirk got was a groan that could have been anything from a positive response to what Falkirk thought was actually a 'fuck you'

The Alpha took a long, slow, deep breath then another. Slowly Tilly's breathing evened out as he fell into a deep slumber. Carefully Falkirk moved out from underneath the Alpha and resting his head on a cushion. With a last caress to the man's hair Falkirk went to the kitchen where he found Tanner and the Ambassador.

“Perhaps it would have been better if Neil didn't know,” The Ambassador was saying to Tanner as Falkirk entered silently.

“Well he knows who his father is so Neil must deal with it, or ignore it.” Falkirk stated startling the two men. The Ambassador tugged his ear and indicated the room. Shaking his head “I would be more surprised if Neil's lineage wasn't known. He may not remember, but I invited Neil to come see me if he's in London.”

--

At breakfast Nile was at the table with his head resting on the cool surface. “I could murder a bacon buttie,” he lamented into the the glass surface.

“Yes, so inconsiderate of a religion to ban Pork for thousands of years just to upset a man with a hang over,” The ambassador said.
“The locals don't drink so no need for a hangover cure,” Falkirk added.

Arriving at the airport. A minor Iranian official had been drafted in to see Falkirk off. Sitting down Falkirk pulled the water bottle Tilly had provided him. Taking a swig Falkirk then closed his eyes using meditation and calming techniques he had been taught over the years. Taking a few more swigs of what he could now call vodka seeing as he was outside of Iran. Absently he noticed, it never felt like they stopped accelerating. Nor was there a refuelling stop.

Falkirk stepped out into the drizzle of the London afternoon. His head a little sore, after the vodka and no sleep. His car waiting for him on the tarmac was a welcome sight.

Coming from the terminal, Falkirk noticed another car. Unmarked, it only had a single light stuck on the roof, and the flashing lights behind the grill, to identify it as a Police car.

Rey, Falkirk's bodyguard whistled. The expanded team that accompanied Falkirk to Iran, all heavily armed men took up position and pulled out their pistols.

The car skidded to a stop. Falkirk recognised the man behind the wheel. Lestrade was now dressed in the formal black dress uniform befitting his new rank. Lestrade was careful as he opened the door.

“M?” Lestrade said. His eyes darting from gun to gun, aimed at him “Mycroft asked me, if I could come get you.”

“Where do you wish to meet?” Falkirk said.

Lestrade gulped. “Mycroft's a bit worried about security. He said, he'd text me the location once I picked you up.”

“So I'm just to get in your car and go... wherever?”

Lestrade nodded. “Please?”

Falkirk moved away from his car, heading for Lestrade's. “Rey, up front with the Assistant Commissioner. Tanner with me.”

Lestrade drove them to the security gate and out, he received a text. He floored it, weaving and snaking through the traffic.
Mycroft watched as the eyesore was assembled. His assistant, Rook, was outside inspecting the marquee, being set up at the front of Mycroft's house. A great white tent that would sit flush to the front of the building and extended to the far side of the dive way. It would allow a car in at one end and out the other. Mr Trevelyan was less obvious but was out there still, and often took a shot or two when he spotted Freddie.

A shuddering breath made Mycroft looked to the man sitting and cowering in a wing back chair. Mycroft said, “Twelve hours until M returns, Freddie.”

“Twelve hours, they will get desperate. They'll get me! They'll come inside! They...”

A car came up the drive. Because of the marquee it had to stop at the bend where the drive looped to pass in front of the house. Mycroft rolled his eyes, when he saw the tall man step out of the back seat, brush imaginary lint form his shoulder(just so he could stroke his rank), then pull on his cap over his silver hair.

'A posturing peacock!' Mycroft thought.

Peter Towers, Mycroft would bet he'd barely walked a single step of a beat in his fast track career. Which was why he didn't walk like Lestrade. Towers strutted. Lestrade meandered, a plodding gate and often rocked on his heels to stop them getting overly sore.

Shaking his head, Lestrade unlike John never needed to say he wasn't gay, because he wasn't. A line of disastrous woman proved it, and every time Lestrade fell for a new woman. Mycroft needed to shake his head again, to stop himself from thinking about the one who got away.

Going to the front door. Mycroft pulled it open, to a glaring Commissioner Towers. The silver haired man trying desperately to brush off some real masonry dust that had fallen on him.

“Oh, dear. Your new uniform is dirty,” Mycroft observed. “Can't be helped. Security must, after all.”

Towers smiled, falsely. “Quite! Peter Lewis and Kyle Reeves, are threatening to talk.”

Mycroft smiled evilly, “Let them.”

Freddie, hiding in the lounge doorway and out of view of the open front door, gasped. Towers stiffened. Mycroft added, “The more they 'sing', the more we can hand over to appease M.”

“And the less to oppose you! You want to be the Grand High Wizard!”

“Come now Freddie, I may be offended by your rudeness soon... and ask you to leave my home.” Mycroft spared the short blond man a glance. Freddie had slumped and cowered in a small ball on the floor.

Mycroft made sure the Commissioner would be here tonight. Then dismissed the man in charge of the Met like he was an annoying servant.

--

Mycroft took one of the smoked salmon canapés off the tray. Savouring the hint of apple that
infused the fish. Then took a sip of a truly exquisite sherry, very tart almost pulling his cheeks in it was so dry. Just the way he liked it.

He looked around his guests. They were all on edge. The heavy curtains blocked all the windows, so Alec couldn't interrupt. Some carried injuries, just a warning to the less involve of events. Others were noticeable by their absence. Hume, one of the highest ranked 'fixers' of the Masons was not here, nor had his death been reported. The ex-SAS officer might be giving MI6's best a run for their money.

Mycroft frowned. Something firing in his mind. The ones who'd been intimidated. The ones killed. It was all too precise.

'Is there a spy?' Mycroft wondered. The injuries and deaths were not as random as he first thought. Really the only one still alive who was involved with both Laws and the attempted kidnapping was Freddie, and possibly the Mason's chief fixer, Hume.

A man in the livery of a butler came up to Mycroft to tell him, “The guard house, sir. An unexpected visitor, The King.”

Mycroft went to his study. Going behind the large oak desk, he logged into his computer and pulled up the guard house's CCTV feed showing the waiting saloon with tinted windows. He saw the image of a man in the front seat, unknown and wearing slightly tinted aviator glasses. It was the rear window that had been pulled up by the guard house, and it showed the young man who ruled the country.

Mycroft drummed his fingers a moment. A horrible thought dawning on him, that this had just become ground zero. The place James and the rest avoided, so the enemy would gather here en mass. But would they involve the king?

'The king is an arrogant young Alpha, he'd love to be involved,' Mycroft thought.

Pulling out his phone. He checked the time. Half an hour, he'd pulled strings so his brother would arrive earlier than expected. He sent a message, for Lestrade to meet Falkirk's inbound plane.

Hoping he could stall his pack. Mycroft pressed the intercom button and said, “Allow His Majesty through.”

He watched the gate pull back and the car come up the drive way. Standing, Mycroft went through to the lounge. “GENTLEMEN! Please make your way to the dining room.”

The group of men passed Mycroft and went to the next room along. Looking in, he saw Freddie had taken the head of the table, hoping to maintain his position as Grand High Wizard. Mycroft then went to the front door and pulled it open. The car stopped, inside the tented corridor.

Mycroft's eyes landed on the bodyguard getting out. Something familiar. It was only when he caught the scent of omega from the bodyguard he recognised 009.

G came up to him. Mycroft gave a formal bobbing nod. “Your Majesty?”

“Hello, Mycroft,” the young blond man said with an easy smile. “I thought I'd come see one of these meetings for myself. You know, I heard a legend. Supposedly Jack the Riper was a Mason, covering up that the prince illegally married a prostitute. Is it true?”

Mycroft offered a forced smile, “Fiction your majesty, I assure you. For the film industry if memory serves.”
One of the king’s bodyguards laughed. Addison said, “No greater lie, than convincing someone the truth is not the truth.”

Mycroft rolled his eyes and stood aside. Leading his self invited guests into the dinning room. Freddie was sitting at the top of the table, with the others down the sides. Even with the chaos, all wore the gold embroidered aprons and gloves with the ruler and calliper motif of the Masons.

Freddie, parallelised with fear. His eyes fixed in the three new arrivals. Suddenly the little power play of having Mycroft at the far end of the table didn't feel such a good idea.

As Mycroft invited the king to sit. He noticed the two Double Os walking up the sides of the table. To each man in turn, the Double Os loop a piece of wire over the head of the guest and the other end hooked onto the chair.

An old, silver haired man turned to see what the omega had hung round him and attached to a spar of the back rest to his chair. Touching the thing that looked like a Christmas decoration.

“Carter,” Mycroft said cautiously. “I would advise against playing with that.”

“Yeah,” Maloney said. “We don't want any accidental BOOMS!” He, the king and other Double O giggled a bit.

Mycroft slid into his chair, beside the king. “Am I to be bobby trapped as well?”

“Oh, no Myc.” Alec purred coming in from the kitchen door. The butt of a long sniper rifle perched casually on his hip and pointing up.

“You're pack, the Laddie would never forgive us.” Daniel said, following his mate in, with John bringing up the rear.

From the main door at the bottom of the long room, James came in followed by Selene, Mallory and Sherlock. The Double O was a little bloodied and bruised, “I remember the SAS being tough bastards! That one was just bloody annoying.”

Alec laughing said, “You mean he was just like you, James? Didn't have the good grace to lay down and die?”

Passing an empty place, James saw the place card. “Hay there's a difference. I'm the hero. Ah well, Hume is now inhumed,” James said picking up the place card and flicking it across the room.

Mycroft looked around. Like the other Masons were. Alec was standing behind Freddie with the ridiculously long rifle held perfectly. The butt flush to Alec's shoulder and the tip of the thick barrel an inch from the back of the terrified blond man's head.

Feeling the silent buzz of his phone. Mycroft hoped it was Lestrade. Subtly slipping his hand into his pocket he sent a message for Lestrade to hurry.

“Prime Minister?” pleaded one of the Masons. “We served together. I got you into the Masons. I was the one to get you into the party. I've stood by you. What have I done?”

Mallory had a cold and dark look in his eyes, as he studied the revolver he carried. He aimed the magnum at the man who spoke, “Did Freddie not tell you? My son was in the house you attacked?”

The man shook his head and tried to argue his innocence. Another Mason called him a liar and pleaded, willing to betray everyone in exchange for his own life.
Mycroft heard it, the buzz of the intercom. He was sure the staff had been subdued in the house, but the gate guards might have been overlooked if they were buzzing the intercom.

Sherlock's razor sharp perception caught the flicker of relief that passed over his brother's face. “We should hurry!”

“Why?” Alec said. “I think Lord Snooty's about to wet himself here.”

Mycroft spoke, cool and controlled. “I have taken over the Masons. The killers of Laws have been arrested. MI6 still has the three who attacked M's house,”

“Do we still have them?” Daniel looked around curiously. “I thought we... you know, flushed them.”

“Inconsequential,” Mycroft said.

Sherlock snapped, “We need to hurry!”

“WHAT THE BLOODY HELL IS GOING ONE HERE!”

Everyone started. Alec jumped so much, his finger squeezed the trigger and the sniper fired. Freddie screamed as the bullet went through the table and into his leg. “Jesus Christ! So sorry that really wasn't meant to happen.”

“Bullshit Trevelyan! You're a piss poor liar.” Falkirk snapped. “John, see to whoever that is!”

Everyone slowly turned to the harassed, grumpy and slightly hung over looking omega in the doorway. Falkirk blinked his bloodshot eyes a few times. He then walked to the end of the table, where there was a free spot. Falkirk sank into the carver chair, at the foot of the table with a groan. John and Lestrade were taking the injured man through to the next room.

Falkirk seeing it was a perfect shot to the man's kneecap. Suspecting Alec was adding to the running joke in their pack, about the number of times Falkirk had kneecapped someone.

“M,” Mycroft called. “I've taken over the Masons. We've arrested...”

Falkirk waved at his brother to shush him. He looked over the table, “Is Mycroft your leader?”

There was unanimous agreement, that Mycroft was now the Grand Wizard.

“Grand Wizard?” Falkirk said. “Wait, no never mind. I'm not interested in what silly titles you use. Just so long as you know if you piss me off again, I will let that lot loose again.”

Again the group nodded frantically. Falkirk sighed, realising they were agreeing at the end of a gun barrel, “What the hell are those things around their necks?”

Getting, 'guilty' wasn't the word, 'embarrassed' maybe. Falkirk shook his head, he wasn't in the mood, “Get them off... And no Double Entendre jokes!”

Which was the point he noticed the two not a part of his pack. “Double O Five and Nine, I shall be having words when I feel up to it.”

“Yes, M,” Maloney said.

Addison looked and him, putting his foot down. “Hay, Darren made me god father. I've a right to kick the shit out of anyone who goes after Colum.”
Falkirk just waved his hand, to get them moving. Then noticed the bashful young man sitting to his right. “Oh, yes, they'd just get you involved.”

Alec teased, “Just wait until you see the new skills we taught the kids.” He quickly ducked his head and hid behind Daniel, when Falkirk looked at him.

'Contrite!' Falkirk realised that is what his pack was going for. When they'd taken the bombs off the masons, Falkirk pointed to the door, “Out!”

“You to, Your Majesty,” Falkirk added. The young man trying to avoid his notice darted out of his chair and the room. The king slamming the door behind him.

Falkirk looked round the room. “So this war is over?”

“Yes,” Mycroft assured and the others parroted him.

One man put up his hand and asked, “This has become, unacceptably public.”

Falkirk smirked, while leaning his elbows on the table and tenting his fingers. Every Alpha and beta in the room cowered. He said, “I have the perfect scapegoats.”

Falkirk stood, wishing everyone goodbye. He then glanced at Mycroft, “Do come for dinner.”

“As my Alpha commands.” Mycroft then stood, going to the head of the table. By the time he took his chair, his brother had gone. What was now the council of the Masons let out a breath. Suddenly he jumped up and went to the door, flinging it open. “Oh dear, they took Freddie.”

The masons cowered and whispered to each other in fear. While Mycroft was still at the door, he saw Tanner coming in with his travel bag. Thoughts of Freddie deserted him.

Having heard him, Tanner said, “I helped Greg put someone is his car, to take him to the hospital I think.”

“Welcome home,” Mycroft said with a smile then turned back to the men at his dinning room table. “So, first business, a new Grand Lodge.”

“We don't have a treasurer.” said one of the men.

“First business, everyone's new positions. Who wishes to be treasurer?” Mycroft amended and sat at the head of the table.

—

'Home!' Falkirk thought as the car turned onto Cherry Tree Lane. Falkirk pulled out his pocket watch, it didn't look like others were back yet.

Mr Hudson pulled open the door, the moment Falkirk's foot touched the top step. Hearing an all out riot, Falkirk quickly went for the lounge door.

“I swear to fecking god, Andrew, if you don't wind your neck in I'll knock you into next Tuesday,” Darren said.

Keading said, “You shouldn't curse! and threats?”

“Nothing wrong with fecking threats, ANDREW PUT YULIAN DOWN!”
Falkirk peeked round the door. Apparently Keading alone could maintain order. But the children had learned a valuable lesson, divide and conquer.

“He kicked me!” Andrew defended.

“Did no’,” the slightly younger Yulian whined.

Cody let out a sudden scream. Darren and Keading rounded on him at the noise, and saw Colum with the older boy's arm between his teeth.

With the adult's distracted, Andrew pounced on Yulian. The two rolling, kneeing and slapping at each other.

The baby monitor started to shriek the wail of a very unhappy girl.

Keading shot passed him as Falkirk went up to his son, who was pinning his younger cousin and making him cry. “Andrew Frederick Bond!” he whispered. Andrew froze. “Get off Yulian. Sit on the couch and do not move!”

Andrew moved like lightning. Falkirk grabbed Yulian when he tried to follow the older boy, with fists raised. Falkirk wound and arm around the boy's middle and stood, with Yulian thrashing and growling out his rage. Darren had resorted to the same tactic with his own son. Keading had gone to deal with Michelle. Cody glowered and rubbed his arm.

“He bites more than an omega!” Darren complained, sitting with his son in his lap, whether Colum wanted to or not.

Falkirk called his brother over and looked at the crescent mark on the tanned skin. The skin wasn't broken. He teased Darren, “Looks like bond mark to to me.”

“Not an omega,” Cody said rather unemotionally, with a dangerous look to the boy who bit him.

“I'm just teasing Darren,” Falkirk assured his brother. He then nuzzled his Cody, “You did the right thing by not hitting back, Cody. Colum is still little and learning things like not to biting.”

“Daddy's home!” James shouted.

Falkirk glared at his son, to stop him running off. Falkirk handed over the still squirming Yulian to his own dad, Daniel taking firm hold of the boy.

G sat beside Andrew on the couch. Whispering, “Looks like you're in as much trouble as me.”

“A yes,” Falkirk said, having heard G. “Good work all of you. It appears everything is settling down.”
Mycroft’s town car pulled to a stop outside his brother’s house. Reaching the door, Hudson pulled the it open for Tanner and Mycroft.

Falkirk welcomed them, asking Mycroft to join him in the Library. Tanner heading to the source of the noise in the lounge.

Mycroft closed the library door behind him, “Should I be concerned?”

Sitting on the Mackintosh settee, and patting the cushion beside him. Falkirk said, “Mycroft, do you know what an intervention is?”

Looking around the empty room, “Isn’t there meant to be more people than this?”

“I did think about including the others, but the more I read up on interventions the more bullying they sounded. So just you and I.” Falkirk said and cautiously Mycroft sat down beside him. “Mycroft are you alone?”

“Lestrade is my friend, and Tanner,”

“Do you trust in them though?” When Mycroft refused to answer, Falkirk looked to the snow flake digram above the fireplace. “I fear a random mugger rather the people I deal with. For only a random mugger doesn’t know about that. I see Friends and Family drawn into a pack. I see Kings and Prostitutes, Warriors and Peacemakers, Police and Civilians, Prime Ministers and Terrorists, Spies and Free Lancers. An Enemy of that pack should fear, no matter who they are, because they may win but what will be the cost?”

“They rally to you,” Mycroft said.

A Double O stepped out onto the field by themselves but were never alone. They were part of MI6 with a whole institution behind them, preparing them and helping them. Mycroft had the mentality of solitude even as part of a pack. He existed himself, no backup, no support so it didn't surprise Falkirk his brother tried to handle all situations himself.

“I would rally to anyone, everyone represented there. And Mycroft have you figured it out yet?” Falkirk said.

“That the attacks weren't random. You drew up a hit...” Mycroft trailed off as his brother shook his head.

Falkirk got up to go to his desk and pulled out a pen drive which he handed it to his brother. “The
Mycroft rallied to you, without my order, without my direction, without me. Without me, Daniel and James conspired to bug your phone. James monitored it, Daniel said Stark produces nothing but an expensive paperweight, and recommends you get the Carrington model. This pen drive is all I was given. Sherlock has been your constant shadow. Mallory has been spying on the Masons as best as he can. At no time Mycroft, were you alone. Truth be told Lestrade was forgotten about by the others, yet he was with you too.”

Mycroft clammed up after being told he was bugged. Falkirk wondered if he was having trouble processing his emotions though. Sitting by is brother again, Falkirk said, “Now the next point. Let's use me as an example. A little over six months ago, I was forcibly bound to an Alpha, who I then ripped the throat out of. Do you think I got over than all by myself?”

“No!” Mycroft said sharply.

“That's right, no. I saw two doctors. I still see one. I even have something to tell him. The American Ambassador came into my personal space and I nearly scratched her eyes out. A strange, Alpha woman, so close, trying to dominate me. She acted no worse than other Alphas towards an omega. But I had visions of her lying in pool of her own blood if she tried to hang on to me.” Falkirk controlled his emotions again, before asking, “What about John, does he deal with his emotions alone?”

“No, he sees someone!”

Falkirk nodded. “Seeing war, friends killed, being shot, leaves scars and I'm not talking physical ones. James has to talk or he doesn't get back out into the field. Selene, Alec, Daniel, Addison, Maloney, they all speak or have spoken to someone.”

Seeing Mycroft getting to the point of ignoring him. Falkirk said, “One more thing and I will stop. If you had a brain tumour would you try to deal with it yourself? No. When I saw how unwell you looked I gave Tanner some literature, because I hoped you would listen to him. The doctors are the best, and all have been vetted to my standards. Please consider them... for me... your little bother.”

Mycroft glanced at the puppy dog eyes Falkirk was sending him. He sighed and nodded.

“Okay-”

“You promised the talk was over,” Mycroft interrupted.

“That talk yes. I've got a plan for Freddie, and I'm willing to go easy on him if he cooperates.”

Mycroft perked at the business talk. That was so much better than emotions.

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After the last guests had gone. And both the king and Andrew had gone up to bed, Falkirk and James decided it was time for their own bed. Walking up the sitars, Falkirk leaned against his Alpha's strong chest.

“So James, fireworks and surprises, is that a euphemism?”

“Absolutely not.” James said. Falkirk didn't believe him. “How could you think we'd involve the kids in terrorist activity!”
“Because I know you,” Falkirk said kissing James' jaw.

James huffed and looked away, “I try to arrange a surprise and I get met with baseless, unsubstantiated...eh...”

“False?”

“False... fictitious, malicious, fastidious ,”

Falkirk laughed. Sitting on the bed and letting James push him back. He whispered in his Alpha's ear, “You've run out of synonyms.”

Kissing his mate. When he knew the omega needed to breath, James let up. He looked into the glazed eyes, loving the way his mate's wild hair stuck out in all directions. Gently he plucked Falkirk's glasses from the nose and dropped them on the bedside cabinet.

“I have a surprise for you at the weekend,” James whispered, laying kisses on his mate's neck and gently biting the almost permanent bruise that his mate had as a bound omega. He only got a groan in response from the omega pushing up against him.

--

In the conference room of MI6. Darren bounced excitedly, he was not part of these meeting usually. Around the table was James, Daniel, Alec, Addison and Maloney. Invited too was an uncomfortable looking Lestrade, tugging at his new dress uniform.

Falkirk stood at the end of the table, where the wall behind him showed surveillance images. Under the label, 'The First Cell', There were head shots of a dozen men or women. Pictures of a corner shop, where the cell were operating from the flat above. For the Second Cell, there was a picture of a white and expensive town house. The pictures of the people operating out of the second premises, were of an older couple and their supposed nephew.

“Gentlemen. These individuals are planning an attack on Andrew Bond. They are concerned by the heroic actions of the Iranians, and now want to be the heroes too.” Falkirk called. “I need you to work your magic on the flat. Same MO as the Mason lodges.”

Maloney said, “How would we know the MO used on the mason lodges?”

“Yes, yes,” Falkirk said with resignation. “Your innocence is noted now and for all time. Darren!”

“One IRA Special, no probs M,” the Irish omega said with a wide smile. “How big a bang?”

“Just the flat. Surveillance says Thursday, 05:00 hours is the best time to minimise casualties. Double O Seven, you will go in first to make sure they're all dead before Darren plants the bomb. I don't want bullets wounds or other injury that would indicate they died of something other than being blown to bits. Double O Five will be with you, for Darren's protection and back up,” Falkirk said. “Lestrade, a dawn raid on Number 15 Cherry Tree Lane, please. MI6 suspects them of terrorist activity, so that should cover the paperwork. Maloney will be on hand, Mr Able is not someone to be messed with. I think he'll go quietly but you never know.”

The group around the table acknowledged.
“Interview terminated, 16:13,” the plain clothed, CID officer said and stopped the camera.

Freddie was helped to his feet. His lawyer lying to him, saying he'd be fine. The blond, dressed in scrubs was walked through the police station. Dragging his injured leg in its brace. His cell door was opened and two, dressed in good suits were waiting for him. Mycroft and the blond who wanted to kill him.

“Please sit, Freddie,” Mycroft said, indicating the spot between him and Alec. “My friend wishes to discuss something with you.”

With a loud bang the door slammed closed behind Freddie. He was trapped.

Alec leaned forward, because Freddie didn't move. “I'm here to trade with you. You admit to being part of the kidnapping attempt on M's son. But! You tell the police it was a guy called 'Joe Able' who organised it. That he wanted to interfere with the Election. Wanted the hit on David Laws. Lay everything on Joe Able.”

“Freddie,” Mycroft said. “You can do your part for the Masons still. Joe Able. Pin everything on him. I will ensure you get the shortest possible sentence. You will spend it at HMP Frays. You remember Irons, he's there, you went to School together. It's a country club. Squash. Pool. Like Boarding School, this time without vile matron,” Mycroft laughed, the prison was for the very rich when they accidentally buried a company, or lost a few billion pounds or dollars.

“I just say this Joe Able was the mastermind?” Freddie said cautiously.

Alec nodded. “He will carry the can for all your actions and ours.”

“And you won't shoot me?”

Alec crossed his heart. “M says, as long as you blame Joe Able. You're safe.”

“Agreed,” Freddie said. Both Mycroft and Alec shook his hand. The two other men left.

When he was called to continue his interview. Freddie sat down in the small room. Only his lawyer was here and he showed Freddie a letter, it was from M, laying out the deal. He nodded to his lawyer and the man put it in his brief case.

When the two police officers entered and started the interview. Freddie headed off the first question, “I would like to confess my part in events. But you are wrong, I wasn't the mastermind. Joe Able was...”

Freddie noticed as he spoke. Neither officer asked something inconvenient like who Joe Able was, where he lived, or how they met. Given what he went through, he had a twinge of sympathy for whoever Joe Able was. But not enough to stop him throwing Joe Able under the bus to save himself.

--

Falkirk jumped awake, when his bedroom door battered open.
“Papa, papa, there's police outside!” Andrew shouted jumping up on the bed, to make sure his papa was awake. Then ran to the window and ripped open the curtain. “Look! It's Nathan!”

Noticing James wasn't back. Falkirk pulled on his dressing gown. He came up to the window and looked out. Seeing the police vans and officers dressed in their black tactical gear and helmets. Maloney was standing out the way, prepared if Joe Able decided to be difficult.

Falkirk headed for the door. He grabbed Andrew's hand and held it tight. A sleep mussed up G joining them, unable to sleep through an excited shouting Andrew. They stood on the front steps of the house, like many of the other neighbours. They watched as the police battered down the door of the house, several doors down.

Falkirk waved as the old couple and their nephew were arrested. The young man glaring at him as he was bundled into the police van and driven away. Falkirk was right, doing this publicly meant Able and his handlers would be too scared to dig themselves a deeper hole.

“Oh, 'ello, sir,” called Mrs Bridges, arriving for work. “An exciting morning?”

“It would appear so,” Falkirk said shooing Andrew inside. “I think it's over now.”

Andrew knelt on the couch, looking at his dad at point blank range. A small finger gently touched the purple bruise on James' cheek.

“Daddy, were you in a fight?”

James smirked at his son and winked. Overly loud, “No Andrew, daddy was training with some recruits. We got carried away.”

In a whisper he added, “Daddy saved London from baddies.” He nodded to the TV.

Andrew looked. He saw Uncle Greg appear, dressed in his fancy uniform.

Lestrade explaining, “There were multiple dawn raids this morning, against a radical element of the Masons. As we approached one address, the terrorists detonated a bomb. Early Forensic reports have indicated the bomb was the same used in the Mason Lodges around London. We have uncovered evidence the group is also responsible for a number of other terrorist events, including the murder of David Laws, the attempted kidnapping of several children of prominent individuals, and a possible plot to fix the upcoming election...”

Turning from the TV, Andrew looked at his dad. “You work with Nathan and he was here this morning. Was Mr and Mrs Able baddies?”

James nodded, and hugged his son close. “You could say that. That's what papa and I do. We go after the daddies.”

“What about uncle Alec?”

James answered yes, and Andrew started listing off everyone he knew, each one getting a yes. Andrew then asked, “Can I go after baddies?”
“When you're big and strong, and smart,” James said nuzzling his son and wrestling him down to the couch. “And you can take me on.”

The two screamed as they fell off the couch. James grunting when Andrew landed on some sort spots on his body.

“Children?” Falkirk warned, coming into the room. “So what should I wear for this surprise?”

Andrew took a breath to say something, and James clamped his hand over the boy's mouth.

“Something warm... Ewww!” James pulled his hand back. Andrew giggling. James wiped off the saliva from the lick Andrew gave it.
Falkirk noticed something had been laid out for him. Brown corduroy trousers, and a thick jumper. Shrugging, he dressed like his Alpha wanted. Coming out of the bedroom, he saw the front door was open.

Hudson appeared, wearing dark brown suit, not his normal black tail. As Falkirk came down stairs, “Mr Hudson, going somewhere nice?”

“With you,” the older man said.

“Oh?” Falkirk said, stumped. “Good, I think. James has kept me in the dark.”

Falkirk followed the man out the front door. Seeing James' car had been brought round the front, along with a classic 60s jaguar belonging to Hudson.

Falkirk watched Hudson hand over a case to James, who put it in the boot of the Aston. James then said to the butler, “We'll see you later.”

“Sir,” Hudson said and nodded.

Falkirk got into James' car. Andrew was already in the back, beside G. The young Alpha looking a little squished. When James got in Falkirk asked, “So this is a family... well a pack outing then?”

“Don't think so,” James said, deliberately confusing his mate. He then pulled away.

Falkirk thought about saving G from Andrew's constant chatter. In the end he decided not to. He liked this, it had been a while since he and James just went for a drive. The last time, they took Andrew up to see Kincade. 'Andrew was a baby back then,' Falkirk thought to himself. He didn't like to make plans in case James had to go, but Falkirk wanted a holiday. A real one. Hopefully without flying.

Falkirk lapsed into thought. He was thinking of a private holiday, just him and James. Perhaps he could stomach a little flight, or they could do a train journey. There were some spectacular ones in America or Canada. There was the South African Blue train or... the Orient Express. He then moved onto thinking about a family holiday. What would Andrew like to do or see? Would there be a long plane journey involved.

“We're here,” James said.

Falkirk saw the red brick country house. It looked sort of Elizabethan but he wasn't sure of the exact era. He was curious when they had to pass a secure checkpoint to gain access to the grounds.
around the house.

“Where are we?” Falkirk asked, handing his official ID to the soldier who came up to his window. James the insufferable bastard only smiled at him in answer.

Andrew called, “I know!”

“He's never going to have a career in espionage,” James whispered. Slowly moving beyond the checkpoint.

When they pulled into the forecourt of the house, there were a few cars Falkirk recognise. Mycroft’s town car. Daniel's Bentley. A ministerial car and some police motorbikes. James parked and they got out.

Darren ran out of the door and up to them, with a bright smile on his face. “You're here! We're setting up out back!”

Falkirk watched James hand the other omega the metal case Hudson had carried out to the car.

Andrew demanded, “Can I show Papa?”

Darren squatted down. Sending a sparkling smile to the boy, “Tell ya what, you can launch yours.”

Andrew smiled brightly.

They headed round the large country house. Darren saying, “Probably the first proper party this place has seen.”

Falkirk confirmed this was Checkers, the prime Minister's official country residence. He came to a grinding halt, seeing Alec off to the side of the vast lawn with a mousy-brown haired, young woman. What MI6's sanctioned torturer and Alec were up to beggared belief. Seeing an oil drum barbecue by the pair, it struck Falkirk, “You're not letting Alec cook with those chillies Alice grows!”

Darren shrugged, while looking devilish.

“Oh, god!” Falkirk said, “This is going to be a pis... a macho contest isn't it?”

Darren nodded. He then headed off to where Daniel was standing at the bottom of the lawn.

James claimed a spot and cast a large blanket on the ground. Andrew went to play with Yulian and Colum. Falkirk noticed G putting down a small barbecue and a large cooler by another barbecue, closer to them and the house.

Falkirk sat on the blanket and James brought him a Buck's fizz. The two just sitting and enjoying the early afternoon sun on the nice spring day.

“M?”

Falkirk looked to Addison and the blond doppelgänger of Sherlock beside the Double O. “Mr Addison and Guillam? Is Mr Guillam a plus-one, or was he involved?”

Before Addison could answer, Falkirk saw the double O's flat-blue eyes go to the side of the lawn.
“MR ADDISON!” Falkirk snapped. Everyone jumped, including the addressed Double O. “You have every right to dislike Alice, but you will be civil here. UNDERSTOOD!”

“M,” The Double O acknowledged. Guillam took the other man's arm and walked him off. The two going to see Darren and Daniel at the bottom of the garden.

G asked, “Does Graham not like her?”

James leaned into the younger man, “Ask me he's in love. How else can you explain letting the woman who wanted to castrate you, then pull out your heart so you could see it stop beating live?”

G chuckled. James dragged him off, to see what Alec was up to.

Falkirk looked around again. Hudson and Mrs Bridges had arrived. The butler had a collapsible pick-nick table and was setting it up. Falkirk went over and helped him.

Selene and Keading arrived next with their kids. Maloney arrived with his long time friend 008, a beta woman named Evens. Sherlock arrived, even Ms Marple had come. Like Hudson, Mycroft had arrived with a folding table and chairs for himself and Tanner.

As the afternoon became the evening, Falkirk and Keading watched over Michelle and Rosie. Both sitting on a blanket. Most of the others were playing football. Somehow they'd managed to rope Mycroft to being a goal keeper. Tanner being oddly competitive, going so far to shoulder James to the ground in order to tackle the ball away from the Double O.

Chocking, Falkirk tried to clear the tickle in his throat. Rosie started to choke and sneeze. Falkirk looked to the side, Alec and Alice had pulled on gas-masks. They were cooking something and even thirty yards down wind the spice was strong enough to reach them.

James came over, with Andrew and G. All with flushed faces and bright eyes. The macho Alphas, James, G and Mallory amongst them started the other barbecues. Andrew insisting he help his dad. Selene and Cody came for Keading and Sherlock took Rosie.

While James and the others cooked. G sat beside Falkirk. Seeing something weighing on the young man. “G, is there something wrong?”

The blond shook his head. “Not wrong. I asked Commander Gerald about a transfer. He agreed and gave me a recommendation. I was hoping you'd give me one too.”

“I'm not Navy,” Falkirk reminded.

“Captain Sansky said you have an Honorary Rank of Vice Admiral and that is acceptable.” Falkirk nodded, he tried to forget that. The rank pushed on him and a little uncomfortable because he'd never actually served. G leaned in and whispered, “It's for the Submarine Corp.”

Falkirk was growing suspicious. Something feeling like when Andrew asked him something when he'd not gotten the answer he wanted from James. “Is there opposition?”

G nodded, just like Andrew did when he'd been caught playing one parent off the other. Falkirk asked, “What is the opposition?”
“Well. Once onboard, I can't get back off for the six months of the deployment. They don't like the idea of me being completely out of touch. I won't be here for the garden parties, or Christmas...”

Falkirk patted the king's hand. “Go speak to Mycroft. He can fix those problems better than me. Tell him I will give you a reference.”

Falkirk was given a quick nuzzle by the young man before he darted away. To go have a word with Mycroft.

Everyone had their pic-nick. In which, Alec tried to get as many people to try his ribs. Falkirk getting a photo of Cody, Andrew, Yulian and Colum trying the things and all screaming and crying from just the tiniest bit of the juice. Even the most macho of Double O's had weeping eyes and hacking coughs after the ribs made with the home grown chillies of Alice's. Alec eating half a dozen without complaint.

After dinner. Darren suddenly called for Cody, Andrew his own son was already with him. Yulian followed his own dad.

James snuggled up to his mate. Falkirk took a sniff, “I still smell Alec's ribs.”

“My mouth's still on fire,” James whispered back. “Like eating mace.”

“Then why did you do it?”

“I can't let those young whipper-snappers think I'm soft.”

“So I got to see four of my most elite Operatives balling like a babies,” M teased.

Darren called loudly over the garden, that it was time for the entertainment. Starting with the children's contribution. Cody was first as the oldest. Darren let him press a button on the thick control box. A bright white line shot straight up and burst in a sphere of dark purple light. As next oldest Andrew got to press the next button and an orange line of sparkling light shot upwards and burst in a five pointed star then burst in another and another. A beautiful amber star being drawn and redrawn in the sky.

“You literally meant it,” Falkirk whispered to his mate. “You made fireworks.”

James pulled his mate close, “Course I did. I'm a responsible grown up.” Falkirk laughed, a deep hearty sound.

“I AM RESPONSIBLE!” James defended.

“In the sense you did something, yes.” Falkirk said.

They were tackled by a running Andrew. The family fell back to the blanket in a tangle. Andrew demanding, “Papa, did you see. I made the orange one! Uncle Daniel and Darren showed me how.”

“Yes I did,” Falkirk said nuzzling Andrew. The boy getting more praise from both. They snuggled together to watch the rest of the home made display. The darkness filled with overlaying colours of sparkling light. The air filling with the smell of gunpowder and chemicals.

“This is a lovely surprise,” Falkirk said, laying a kiss on first Andrew's forehead then James'
Falkirk replaced the handset of the phone. Coming out of the Library Falkirk entered the lounge to hear growling and thumps along with Andrew's approximation of a growl. Sitting on the couch Falkirk watched Andrew and James wrestling on the floor. Andrew was on his back almost folded in half as James lay on top of him. The child had one leg around his Father's neck and the other under his armpit in a completely ineffective scissor hold.

“That was David,” Falkirk informed casually.

“Oh?” James responded allowing Andrew to roll him over. “Your Nephew?”

“David Villiers,” Falkirk said. A genuine growl sounded from the Alpha that Andrew tried to copy, choking and hurting his throat in the process.

“David and Grigori have extensive engagements and have asked if we could take Rupert for a week,” Falkirk informed.

“No Villiers?” James asked.

Falkirk was momentarily mesmerised by the image of James and Andrew looking at him. Two faces, Andrew's back arched against the floor looking at his Papa upside-down, with James above him looking up to is mate.

“Yes, no Villiers,” Falkirk reassured.

“Who's Rupert?” Andrew asked.

It wasn't unexpected Andrew didn't remember so Falkirk explained, “David used to worked with us. He had a son, Rupert and I'm his god father.”

James adding, “And his Papa was a flying monkey of the Wicked Witch!”

“Really?” Andrew asked his Papa.

“No, Not really” Falkirk spoke over James' response. “Daddy, Uncle Alec and Daniel, Aunt Selene and I had a boss who Uncle Alec dubbed the Wicked Witch. Her assistants, Uncle Tanner and Villiers became known as The Flying Monkeys.”

“You're the boss?” Andrew asked as he and James continued to tussle.

“Yes,” Falkirk replied wondering where Andrew was going with this

“Do you have a flying monkey?” Andrew asked between puffed exertions. James informed, “No Papa is called Mother behind his back.”

At this Andrew became confused, just beginning to notice differences. All Girls were all mum or Mummy, Mother was used for Alphas specifically while special boy's where called Papa. With Keading, Andrew had noticed the term 'Mom' was considered incorrect.
It took some time before James and Falkirk understood what Andrew was trying to ask. In a show of bruit strength James lifted Andrew to sit in his lap. Leaning against the French doors James looked at his Mate directing Andrew in the same direction.

“Papa doesn't quite act like other Omegas. It was decided 'Papa' was a bit, soft for Papa's personality so he was dubbed Mother, and the Wicked Witch was then called Father. Because if we got into trouble with Father, Mother made it all better.” James informed.

“I still don't understand?” Andrew declared.

“They're teasing me,” Falkirk informed. “It's not mean and comes from respect so I ignore it.”

“Why don't we go sailing,” James jumped topic, earning a quick glare from Falkirk. Personal planning was done on a short term bases as Falkirk tried to avoided making plans that could then be abandoned without Andrew being able to understand why.

“Perhaps, Daddy may be called away on business,” Falkirk said cutting through Andrew's excitement.

Every Sunday Daniel, Alec, Selene and if he was home James would instruct the children on self defence and other skills. This Sunday uncle Sherlock and Mycroft had led an expedition into the park. Spending most of the day showing the children how to read people.

Darren, Keading and Falkirk were in the lounge. Michelle was lying on a blanket wriggling about, she was at the stage of getting her knees under her. All she needed before crawling was the strength in her arms to push her torso up.

The phone ringing required Falkirk's attention. Getting up Falkirk moved to the Library so he could speak without having to shout. Lifting the phone the privileged, upper class accent was unmistakable.

“I'm IN! Thank you,” G said. “Got to have a stupid camera crew with me though. The palace want to explain why I vanished.”

“Why you want to be on a metal tube under the sea I have no idea, but have fun,” Falkirk responded. Then thinking, “It was nice being out of touch in Iran. So I do like the idea of six months without any communications.”

Chapter End Notes

A quick note on something I covered, but couldn't remind people of in the story. In the culture of this world, until recently Marriage was only between man and woman. So it was acceptable(if old fashioned) in some mirages, particularly between two Alphas, they could have a bound omega(of the same gender male/male or female/female) as well as a spouse.

In the case of M. She had a husband(Edward), who also had a bound male
omega(Villiers). All children are recognised as legitimate children of M and her husband, even if it was Villiers who had them. So M would be 'Mother' to Rupert, Edward father, and Villiers papa.
The world turned and James moved to the head of the queue. When MI6 got information on a business woman being the target of a problematic assassin, James' time was over.

On the day James left, Andrew asked his Papa, “Where's daddy?” Watching his papa doing up his shirt and tie in the mirror.

“In Brussels.” Falkirk answered watching his son sitting on the bed and kicking his legs gently.

“Why?”

“For business.”

“What business?”

“Important business.”

“Do you know?”

“Yes, I just cant tell you.”

“Getting baddies?”

That was a new one. Falkirk wondered where Andrew picked up on that idea. “Yes. How did you know?”

“Dad told me he goes after baddies. What baddies?”

Falkirk cursed his mate. They had to be so careful of their son and what he knew and could understand. He eventually answered, “Secret ones.”

Andrew was getting less satisfied with the explanations of his Father's disappearances.

Falkirk went on to given abstract explanations, even truer ones. Falkirk had even explained about the secrecy of his and James' jobs and how they couldn't tell Andrew everything. Nothing worked and Andrew was getting frustrated.

“I miss Daddy,” Andrew admitted coming up to nuzzle Falkirk.

Circling his arms round his son and nuzzling his head. “I do as well,” Falkirk said. Loathed to break the moment Falkirk patted Andrew's shoulder “Keading will be here soon. Get your coat and school bag.”
Blindfolded, with hands bound behind his back. The sway of the van making him bump into the man beside him. Suddenly there was a roar and the van vibrated with it. The deafening noise soon vanished. The van stopped. Anonymous hands grabbed him. There was a scream from a woman, who unlike the men couldn't stop her surprise.

Dragged out of the van and made to stand. The hood was ripped off him, like the older man and woman in line with him. His eyes landed on the narrow set blue eyes of a blond man dressed in good suit. The noise grew again, a defining sound of a 747 taking off right over the top of them.

When the noise died away, he called, “So this is it, Double, O, Nine?”

“No, Mr Able,” said a voice from behind the group.

The bound man, turned. His green eyes taking in the Director of MI6, who stood by the open doors of the van they'd been brought here in.

M said, “Mr Able, you have my condolences, your comrades were killed for this farce. But that's what you signed on for wasn't it? Get it right and you're a hero, like the Iranian agents. Get it wrong and you're a corpse. You got it wrong, Mr Able. So very wrong.”

Benjamin Able kept his face neutral. Confirming and denying nothing.

Falkirk looked to the two older people, his ex-neighbours. “You are terrorists now. Traitors, working with a foreign power to harm and attack this country. All of your UK assets have been confiscated. You will leave and take a message to Director David. My son is not a pawn, for him to win my gratitude with. Understood?”

The older man stood firm and stoic, showing the agent of a foreign country he'd always been. His wife was crying, unable to understand what was going on.

Falkirk ordered, “Your flight leaves in ten minutes. Goodbye!”

The three were bundled into the van again, this time without the hoods. They were driven through a nearby security gate and right onto the tarmac. The van stopping by a waiting plane where they were forced on.

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“Have the personal effects of Mrs Able, and only Mrs Able's shipped to her,” Falkirk ordered Tanner. “Make sure it's addressed to her. Her husband can rot in hell for all I care. But she's innocent.”


Much to Falkirk's surprise James breezed into his office, he'd only been gone a few days. Dismissing Tanner, Falkirk watched his mate taking the guest chair as if he owned the place. Once James made himself comfortable. Falkirk asked, “No explosion? International incidents? Wars? Have you finished the mission?”
“Yes I'm finished,” James shot back. Falkirk was sceptical but reserved judgement until all the reports were in. “Heard you were doing the Godfather routine?”

Falkirk shrugged. “Most of the talks are like I'm a gangster.” Looking at the clock, “Oh, let's knock of early.”

James had no objections so they headed home. Andrew was overjoyed seeing his Father coming through the door with his Papa.

The next morning, on the last day of School the children could come in wearing something other than their uniforms. Andrew pulled out pea-green trousers, white shirt and emerald-green silk bow-tie. Falkirk held his chuckle at how scandalised James was by the fashion concoction of their son. Reluctantly James straightened the bow-tie for Andrew, resigned to the fate of a son who had inherited his Papa's fashion sense, of uncoordinated geek chic.

Keading arrived with Yulian, Colum and Michelle. James followed Falkirk and Andrew out to the car. Inside Cody sat with his back to the driver as he usually did and Selene beside him. Sharp, soft-brown eyes that conveyed intelligence beyond his years flicked to Falkirk then back to his book. Wearing black trousers and shirt with what looked like a suede jacket Falkirk couldn't help mentally dubbing him 'Little Sherlock'.

--

Falkirk had stopped in at the club on his way home. He offered Roebuck the opportunity to come with him to Eaton to pick up Rupert. After all, the man was Rupert's god father like Falkirk was.

“My boy,” the old man grumbled. “I didn't deal with my own children before they enlisted. Why would I deal with someone else's?”

Falkirk couldn't say he was surprised. The older generation had different notions.

Coming home that evening, Falkirk found James and Andrew in the lounge. On the last day all the pieces of work Andrew had done over the year had been given to him. Pictures and exercise books littered the floor. Picking up a jotter Falkirk opened it to reveal page of 'A's half upper-case half lower-case.

Pictures of family, crudely drawn. Falkirk picked up a coloured pencil picture. At first he thought it was James with his arms stretched up, then realised it was Hudson. The day of the kidnapping attempt, Hudson did a flying tackle and here it was in permanent memoriam.

“Do you think Mr Hudson will like it?” Andrew asked hesitantly.

“I'm sure he will,” Falkirk reassured. “Why don't you go give it to him. I think he'd like that.”

Andrew took the drawing and raced out of the room. Returning a short time later, Falkirk asked his son, “Did Mrs Bridges give you a piece of cake?” Falkirk getting a overly innocent shake of the head.

Chuckling James beckoned Andrew to him. Wiping the chocolate from his son's lip, “Remember to destroy the evidence.”

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Arriving at Eaton College Andrew had his nose pressed to the window as they came up the drive. Falkirk's car was not the only one present with a police escort. Coming to a stop next to another Jaguar, 'Ducks in a Row' came to Falkirk's mind.

Getting out a Beta teenager came up to James. Pleasantly he greeted, “Sir Thomas?”

Snorting a laugh, James nodded to Falkirk. The Beta looked embarrassed and changed to Falkirk. Extending the same greeting to Falkirk the Beta added his own name, Reginald and said, “I've been asked to escort you to the Headmaster.”

Falkirk nodded and indicated the boy should lead the way. Coming round to the front of the building, Falkirk was shocked by the number of Burgundy shawls and blazers of a prestigious nanny school. They were all experienced and led their charges like they were lead-trained dogs. Even the ones Falkirk though old enough to lead themselves.

“But... Nanny!” whined, a burly, older teenage, Alpha, bigger then James. He crossed their path led by the hand, by an Omega only a third of his size.

Even Andrew knew the scene was odd. Looking to his father in confusion. Hesitantly he removed his hand from James' grasp.

“Good boy,” James reassured looking at an almost identical scene some distance off. Another, almost man, being led by a nanny.

Nearing their destination, a man standing out the front. James whispered, “God, it's Fester.”

“Sir?” Reginald stated coming up to an old Alpha.

Dressed in typical teachers attire of suit, gown, and mortarboard. A bamboo cane jerked in the old man's hand, like he was using a crop on a horse. Sharp cruel eyes looked to the boy who jumped, then the watery-grey eyes turned to Falkirk.

A white moustache, stained nicotine yellow and competed with eyebrows and ear hair for the bushiest thing on the headmaster's face. Smoke, body odour and with a stench of stale alcohol and possibly urine. Falkirk tried not to flinch as well. The old man continued to glare at Falkirk with the Omega easily able to match him.

“My God son?” Falkirk snapped. It was clear the man despised being challenged and hated being reminded he was a servant in Falkirk's opinion.

“You know who Reginald is, and, who he was sent to meet, so could I have my, god Son,” Falkirk prompted more slowly. Falkirk couldn't scent a Beta but Reginald was trembling while the Alpha was furious.

A subtle audience was now watching them. Most stunned Falkirk knew this was the headmaster but didn't care. By the way the boys were watching with concealed but wrapped attention they had obviously never seen someone stand up to the man. The cane was twitching wildly and Falkirk was sure the old duffer wanted to put the upstart omega in his place.

He knew it was low and nasty but Falkirk could recognise a bully when one stood in front of him even without the stories he had been told.
“Are you slow or senile?” Falkirk asked slowly. Snorted laughter went up and a few mutters of 'are you slow or Senile' went up from the boys watching them. One advantage of an average typing speed of a hundred words a minute, when the cane flipped up Falkirk batted it aside snapping it in the process.

A dark chuckle sounded from James, so liking watching the man's whole face reach the same red as the Headmaster's nose. Andrew picked up the broken off piece of bamboo. Interlaced his fingers over the pliable wood, and tried to snap it by flexing his fingers, like his Papa had.

“Do not use you ring finger it's your weakest, index, middle and pinky!” Falkirk told his son. Turning back to the headmaster Falkirk prompted, “Rupert Villiers?”

“BOY, GO!” the headmaster barked at the poor Beta. Reginald, jumped and ran away. “DO NOT RUN BOY!” the headmaster bellowed Falkirk winced placing a finger in the ear closest to the man.

Word must have gotten round as a younger Alpha in gown and mortarboard approached. “Headmaster, Lord Blair is looking for you,” he informed.

With nasty half smile. “Good day, Sir Thomas,” the headmaster spat and walked away, pressing a book to the new Alpha. They exchanged a brief look before the headmaster moved off.

“We are not interested,” Falkirk informed indicating the leather bound prospectus the new Alpha was holding.

“Wouldn't think of it,” the Alpha said lowering the prospectus. Extending his other hand, “Edward Grant, English Master.”

A creaking sounded along with a quiet grunt. Looking to Andrew he had managed a slight bend in the cane and angry red marks across his fingers.

“Most impressive,” Grant said in an encouraging tone.

Andrew looked unimpressed. “No it's not. Papa snapped it.” Andrew stated then moved his finger up and tried again to snap the wood. The teacher looked taken aback by the little omega's frankness and dismissal of the encouragement.

“I thought Fester would be dead by now,” James said to the teacher.

The man laughed gently, “Ah, Uncle Fester, I take it you're a alumni if you know the nickname? Well if the good die young, 'Uncle Fester' will live to see the end of the universe.”

Falkirk let the two talk. The grounds were nice. The Teacher talking to them now too, but Falkirk didn't like places like this. They were too insular. The students grew up thinking poor was a person who had to buy a Mercedes, Jaguar or Lexus, because the Rolls Royce were a ridiculous price.

“James,” Falkirk stated and indicated Reginald and a boy Falkirk assumed to be Rupert. The two boys were struggling with a trunk between them, the elder Reginald at the front with the smaller, younger at the back. James preceded Falkirk in approaching the boys. Picking up the trunk James bore the awkward weight with ease.
“Sir,” both boys greeted the teacher.

Falkirk crouched down in front of Rupert. The boy had changed since he saw him last, his brown eyes were darker than Falkirk remembered. He was also a bit short, shorter than Cody who was slightly younger. His dark hair was done in a very neat side parting.

After a moment of awkward silence, Falkirk said, “Hello.”

“Hello, Sir Thomas,” Rupert said respectfully. Standing, Falkirk thanked the English master and led the way to the car.

“Are you too old?” Falkirk asked offering his hand to Rupert.

Getting a shake of the head and a quiet, “No. Thank you.” Rupert took the offered hand. A sudden pressure gripped Falkirk’s other hand and he looked to see the veiled jealousy of a young Omega latching onto his Papa’s other hand.

Watching James and the driver wrestle the trunk into the boot gave a few minutes of amusement and a rather nasty scratch to the black paintwork.

“I’m glad you are not so careless when dealing with other large packages going into small spaces,” Falkirk dead panned. James’ look said it all, the alpha as unimpressed by the comment.

“Are those guns real?” Rupert asked pointing to the lid of the boot.

“M4A1 Carbine and a UMP-9!” Andrew shot.

“Andrew! Watch your tone,” Falkirk warned before confirming that he was correct. Eventually with a growl from James, that made Rupert flinch the man slammed the boot shut.

In the car Rupert sat alone on the bench behind the driver. Head down and shoulders hunched. Falkirk could scent the nervousness of the young Alpha. James and Falkirk sat on the back seat with Andrew between them.

Batting Andrew’s hand away from his nose, Falkirk glared a warning at his son. Alpha nervousness was not a pleasant que, and often indicated weakness to discouraged an omega being attached to them.

“I thought Fester would have died by now. Good boi by the way,” James said, with a cheeky grin directed towards Falkirk on the last. Rupert looked up at the nick name of the headmaster.

James tried to encourage some interaction, by using the favourite British pass time. Moaning. “He and I had run ins from the day I arrived to the day he finally expelled me. Beat me with that bloody cane ever day.”

“Oh?” Rupert responded.

“It was bloody unfair. I only deserved half the punishments at most.” A dark chuckle came from James, “I once got a load of fireworks. Opened one and sprinkled the gunpowder on his tobacco. The rest I hid in the chimney.” James had a wistful smile, thinking of the chaos he caused.

Falkirk pointed a finger at Andrew, able to see the thoughts forming in that little head. “No
copying Daddy! Gunpowder is dangerous!"

“Don't worry.” James said. “He wasn't shown the full recipe.”

“Recipe? We're not talking about cookies here!” Falkirk said. Noticing the nervousness of the young Alpha getting worse as they bantered.

After a few minutes, and looking out the window while thinking. James said, “I never had the nerve to stand up to Fester though. Lucky I have Papa to stand up for me.” James giving Andrew a nudge.

“Most of the pack gather on a Sunday so tomorrow will be a bit hectic” Falkirk warned, changing the subject.

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“From Villiers and M's husband I was expecting odd but...” James trailed off, as he poured a bourbon and a scotch.

Andrew had been sent to bed an hour ago with Rupert asking if he could be excused shortly after dinner.

Nodding and accepting the glass Falkirk made room for James to slip in behind him. “I do remember him being bit more assertive.”

James flicked on a movie not really caring what, just liking having his Omega reclining against him. Falkirk mused, “It might just be nerves. It's been a while since we saw him.”.

“Not to mention that circus of a school,” James said. “God I wished I punched that old arsehole!”

Falkirk turned and kissed James' cheek. “So proud of you. You set such a good example.”

“Yeah, so you could be a bully.”

“I was being assertive.”

“Bullshit! You knew the stories and the second you knew he was Fester you were going in for the kill.” James nuzzled and lay lots of kisses on his mate's neck. Falkirk letting out a groan. James whispered in the shell of an ear, “That's my little megalomaniac.”

“Fa-n-at-ic,” Falkirk corrected, breathing heavily.
Like Buses: Sunday and Monday.

Chapter Notes

Because tomorrow is a big family gathering. I'll post his early.

Thanks to all the reader, commenter and those who leave Kudos.

Sunday morning was a buffet brunch. The items had been laid down the middle of the table, with pots of coffee and tea and jugs of milk and orange juice.

Daniel and Alec were the first to arrive with Yulian in tow. Mycroft arrived punctually as ever, with Tanner. Sherlock swanned in with Rosie perched on his hip, John being weighed down by the pram, changing bag, toys and everything else.

Darren came in, a little harassed. The omega saying to everyone in general, “Gareth's touring the constituencies, so sends his apologies. I'm just fecking happy he didn't drag me to play the happy partner.”

When Selene arrived with her family everyone could take their seats at the table. Falkirk sat at the foot with Daniel to his right, Keading and Darren on his left. James sat at the head of the table with Alec to his right, the two laughing about Falkirk tormenting the hated teacher.

Through the the informal meal Rupert kept to himself and his head down. The boy poking at the poached egg he'd taken and nothing else. Falkirk couldn't help his eyes flicking constantly to the child in concern. For an Alpha Rupert was acting atypically. While just as quiet, not even Cody was so withdrawn.

“So what's The Flying Monkey been up to?” Alec asked the newest addition. Both James and Alec's chair scraped back, both men backing up from the glare Daniel sent them. Keading and Andrew stared transfixed to the usually calm Scots Alpha.

Falkirk said to his alpha and the man he considered to be the brother he always wanted. “That nickname belongs to a past era. I think it's time it ends.”

Getting nods from the two chastised Alphas. Alec apologised then asked, “What's David been up to?”

Shrugging, Rupert answered not looking at Alec, “Don't know.”

“Why?” Andrew trailed off as he caught his Papa's eye and received a shake of the head. Rupert answered anyway.

“Haven't spoken to Papa since Christmas.”

“That was ages ago,” Andrew declared before Falkirk could stop him.

“So Poppet, what do you enjoy,” Daniel asked before someone could ask something else. After a
moment's hesitation from the young Alpha, unsure if he was the one being talked to Rupert shrugged. Daniel prompted, pointing to Cody, “That one's into bugs. While Yulian likes... I'll say wrestling to be polite. I'll admit he's a bit of the thug. While that one! Colum, he's into his football,“

“Go Celtic!” Darren said with a fist in the air.

“No Sectarianism, please,” Daniel said. “Now for the Little Laddie. I don't really know, him or his daddy, one of them is a the biggest pain in the arse. Not to sure which one at the moment.”

Andrew protested, James shrugged, telling his son, “That's a good think where Uncle Daniel in concerned.”

Eventually Rupert shrugged in answer and said, “Don't know.”

Finally even the most oblivious of the group saw there was something up with the new arrival. With Rupert unwilling to talk, they stopped putting pressure on him to do so, while in the busy setting.

After brunch Daniel took Rupert to the side. Letting James, Alec, Selene and John, over see the practice of the others. With the improved weather the others watched from the terrace looking down on the back garden.

Rupert, it was clear had no interest in guns or the training. He completed his exercises because he was told to, with no interest. After the practice the kids started to play.

Only half paying attention to the conversation around him Falkirk watched the interaction down on the grass. Keading had taken Michelle and a blanket down, to sit on the grass. Uninterested in the game of touch rugby, Rupert cautiously approached Keading. Kneeling down, Rupert held out his hands and Michelle crawled from her Papa to the young Alpha.

Even from this distance Falkirk could see a gummy grin being given by the baby girl. Cody having noticed the presence of the alpha went over to Keading. With the presence of the other Alpha, Rupert withdrew quickly. Falkirk watched Rupert wander the garden, staying clear of the other kids and Keading. Quickly becoming bored, Cody returned to the game the other children were playing.

With Cody gone again, Rupert returned to the blanket with Keading and Michelle. With the new Alpha by his sister and Papa again, Cody's territorial instinct kicked in. Keading, realising what was going on looked to Cody as he approached. Rupert's head dropped and he started to stand, a quiet word from his Keading had Cody returning to the game and Rupert settling back down.

“Not exactly what I expected from Villiers and M's husband,” Alec mused. Drawing Falkirk's attention.

“What happened to the growling little git who claimed my mate?” James added.

“Something. Perhaps I should pay David a visit,” Falkirk said. A little worried. Hoping what he suspected wasn't true.

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The door to the bedroom swung open. Falkirk buried his head under the pillow and complained,
“What did I tell you about waking us before dawn?”

“There's a strange smell. I'm going to watch cartoons,” Andrew declared then thundered along the landing and down the stairs.

Forcing himself up Falkirk gathered his dressing gown. Heading upstairs Falkirk noticed the smell. Usually a base gesture of an Alpha marking their territory, but Falkirk didn't think that was what was happening. Tapping on then opening Rupert's door Falkirk braced for the intense scent of urine. The bed was empty with a prominent wet patch.

Pyjamas had been discarded on the floor and clothing had been removed from the wardrobe.

“Rupert?” Falkirk called hopefully, checking the room, then the shared bathroom on the second floor. Nothing. “Shit, shit shit,” Falkirk chanted running down the flight of stairs to the floor with his room on it.

Falkirk ran back to the his room. Shouting, “He's wet the bed and run off!” Falkirk pulled out his trousers, and threw James' at the mound in the bed. James pushed himself up and pulled on a tracksuit.

“I'll check up here, you down stairs, and tell Hudson!” Falkirk ordered. Falkirk returned upstairs checking the all four rooms at the back and the three at the front of the house. Falkirk found nothing. Coming downstairs and checked the three guest rooms on the same floor as his own.

By the time Falkirk got down to the basement kitchen, he found Hudson putting on his coat and bowler hat.

Hudson informed, “I'm going to help look. CCTV shows the young master slipping out when I brought in the morning deliveries. Mr Bond has already started scouting the area.”

“Thank you,” Falkirk said as Hudson went to help James search.

“Poor boy,” Mrs Bridges was muttering as she moved about, making the breakfast. Falkirk picked up a washing basket and waited. Mrs Bridges set up the tray, of Andrew's breakfast.

With tray, and basket hooked over his arm, Falkirk went upstairs. Placing the plate and glass of juice on the dining table. “Andrew! Time to eat. Don't take it in front of the TV!” Falkirk warned before heading upstairs.

Having stripped the bed Falkirk returned to the kitchen. Stuffing the soiled bedding into the washing machine, Falkirk had to wave off a fretting Mrs Bridges. Falkirk insisting, “I am perfectly able to do some washing, Mrs Bridges. I did take care of James and Alec... I think they just expected clean clothes to appear in their wardrobes by magic.”

With the load of washing on. Mrs Bridges had prepared Falkirk's breakfast. Taking his kipper Falkirk returned upstairs. Entering the dining room Falkirk found Andrew's seat vacant and his plate missing. Instead of reprimanding him Falkirk ate in peace. Finishing Falkirk piled his plate on the tray then went to get Andrew's. The young Omega stared transfixed as Batman fought henchmen on screen. A scrambled egg covered toast soldier hovered close to Andrew's open mouth.

“Eat then take your dishes down stairs,” Falkirk ordered.
“Yes, Papa,” came the absent voice as Andrew finally took a mouthful.

While washing and dressing, Falkirk was getting concerned. Hudson and James still hadn't returned when Keading arrived for the day. Reluctantly Falkirk went to his waiting car. Falkirk repeated the morning's events to Selene. Having explained Rupert's absence to Keading already.

A thought came to Falkirk, pulling out his phone he called Sherlock. Using his house as source, M's old house as destination, the age and size of Rupert, Sherlock was able to supply an approximate location. Relaying the area to the driver they took a detour on the way to MI6.

The driver pulled to a stop and Selene, Falkirk and Rey got out. Falkirk followed a lane to an adjacent street. It was early and the shops were still closed. Falkirk's phone started ringing, picking up Rey's voice came through, “Male, dark brown hair, formal trousers, jumper with Eaton logo, approximately ten years old, alone.”

Falkirk moved quickly through the lane and to the street he had instructed Rey to search. Coming round the corner he saw Rey was leaning casually at a bus stop as the bodyguard watched a child walking along the far side of the road.

Falkirk crossed the road and fell into step with Rupert. The young Alpha stopped and dropped his head.

“I'm just worried, not angry,” Falkirk reassured and offered his hand. With resignation Rupert took the hand and they walked back to the car. They drove for about ten minutes before the driver said they were here.

“Rupert, there,” Falkirk said pointing the the door of a town house. A two story, red brick, building. With black door and white pane windows.

Rupert looked across Falkirk and out the window. There stood the one time home of Rupert. Brushing the boy's dark hair, Falkirk said, “James was hurt badly. We thought he had been killed. Your Mother offered me a place to stay. Your Father had died by then and you and your Papa had moved out...” Falkirk reminisced about the old house. Rupert leaned closer to the window and Falkirk was able to put his arm about him. The gesture seemed to take Rupert by surprise but he settled against Falkirk after only a moment.

The door of M's old house opened. Falkirk froze, swearing for a moment he saw a short woman marching out. Blinking, the Middle eastern man was definitely not a diminutive Alpha woman.

“Are you ready?” Falkirk asked and felt the small nodding movement against his chest. “Driver, Vauxhall Cross please.”

Arriving in E branch. 005 was perched on Darren's desk. Falkirk breezed passed, with Rupert in tow

“This is not a bar, Mr Addison.” Falkirk snapped as he passed his PA and Double O.

With Rupert here, the first thing Falkirk did was call in Tanner. “Rupert, you remember Bill, you met him yesterday. He worked with your mother and Papa.” When Falkirk got a nod from the boy, Falkirk looked at Tanner, “Why don't you take Rupert a tour?”
As Tanner took Rupert out both flinched when Falkirk bellowed, “ADDISON! Get your arse in here!”

Falkirk was putting the poor Double O through the ringer when he saw James perch on Darren’s desk. “What the hell is it with Double Os and flirting with M's secretary!” Falkirk complained then dismissed the Operative in front of him.

Addison looked through the wall, “That is just unacceptable behaviour! That desk corner is where I sit!”

“Get out Double O Five!”

“M,” the alpha acknowledged with a smile and headed out.

James and Addison exchanged a few words before James entered. Taking a seat without invitation James listened to Falkirk’s story of finding Rupert.

“I have to go see Double O Three. I'll stop off in Dubai, I want to see David,” Falkirk informed.

“Has Fairbanks been a naughty boy?” James teased knowing a personal visit from M was not a pleasant thing. Especially when that M had a fear of flying.

“Never you mind what that fool has been up to,” Falkirk shot. “Could you spend the day with Rupert? Let him get comfortable with your presence.”

A brief shadow passed over James’ face before he nodded. “What should I do with him?”

“He seems unsure of who he is, or where he belongs. I think he wants to know of his past, talk to him.” Falkirk advised. Falkirk knew it was hard for James to discuss those who had died but he was the only who could in Falkirk's absence.

Falkirk looked at his clock and realised Tanner and Rupert had been gone for a couple of hours by now. Checking the last location Tanner and a guest had checked in. Analysis, was one of the branches whose work was as vital as it was boring. They processed massive amounts of information pulling out the bits relevant to the needs of MI6.

Going through the building with James beside him, Falkirk entered the network of corridors that made up the Analyse Branch. Nicknamed L as the designation 'A' had been appropriated by Archives. Each of the small offices had between two and six, predominantly Omegas working in them.

“M,” James called and indicated the glass front of an office Falkirk had passed. Returning Falkirk saw Tanner in the corner, out of the way. While the deputy department head had Rupert beside him. Rupert had big stack of papers in front of him, a highlighter in his hand and a pencil stuck behind an ear. The Branch deputy, Paisley was a red haired Irish Omega who had been friendly with Villiers.

Opening the door Paisley and Tanner looked up as Falkirk entered. Rupert was so engrossed in his task he was oblivious to the world until Falkirk placed a hand on his shoulder. Falkirk leaned over the boy's shoulder to look at what was being worked on.

Paisley informed, “The French were so kind in supplying the copies of LeCarre's financial records
we wanted... *in hard copy form only.*”

“You're tracing specific transactions?” Falkirk asked looking over Rupert's work. The boy was going down the list of transactions and highlighting some of them.

“Every transaction of exactly €120,000.00,” Rupert informed. Looking up to Falkirk.

“When he's finished James is here to take him home,” Falkirk said to Paisley. Getting a relived smile and nod.

The red haired omega then looked to James, “There's a break room at the end of the hall.” As there were no Alphas in Analysis James' presence was causing some discomfort in the room.

“That's me told,” James said and walked off. Tanner logged off and followed James out.

When Rupert returned to his task Falkirk caught Paisley's eye and indicated the omega should follow him out into the hall. In the corridor Falkirk made sure Rupert wasn't seeing anything he shouldn't then thanked Paisley.

“He may want to stay, let Rupert complete the task then call in James.” Falkirk stated. When Paisley agreed he also hesitantly asked about Rupert's welfare.

“I don't know what is wrong but I will find out,” Falkirk promised. “Have you spoken to David recently?”

Paisley shook his head. “You know what it's like, M, when someone moves on. You try to keep in touch. I've not really talked to David since he stopped working here. A Christmas card was the last contact I had with him.”

Falkirk nodded in understanding and turned away. That was three-for-three so far. Rupert, Paisley and Falkirk himself, none had spoken to Villiers since Christmas.
Double O Three had been investigating weapons shipments going from China to the middle east. The money and paper trail were all led it a Broker located in Hong Kong. Fairbanks had seduced an Omega on The Broker's staff and had bonded with her. In typical bad guy fashion, the Broker killed her in front of 003.

In the escape Fairbanks had descended into a mindless alpha Rage. Rage was common for Alphas when a bond breaks, by the death of their omega. If Fairbanks had been able to target his rage Falkirk would have been able to gloss over what happened next. In the initial state of rage Fairbanks had walked in the front door of the Brokers legitimate businesses and started shooting, moving on to using his bare hands when he ran out of bullets. None survived the Double O, not even the innocents like a cleaner.

So, here, in the grimy hotel that charged by the hour Falkirk waited. The bed, Falkirk looked at distastefully choosing a rickety chair to sit on. The cheap bed spread still had the scent and stains of the previous occupants, or the last several in fact. Falkirk concentrated on ignoring the faint chemically masked scents in the room.

When Fairbanks arrived he had an oddly clam demeanour and his scent ques were muted. He was at the stage in an Alpha's fury where he was high functioning. That didn't mean he was safe to be round, which was why M was alone in the room. An Omega shouldn't be the instinctive threat that an Alpha or even Beta was.

Falkirk said, “Will you come back with me?”

Fairbanks was polite and respectful as he told M to leave.

Falkirk said, “If you continue on your path it will not be as an Operative of the United Kingdom.”

“I think you know my answer, M,” Fairbanks responded.

Nodding Falkirk stood and walked to the door, “Goodbye then, Bill.”

The Double O came up beside him. “I think I should escort you out,” Fairbanks said, taking Falkirk's arm forcibly marching the smaller man through the hotel. It was fairly easy for Fairbanks to identify the MI6 personnel amongst the Asian clientele.

Fairbanks seemed eased by only a small personal guard. Stepping out into the rain, Rey was waiting by the car. Falkirk ordered the other guards into their car first. Falkirk then indicated Rey should get in as well. Fairbanks opened the door for Falkirk to get in. Fairbanks closed the door behind Falkirk with a slam.
The car pulled away, drove a few meters then pulled in again. Opening his door Falkirk stepped out to see Fairbanks falling to one knee as he fought off unconsciousness. Slowly approaching, Fairbanks lunged at him and fell flat on his face. The guards in the second car exited and picked up the Double O. The sniper with tranquilliser gun emerged from an alleyway.

Falkirk and his bodyguard, Rey, returned to the hotel room to find the night manager ransacking it and searching through Fairbanks' stuff. Falkirk's Bodyguard grabbed and held the manager, allowing Falkirk to searched through his pockets. Both ignored the indignant shouting. Falkirk dropped the fistfuls of cash on the floor. The Rolex, cuff links, a small ring and a pin Falkirk transferred to his own pocket.

Indicating the money on the floor, Falkirk spat, “Take it and get out!” The manager never spoke in English but Falkirk didn't doubt the Beta with greasy hair understood him.

Falkirk moved about the room looking in all the nooks and crannies. The lining of the curtains yielded a necklace with a small star charm on it. Inside a pillowcase, wrapped in a plastic bag to preserve the scent Falkirk found a blood stained blouse and a scarf. Falkirk hoped he had everything as he cast his eyes over the room one last time.

Passing through the lobby an angry voice shouted, “You owe money!” the night manager demanded in well enough English. “I call police if you not pay!”

“Feel free, thief!” Falkirk spat and didn't break his step.

On the plane Falkirk passed the unconscious form of Fairbanks. Strapped to a seat with a sedative IV. A guard sat on the row in front, behind and beside him with a nurse monitoring the IV.

The plane took off heading west, to land in Dubai. Falkirk spent most of the time with his head between his knees doing breathing exercises to help control his anxiety.

Everyone in the dive hotel in Hong Kong noticed Falkirk's presence but didn't care. The five star hotel Falkirk walked into in Dubai was the opposite, no one noticed the smartly dressed western Omega surrounded by security but would have cared if they did.

On an uppermost floor just before the rooftop restaurant Falkirk found the suite he was looking for. With his phone it took Falkirk less time to hack the door than it would have taken to uses a proper key card.

“I love technology,” Falkirk muttered as the door swung open. If it had been an old fashioned key there was next to nothing Falkirk's expertise could do. One of the guards would have had to kick in the door or worse he would have had to talk to the hotel.

The suite was exquisite. Picture windows showed the dying sun casting golden hues over the ocean. They were in a large lounge/study area. A large bedroom was through a set of double doors. With relief Falkirk noticed the bed had already been turned down. After a quick walk through of the suite Falkirk took up residence at the carved desk in the lounge area.

The guards took up positions around the room with Rey standing just behind Falkirk.

“At ease, we may be some time,” Falkirk said. All the guards with the exception of Rey widened there stance and relaxed their arms. Rey stayed on alert.
Night time came, the room going dark. While nice to look at, the stars and distant boats on the sea offering no light to see by. Falkirk could barely make out the guard at the far end of the room. Falkirk's phone beeped in warning. It didn't take long before a click sounded and the door swung open. The guard directly opposite the door was bathe in light from the hall. From out in the hall an English voice said, “Please go in. M would like a word.”

Grigori Dzhambgerchinov cautiously stepped in with David Villiers and another male Alpha just behind them. The obvious bodyguard Falkirk looked to, then with a jerk of his head indicated the door. Taking the non verbal order, the last of the MI6 guards grabbed the bodyguard and pulled him back out.

The round faced Russian with dark blue eyes and black hair looked over those in his suite. His face on the stern side of emotionless, stereotypical to the Russian demeanour. Going to the drinks cabinet he said, “What's this about?”

Ignoring the alpha, Falkirk looked to Villiers. He asked, “How is Rupert?”

“His reports are acceptable,” Villiers started to say. Then just sort of stopped.

“Not spoken to him recently?”

Villiers flinched but said, “It's time he started school. Like his father before him, and grand father before that. One expects a certain amount of distance when Rupert is of that age.”

Flicking his eyes to the slouching Alpha who sipped on a glass of vodka. Falkirk said, “Is there anything you need dealt with, David?”

Grigori groaned and settled deeper on the plush couch. “I pay for the boy. I pay for his school. I pay for his home. I pay for his nanny. I do more than most would. I do not deny him his pater. He has room in my houses, all of them...”

There was no heart in the man's word, that Falkirk could hear. “David? Is there?”

“No,” Villiers responded to Falkirk. Like everyone, knowing what Falkirk had been truly asking.

“What about your son? Are you truly going to bring Rupert here? To this,” Falkirk asked tone going colder. Waving his hand to the alpha.

“When the house in London is ready he can go there” Grigori offered with a wave of his hand. With another groan the Russian Alpha pulled himself up “I'm going to bed, hurry up and get rid of your friend” Grigori disappeared through the double doors.

Villiers turned back to look at Falkirk and bowed his head, bearing is neck in a submissive stance. Something Falkirk had never seen the older omega do before. Not even to M.

“Is this your final word on the matter?” Falkirk asked the first Omega he admired and idolised as more than just a stereotypical bitch. Falkirk knew what the other Omega's answer would be before Villiers said it. The bitch placed his Alpha's desires over that of his own son.

Falkirk couldn't say anything, he didn't know where to start or where in his anger anger he would end up finishing. Standing, Falkirk's fingers left three parallel scratch marks on the surface of the desk that he didn't realise making. Villiers said something more but to Falkirk it was like someone
speaking through water.

In a dream like state Falkirk walked out of the suite, passing Geigori's restrained bodyguard in the hall.

“M?” Rey asked, concerned with his boss' change. For the first time Falkirk didn't need some form of reassurance on the plane. Everything seemed at a distance. Disjointed. Unreal.

He had been up for nearly twenty four hours when Falkirk arrived in London. Staying at the airport long enough to ensure Fairbanks would be cared for Falkirk got in his own car.

“Hind Club,” Falkirk told his driver.

In the ornate club favoured both by current and ex-navy, Falkirk headed for one of the lounges. Picking a small round table with upright chair Falkirk sat down. Automatically a porter brought over a straight bourbon for him. Accepting the glass, Falkirk said, “Bring the bottle.”

“Right away, Admiral McLair.”

When the porter returned, Falkirk said, “Thank you. Take one for himself.” He was thanked in turn.

Falkirk snorted a humourless laugh as he reached for the bottle to inspect the picture of the turkey. It wasn't the most prestigious brand but the club had started stocking it since Falkirk had joined. It also had a healthy markup if Falkirk's account was anything to go by, so would make a decent tip for the porter.

After his third glass Falkirk was interrupted by a guffawing, “My boy?” Falkirk only glanced at Roebuck, then returned his attention to his glass. “Is something wrong my boy?”

“Bitches!” Falkirk spat, with a bit of a slur. He leaned closer to Roebuck, who'd sat down. “I didn't believe it! A bitch will be loyal to its Alpha at the expense of everything else.

Tapping his own chest, “Didn't believe it for me! Not Keading, his whole world revolved around Cody. He was so brave to do it alone, I don't think I could have. Darren, I'd bet he'd slug anyone... I thought...Villiers,” Falkirk spat the last name before correcting himself, “ Dzhamgerchinnov now. HE KNEW what he was doing was wrong.”

“I'm sure you are not so easily dominated,” Roebuck attempted to reassure and got a humourless laugh in answer.

“We don't know,” Falkirk hissed before straightening his back. The slur left his voice, and he spoke with perfect clarity.

“Falkirk Holmes, security and personality assessment, as commissioned by M, based on observations by the Siger Holmes surveillance unit, and evidence obtained. 'Falkirk Holmes is loyal only to his Alpha, in this case his father'. I was loyal to my father. I am loyal to James, I became M because no one else would stand for his bullshit, and M she wanted me to protect MI6 for her. On-a, Ontop, Ontopz, HER, she didn't count I didn't bond with her properly.”

Roebuck didn't recognise the last name but didn't think it wise to ask. “That's why we have packs. So a new bond doesn't result in an abandoned child.”
Falkirk snorted and returned to his drink. Falkirk sat fuming as he glared at the ever decreasing alcohol. Roebuck helped contribute to the diminishing bottle.

A new voice arrived, a rich Scottish brogue, low and melodramatic, “The gathering brow like the gathering storm, nursing her wrath to keep it warm.”

“The tempo of the poem doesn’t imply that inflection,” Falkirk shot, looking to Daniel.

“I know laddie. It's just one of my favourite quotes and it seems to fit the moment,” Daniel said picking up a chair and sitting at the small table too.

“Double Oh Three?” Daniel asked indicating whoever had called him had not indicated the reason for Falkirk's mood.

Snorting. Falkirk slurred to the bigger Alpha, “Fairbanks I understand. I can't condone his actions... at least not all of them. But I, I understand. Someone killed his omega and he wants to rage...”

While Falkirk spoke, Roebuck whispered to Daniel, “I believe David Villiers has abandoned his child,”

“The Bitch!” Falkirk spat.

“Come on Laddie, I'll take you home,” Daniel said.

“No! I'm not taking orders! Not from you! Or James! Or any alpha ever again!” Falkirk spat.

Roebuck tensed looking between the big Alpha and little Omega.

Daniel chuckled, darkly. “Okay, Laddie. You do know it's me you're talking to. What would I do if I gave James an order and he refused? Or anyone else, for that matter?”

Falkirk let his fist hit the table making a thump for emphasis, “Knock their blocks off! Pin them like their, there, they're, yeah that one, pin them like they're bitches!”

“What makes you think you are any different,” Daniel shot back.

“You wouldn't dare!” Falkirk accused.

“You're right, I couldn't hit you or pin you.” Daniel said but before Falkirk could feel relief he was over the Alpha's shoulder with an indignant squeak.

“I'm gonna tell Alec on you! He'll beat you up!”

“He can try,” Daniel said, taking Falkirk home.
Cracking an eye to the early morning light Falkirk's vision was filled with overly amuses ocean blue eyes. James lay on his side with his head propped up on his hand. On full display was the Alpha's bare and scarred chest, usually irresistible to Falkirk's early morning desires. Groaning Falkirk closed his eyes to the world. Everything getting fuzzy after Daniel manoeuvred them into his car. Then the things he'd said in front of Roebuck and Daniel, coming back.

“A fine example, coming home over the shoulder of a burly Alpha with a sailor in tow,” James teased.

Falkirk groaned again and covered his eyes. Something cool was pressed against his forehead so Falkirk opened his eyes again. A side on view of a glass containing the orang hangover cure greeted him.

Sitting up Falkirk accepted the glass. Rehydrating himself with the vitamin drink.

“It didn't go well with Villiers?” James asked.

Shaking his head, “I don't know what to do. They're taking care of Rupert, technically. Feeding him. Clothing him. Making sure he has an education,”

Falkirk didn't see the way James blinked rapidly at the description. Falkirk continued, “David's world revolves around his Alpha now... and soon...

“That could be fixed,” James hedged, watching for Falkirk's reaction. He or Alec could always have a word to frighten off Villiers' mate, if they were being nice. Make him vanish if they weren't.

Falkirk shook his head, “It's not just Dzhamgerchinov, it's Villiers too, and soon their child.”

James nodded. He leaned in and kissed Falkirk's forehead. Pulling back he said, “I'm taking them sailing today. You nurse your hangover. We'll be back for dinner. Hopefully you'll be up by then.”

“I learn! Didn't mix my drinks once so the hangover's not too bad.” Falkirk said, watching James get dressed.

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James pulled his car to a stop. He glanced at the two boys in the back. Andrew was buzzing and couldn't sit still. Rupert was hiding his emotions under a slowly cracking mask of indifference. Jumping out of his Aston, James pushed the chair forward so the boys could get out of the two door car.
The Yacht Haven, was a square building, two stories high. A balcony went round the upper story where there was restaurant, and created some shelter for the shops and offices that made up the ground level of the building.

Andrew ran for the jetties, until James called him back. Grabbing the holdall, James headed for the Yacht Haven. James stopped in one shops first, to pick out a dry suite for Rupert.

The dark haired boy came out of the changing room, to let James inspect the suite for fit. Judging it to be acceptable, James bought it. James just ripped off the tag for the chaser to scan while Rupert put on his trainers and wore the suit out.

In the office of the Yacht Haven, James signed the insurance and lease documents. The guy behind the desk then told James where to find the changing rooms, and asked if James wanted to store anything in a strong box, which he did for his Credit Cards and car keys.

Rupert sat and waited on the bench in the middle of the changing room, he only needed his life jacket and helmet which they would get on their way out. James just changed into his dry suite, in the middle of the open space, while Andrew used a cubical.

James' eyes kept flicking to Rupert. Thinking of himself, after the death of his parents. All his needs were met, technically. He always wanted someone to be there, just for him, and he suffered for it. He grew up cold and hard. A hardness that had never left him, even after being bound to an omega then becoming a father.

Sitting on the bench beside Rupert. James reached out and put his hand on the boy's far shoulder, and felt Rupert cringe down. He felt like he needed to say something, but not what. James wasn't good with talking, give him some ass that needed kicking any day over talking.

Wimping out James said, “Ever been sailing before?”

“No...James,” Rupert responded stiffly. Only having stopped saying Mr Bond the day before.

Andrew burst out of the cubical, bouncing with excitement. He hurried his dad on, wanting to get out on the water. James put their clothes into one of the lockers and then took the boys out to the berth with their assigned yacht moored. More of a dinghy really. A good, small craft for teaching the boys the basics out on the placid lake.

They spent the day on the lake. James teaching the boys the basics. Like everything else, Rupert did as he was told and little more. James at least now understood, and was familiar with the mentality. There was no point investing in anything when Rupert's life was so isolated.

When they had finished for the day. Andrew chatted away throughout the drive home. Talking at length about how great the day was. His hair literally windswept, and not just like his Papa's naturally wild style. The dark blue eyes were wide and alive, in a way James recognised in himself from the adrenalin rush.

When Andrew took a breath between words, James said, “Rupert, you don't talk about school much,” he didn't talk about anything much truth be told. “Any friends or anything? If it wasn't for Alec, I think I'd have run away.”

“No.”
Andrew said, “How can't you have friends?”

James caught the terrified look in Rupert's eyes. Before the boy could come up with an answer James changed subject, “How's your swimming then? Did you need your life jacket?”

“I'm okay.”

“Ever done open water swimming, with waves and currents?”

“No, James. Only in a pool.”

“Why is swimming important?” Andrew asked.

James sent the reflection of his son a smirk. “I was thinking about a little holiday. I've got a really nice yacht in Italy. We could go before School starts again.”

“Really? Yay!” Andrew squeaked. Then pinched his nose to stop smelling the young Alpha's distressed que.

Rupert blinked back tears and said, “I thought I was just staying a week?”

James swore internally. “Oh, yes I forgot about that. Maybe Villiers will still let you come, if you want.”

Rupert looked out the window, his face losing the battle to stay straight. James wondered if the boy knew more than he was letting on.

By the time they got home, Rupert had crushed down on his emotions, quickly learning not to hope for anything, so there would never be disappointment. James wanted to rage. Going into the house, through the kitchen, Andrew tried to tell Hudson and Mrs Bridges about his day, when James sent the boys to get washed before dinner.

While Rupert and Andrew went upstairs, to have a proper shower and change before dinner. James went to his mate's library. Falkirk wasn't in the room, not that James expected him to be here. His mate's desk was to the left of the door, with the seating area further back and to the right, by the fire place.

Going to the shelves on the right, on the far side of the chimney breast. James found the photo albums. Starting with rather cheap ones with plastic covers. Later ones were faux leather then real leather. It was the second one along that had the photos James was looking for.

Finding the picture he wanted. James looked like he was asleep in it. He was reclining against the black leather couch, in their old flat. He wore a white T-shirt, while cradling a baby to his chest. Curled up, Rupert couldn't have been more than a foot long, as James held him. Rupert looked at the camera with his big dark eyes, while sucking his tiny thumb.

Hearing the soft padding of feet behind him. James said, “Can't he stay?”

Falkirk said, “It would have to be Villiers' choice. He would have to sign away his parental responsibility. We could then adopt Rupert.”
“Do it,” James growled. “And he's not going back to that bloody school!”

James felt his mate press against him. Both looking at the images from when M's husband, the man that was David Villiers' alpha had died. When Falkirk, James and even Alec looked after the baby Rupert during the breaking of Villiers' bond.

Falkirk went to the phone on his desk and put in the first call to his lawyers.

James having sat down on the settee, flicking the stiff pages over. Rupert had been with them for just over two months, so there was a quite a few photos from the time. He lingered on one picture Alec must have taken, all that could be seen of him was a hand coming into frame with a finger extended. James and Falkirk, zonked out on the couch, and were dead to the world. Falkirk sat up, with head bowed forward, looking like he was praying, his hands clasped around a full bag for a soiled nappy. While James' head was hanging right back over the couch and the camera could see right up one of his nostrils, the other looked like Alec was picking from the perspective.

James remembered the pain it caused Falkirk when Rupert left, not just the emotional pain. There were many levels of bonding for alphas and omegas. From proximity bonds where just being close created the weak bond Falkirk had with Alphas like Hudson, Daniel or Rupert years ago. Up to the full mate bond like the one Falkirk shared with James.

“It's done,” Falkirk said, breaking James out of his head-space. “The Lawyer will draw up the paperwork. We'll need to go in on Monday to confirm and sign some stuff. He'll then send the documents to Villiers.”

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Coming out of the offices, of an ornate sandstone building. James cupped his mate's cheek and kissed him. Saying their goodbyes, James headed for his own car while Falkirk went for his.

Stopping at one of his favourite spots. A small, cellar bistro he knew Falkirk hated. Wine racks lined the walls. Small round tables filled the underground room, all rather intimate, with flickering candles in wicker chianti bottles. In the corner Alec was waiting for him. Alec didn't much like it here either, but didn't pretend like Falkirk did.

Alec dropped the narrow menu card down. “If you're wanting to get my panties off, I expect the dom-prig-non and es-card-got.”

James laughed and took his chair. “I thought you were chab-liss man?”

When the waitress came over, Alec was sophisticated and charming as he ordered a half bottle of champagne, the onion soup for himself and the escargot for James, followed by the dish of the day, veal, for both.

“So,” James said, as they settled into their lunch. “The Lawyer wasn't too optimistic. Unless Villiers gives up Rupert there's little we can do.”

“So it comes down to whether Villiers singes or not?” James just nodded in answer. Alec added, “You're really not happy. What are you planning?”

James shrugged. He pushed aside the dimpled plate of garlic butter smothered snails. “I'm not having him grow up like... like us.”
“Like you, you mean?” Alec said and saw the stony expression that fell over his friend's face. “You never know, being asked to give up Rupert might shock the bastard into acting right. If the worst happens, we could go pay Dzhamgerchinov a visit, break his fingers one at a time in front of Villiers until he signs.”

“You really know how to cheer a guy up.” James, deadpan straight.

“'Course I do. Why come to this garlic stinking wine cellar but to make you happy.”

James' apatite returned as they talked, so picked up the shell of a snail in the tongs so he could spear the meat with the miniature trident like fork.

Alec asking him to come into MI6 one day. To help show the pups right out of the most elite military units, their training counted for little when it came to MI6. Alec adding, “Really the best training that lot had was in the bar fights when they were waisted. Not one knows how to fight really dirty. 'Biting for bitches!', scratching too, bull-shit!”

“What the hell is it you do?” James suddenly asked. “You're something to do with internal affairs, and training and operations.”

Alec shrugged, like it didn't really matter to him. “Mostly I'm M's enforcer. I intimidate the recruits, the other instructor, the assessors, all the staff really. None know what I am. Some still think I'm a Russian spy. Being a, a quadruple agent I think, no one knows whose side I'm actually on. They really don't see my side is the same as Falkirk's, our alpha's, our pack's, our kid's.”

“He really does go 'Supervillain' when someone innocent is threatened,” James mused, thinking of all the times his mate went that cool sort of ape-shit, when he didn't care about laws or anyone or anything standing in his way.

“You expect something else from the Holmes genes, or our, M and Daniel's education. If he had ambition, god, he could rival the supervillains of SMERSH, or SPECTRE... Is it bad to have a secret desire to see Falkirk as Number One of SPECTRE?”

“Yes,” James said with a chuckle. Standing, he dropped several notes down on the table, more than enough for the entire meal and a tip. “If he was a real baddy, we'd all be so totally screwed, and not in the fun way.”

Giving a goodbye to Alec, James headed home. Alec's complaining about having to go back to work, getting quieter as James climbed the stairs back up to street level.

Arriving home, James found Keading a bit harassed with so many. James stepped into the breach, recommending the two of them take the kids to the park for a while. Keading got the kids organised, James went to get the missing one.

Knocking on the bedroom door, on the second floor. Rupert called for him to come in. Pushing the door open, James found the boy standing at the foot of the bed. James' eyes going to the pillow in the corner to the left. It didn't take a Sherlock level deduction to figure the boy had been hiding in the corner.

“We're going to the park,” James said. “Let's go get some fresh air.”
James deliberately not phrasing his words as a question. Rupert nodded, where if he was given a choice James knew it would be to stay separate from everyone else.

When Rupert was close enough, James put his hand on the boy's far shoulder. They walked down the stairs side by side.

Out on the pavement, Keading looked to Rupert and said, “Can you push Michelle?”

When Rupert nodded, Keading went on ahead of the group, making sure Andrew, Colum and Yulian didn't dart across roads or anything.

James walked with Rupert and Michelle. While Cody brought up the rear, the alpha in him still not happy with another alpha near his omega sister.

Looking at the boy beside him, James thought about being honest. That wasn't a good idea yet. There were too many outcomes and the uncertainty would only do harm.

“It's been great having you,” James said.

Rupert glanced at him, with his very dark eyes. Something sad shining through. “Thank you for having me.”

“Any time, Rupert,” James put his arm around the boy again. “You know you stayed with us before, in our old flat. You were a baby back then. Falkirk even got a nice picture of you and me, remind me to show it to you.”

James knew Rupert was getting bit upset. James leaned in to whisper, “Back then I was sad to see you go. Falkirk more so,” shifting his hand from Rupert's shoulder to stroke his dark hair, “If you ever need a place to aim for, come here. Everyone should have a place to aim for when they need to run, mine was my old house in Scotland.”

James straightened up, keeping himself and Rupert close. Sending an occasional glance to the suspicious boy several yards behind them.

James whispered, “You'll always be welcomed, Rupert. No matter what.”
Coming home to an atmosphere. Keading just glanced towards Falkirk's library. Taking the hint, Falkirk headed for the door.

Falkirk found James sitting in the darkened room. A thick envelope was open with the contents splayed on the low table. James said into the darkness, “It was addressed to you. I saw the post mark and... I didn't think you'd mind.”

Falkirk made sure the door was closed. Taking off his glassed he rubbed his eyes and sat down. Two days since the paperwork and letter had been dispatched. It was now back. He knew what it would say, well no he didn't. James might be pissed off because Villiers was being stubborn.

Flicking through the paperwork. Falkirk came to the last page. Signed by David Dzhamgerchinov, witnessed by Grigori Dzhamgerchinov and with a notary's stamp. He threw the papers down.

Falkirk said, “I don't know what's worse. He said yes, or that he might have said no. Rupert is here now and we can make sure he's cared for.”

James flicked his eyes to his mate. Falkirk growing a little uncomfortable under the man's gaze. James said, “You would take in anyone who needed it, no matter what?”

Falkirk relaxed and nodded. “Yes.”

James gave a soft smile. He stood and held out his hand, to help Falkirk to his feet. James said, “Is it bad that I want to crack open a bottle of champagne?”

“I don't know,” Falkirk admitted. “Some things are worth celebrating, like a new family member, or that we won't need to fight, blackmail or intimidate. Then there's Rupert, how's he going to feel and react? Not well, I'll imagine. Andrew too, a stranger has just become his brother.”

James reached under his chair and pulled out a photograph in a simple wooden frame. He held it out to Falkirk. James was not one for photographs usually, it was Falkirk that liked them.

Falkirk studied the image of James and the baby Rupert. Standing he went to the fireplace, where there were other framed pictures. He moved the half dozen pictures of family and pack until he could slip in the one with James and Rupert.

“Shouldn't have let him go the first time!” James growled and stalked out the room.

Falkirk not happy, rearranged the pictures. He liked an order or symmetry of some description. He tried all the children on the right, and the adults on the left. That didn't work, some pictures could be in either group. Moving the pictures, so the ones with himself, Andrew, James and Rupert were
clustered on the right, and the ones with Alec, Daniel, Selene, Keading, and their children on the left.

Standing back, he liked that arrangement. Their family on the right of the clock, and the rest of the core pack on the left.

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Falkirk and James entered Andrew's room at bed time. The two laying down either side of Andrew. Falkirk looked over his son's shoulder to the book he was reading. From what little Falkirk could tell it was an adventure book.

James said, “Rupert needs a new home.” Andrew responded with a distracted hum.

Falkirk just stroke Andrew's thick hair. James said, “Papa and I are going to ask Rupert to stay.”

That got Andrew's attention.

“Why?”

Falkirk said, “Because I once made a promises to take care of Rupert if is parents couldn't. It's time for me to keep the promise.”

“So I don't actually get a say?” Andrew said.

“No. I hope you see it's the right thing to do,” Falkirk responded. Andrew still hadn't reacted positively or negativity so Falkirk was at a loss to his thinking.

As Andrew returned to reading his book James said, “It's okay to be annoyed.” Getting a shrug in response.

“Do you like Rupert?” Falkirk asked and got another shrug.


“That que is his fear. When he feels happy and safe here, it will stop. Andrew, if you have concerns or anything come to Daddy or I,” Falkirk said quietly getting an absent response of, “'kay.”

“You're not a baby speak properly,” Falkirk chastised.

Turning back around Andrew looked at his Papa. Completely precocious, very like his uncle Mycroft, “Very well Father, If I have issue with Cousin Rupert I will let you or Daddy know.”

“Good boy,” Falkirk said and kissed the forehead. With a final warning not to mention anything to Rupert James kissed Andrew's forehead too, and wished him good night.

Going down the stairs, the two hugging close. James said to his mate, “So when are we going to tell Rupert?”

“I don't know. Soon.” Falkirk said. “The weekend? When we can both spend time with him before
and after.”

James nodded.

--

Falkirk opened the front door, to a host of stampeding children. Keading came in last, carrying Michelle. The goodbye was rushed and buried under the growing noise of half a dozen children. Falkirk waved to James and Keading and went to his waiting car.

Selene was waiting inside. She always accompanied Keading in Falkirk's official car as it went to Daniel's to pick up Yulian, then went to pick up Colum. Then brought Keading to Falkirk's house where he looked after the offspring of the pack. During term time, she and Falkirk then dropped the older children at school. Which reminded Falkirk, Yulian and Colum would be starting after the summer. Leaving Michelle as the only one not going to school. Schooling, Falkirk needed to arrange that for Rupert, James' opinion was so very clear on the matter.

“What's this dinner thing you're going to?” Selene asked, while looking over Falkirk's schedule.

“Oh, I don't know,” Falkirk said, distractedly.

“Something wrong... Oh, did you hear back from David? Keading said James was a bit odd yesterday.”

Falkirk nodded and told Selene about the returned documents. It was all but said and done now. Once the documents were registered, it would be official.

“Like buses,” Selene said. When Falkirk didn't get her she added, “Well it felt like it was so long for me to get pregnant, then we've had three new pack members in the space of three months.”

“Yes,” Falkirk said, quietly. Sombrely. “A pity two came to us surrounded in so much heartache.”

--

Falkirk shook his head. How he got here he didn't know. Where politics were concerned, he tried to stay as far away as possible. Mallory, Falkirk blamed Mallory. The Prime Minister was the one talking and Falkirk was sitting beside him in the private function room of the hotel. Only a single long table was occupied for the dinner.

Falkirk poked at the tower like piece of fillet stake on his plate. Rich red wine, bloody red meat, and the conversation! Falkirk was preying for a terrorist, word war three, something! Everyone spoke in a supercilious way, in privileged accents from the likes of Eton, Oxford and Cambridge's, one even boasted of Yale, while another mentioned the Harvard Business School. To Falkirk, the conversation blurred into a droning wa-wa-wa-wa sound. A bit like the flamingos at the zoo.

“...Sir Thomas....”

Falkirk snapped his attention to the man sitting directly across from him. “Pardon?” he said.

From the far end of the table an older alpha said, “Omegas! No head for business!”

Twenty-five windbag politicians and businessmen fell absolutely silent. Falkirk broke the tension
by laughing, “Yes, quite right. No head for business me,” the others around the table gave weak chuckles, and slowly returned to their meal.

Cautiously, the man opposite Falkirk said, “You might not have a head for business, M. I hope you don't mind me using the title?” when Falkirk allowed the use of his MI6 title, the man added, “You do have influence. Here and abroad, Secretary Wade and Director Ryan in particular. You're on friendly terms with Director Lin, in China too.”

Falkirk looked to Mallory, “Would you please translate?”

Another round of chuckles went up, at the Omega deferring to an Alpha. Mallory said, “Mr Parker is MD for BP. Peters is from Shell. Ms. Watson is from Total. Jennings form ExxonMobil. They are hoping we would help them gain access to a new market.”

“Iran?” Falkirk asked.

The man across from Falkirk, he now knew was Parker said, “Given the Prime Minister's thawing of the hostility with Iran. We,” the man indicated the oil executives, “We were hoping that a dialogue could be opened with the country.”

Looking to the one boasting of Harvard over Yale, the one Mallory pointed to when mentioning ExxonMobil. Falkirk said, “I thought you'd have your own lobby groups?”

The guy with that privileged, posh, up state New York accent, said, “It would help if a respected authority on world security would say Iran isn't the threat that it's believed to be...”

Falkirk laughed. “Not a threat, that's real funny.”

Mallory said, “There is opportunity,”

“I'm not disputing that,” Falkirk said. “Just don't think for one second Iran or any enemy, or even allies for that matter are out for anything but themselves. That's just human nature,” waving his hand to encompass all the executives, “Aren't you all here for the vested interest of your own pay-checks, bonuses, shareholders and profits?”

Mallory rubbed his face, watching his pack-alpha insult a table full of people. Before someone could answer the insult, he said, “M, the risks are understood. The opportunity warrants it.”

“See, that makes sense,” Falkirk said. Looking round the table he said, “Okay, I'll help. Not for free though. Say ten percent...” the entire table gasped, their faces going very pale.

Mallory cleared his throat and said, “I think your lack of business sense has reared it's head, M. How about point-one percent of all profits from the Iranian oil exploration?”

“That seems very low.” Falkirk argued.

“Around five million dollars,” the man from BP said. “One of the biggest individual cuts of the pie, so to speak.”

Falkirk looked to Mallory, who nodded. Falkirk turned back to the man who had done most of the speaking with him and extended his hand. Across the table, the two shook hands. The ExxonMobil executive reminded, “No American company can deal with Iran. You will talk to Wade and Ryan,
to help us get our foot in the door?"

Falkirk nodded. “Yes I can talk to them. That's all I can talk to though.”

“Our boys in Washington can do the rest,” the Exxon executive said, sitting back in his chair with a smile on his face.

Mallory looked to the Managing Director of BP. Now came the time for his price. “I hope this downsizing thing of the Grangemouth Refinery, is now off the cards.”

“Yes, you've saved the jobs, Prime Minister,” the executive said. “Just in time for the election.”

Mallory smiled at the executive, dangerously. “Then with this new Iranian deal, wouldn't BP need to expand its refining capabilities?”

“Very well, Prime Minister.” the BP Executive said. “Five hundred new jobs.”

“Fifteen-hundred!” Mallory demanded. Reluctantly, the executive nodded to the creation of more jobs.

Leaving the dinner, something more personal started to weigh on Falkirk. It was Friday and he and James agreed to tell Rupert at the weekend. As his car drove through the streets, he started to wonder when to actually tell Rupert.

Arriving home. Falkirk entered the library, where he phoned Wade first. He was quite honest with the man, and was told in turn the oil companies in America were putting on quite a bit of pressure to open up a dialogue with Iran like Britain was doing. They didn't want to be the last in, if the oil resources could be accessed.

Ryan, when Falkirk phoned, he played a different angle. With foreign companies going into Iran, and employing locals it could be a new way to embed agents into the tightly controlled totalitarian state. Ryan couldn't give an endorsement, but agreed he might not fight the issue as fiercely as he could.

Sitting back, after having made his calls. Falkirk heard the door click and open. James came in, cradling two cut crystal tumblers, both with an amber liquid inside. Holding one out to Falkirk, James asked about the meal.

Moving on after talking about the meal, James said, “Rupert, really doesn't want to invest here. He knows something is up.”

Falkirk nodded. “He's bright.”

“Tomorrow's going to be nice. So I booked a punt, we can go 'messing about on the river' and have a pick-nick somewhere.”

Finishing his drink, Falkirk said, “Sounds nice. Let's get to bed. We'll talk to Rupert on Sunday, when Andrew and the others are occupied.”

There! He'd picked an exact place and time. No 'this isn't the right moment' or anything else.
Sunday when the pack gathered. Rupert, had Keading beside him. With Michelle between them, the omega girl liked being made a fuss of, and Rupert gave her one of his so very rare smiles.

Mycroft rushed in, calling, “Dear brother, could I have a word with you about Mallory's and your foreign policy.”

“Not today, Mycroft,” Falkirk said, knowing if he dealt with his brother now he wouldn't have the energy to deal with Rupert.

Over the traditional Sunday brunch, Cody said he wanted to go to the park with Sherlock again. So the pack split. Sherlock and Mycroft leading an expedition to the park, while others stayed with Daniel, Alec and Selene to practice in the back garden.

Falkirk waited in the library for James and Rupert's arrival. Drumming his fingers on the wooden arm of the Macintosh settee Falkirk could feel his anger rising. Taking a calming breath, the last thing Falkirk wanted was Rupert to misinterpret his scent que. Jumping at the sound of the door swinging open Falkirk thought he had failed.

When Rupert entered he looked between James and Falkirk, sad and terrified. The miniscule amount of self confidence he had deserted him. Head dropping and shoulders hunched Rupert waited for what the grown-ups were about to tell him.

Patting the space beside him Falkirk invited Rupert to sit and said, “We would like to talk to you.”

Hesitantly Rupert obeyed. Falkirk put his arm around the young Alpha. James took the chair, glancing at the framed picture on the mantelpiece, the one of himself and the baby Rupert.

Falkirk said, quietly, “When I was away. On the way back I stopped in on David.”

Rupert cringed and sunk further into himself. His voice was quiet and hollow “Papa's not coming. That's why James was asking if I could swim. You're stuck with me.” A hand disappeared from view as it swiped at the down turned cheek.

“I want you to stay, we're not stuck with you,” Falkirk said.

“Until school starts?”

James moved to the settee, it was a bit of a squeeze with the three of them. Placing an arm around Falkirk, James pulled him closer with Rupert squished between them.

Falkirk said, “No. Longer than that. We're adopting you.”

James adding, “You're not going back to Eton either. I'll never send anyone there, or to anywhere else.”

The realisation he had been abandoned finally hit Rupert. He crumbled. Clinging to Falkirk, hiding his face from view.

Falkirk wrapped his arms around Rupert stroking the silently crying child. Focusing on not letting his anger at Villiers show. Falkirk stroked the dark head pressed to his chest. A set of arms closed
around Falkirk and Rupert both. James leaned in to nuzzle the omega. The scent and contact allowed Falkirk to relax and in turn comfort Rupert.

“You'll need to update that,” James said indicating the drawing above the fireplace. Rupert looked to the pack diagram, hesitantly he turned his head to the Alpha beside him and then the Omega on the other side.

Falkirk brushed the tear from the boy's damp cheek. “It may take time to understand this, we want you here, this is your home Rupert.”
Some scenes that couldn't be easily fit into the last book, and not how I wanted to start the next book of Falkirk's saga.

Chapter Notes

These are some scenes between one book (Like Buses) and another (Giants in the playground). I suppose I could have just edited out the scenes or added them to other chapters. Anyway. A new book starts with the family on holiday, on my normal Sunday update (tomorrow).

“Tanner,” Falkirk greeted, when the beta entered his office. “Thanks for coming.”

“All that my job, heel when M calls?”

Falkirk gave a polite laugh at the attempted joke. Inviting his chief of staff to sit. Falkirk said, “MI6 is going over to the B-team. James wants a holiday. So Daniel and Alec, and Selene and Keading are taking theirs too.”

“I'll prepare the hand over to Deputy Director Butler. May I ask where you're going?”

“In a professional sense, no. As a pack member I don't mind telling you we're going sailing around the Med. We'll stay a couple days at Daniel's Island. For the love of all that's good, make sure Mycroft doesn't write that information down! Nor is it to be recorded anywhere on MI6's system. I don't want any leaks.”

Tanner nodded. They then started discussing the logistics of M going off the grid for a couple of weeks. While one of the two Deputy Directors took over the day-to-day running of MI6, with Tanner's assistance.

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The Physio had just returned Brayan to a day room which is where Falkirk found him. Because of James' desire for a sailing trip Falkirk visited his old bodyguard during the week. The change in routine disturbed the injured Alpha for a while. Now he could speak the affects of the Aphasia was more notable, words and names were just not present, with Brayan getting quite stressed when he got stuck.

After Brayan had calmed down from the upset in his schedule. Falkirk asked about his recovery and the Physiotherapist he got on with. There was a lot of stumbling over missing words. Moving on Falkirk told Bryan about the holiday and how he wouldn't see him for a few weeks.
The hazel eyes spoke of the disappointment and fear, while the rest of Brayan tried to reassure Falkirk. It would be unfortunate Selene was going to America so couldn't visit. Darren had agreed to visit. He hadn't spent as much time with the injured Alpha but it would have to do.

The next stop on Falkirk's list was the depths of MI6. The room Falkirk commissioned for the recovery of Omegas from bonding was the first for Omegas but there had been Alpha versions in operation for decades. While the omega recovery room was dark, warm with soft furnishings. The Alpha version was a cell, with heavy manacles and nothing that could be used as a weapon.

It was inside one Falkirk found the partly restrained Double O. A tether from Fairbanks' wrist went to a wall anchor, allowed him movement around the room. Sitting in a chair Fairbanks had a small gold ring in one hand and a necklace wrapped round the knuckles of the other, while both rested in his lap. The Double O was playing nice. Falkirk had seen Alphas that needed to have their wrists and ankles secured to the wall, like they were in some dungeon.

Turning his gaze from the objects he held. Fairbanks glared at Falkirk. Murder in his cold dead eyes, for the one who imprisoned him.

Falkirk had tried different tacts with the Operative and today he had decided on empathy. “I've been in your position...”

“You walked into E branch, shot what's-her-name, spent some time in the brig, hubby came back and all was well in the world. You even got a promotion out if it,” Fairbanks said with maliciousness dripping from every word.

“Every instinct I had told me to follow a path. Like I'm doing for you, My friends didn't let me give in to that self destructive instinct. I am not abandoning you to yours.” Falkirk said. Fairbanks didn't believe or understand Falkirk but he eventually would. “I'll be back in a couple of weeks. Mr Fairbanks, I'll see you then.”

--

Daniel and Alec where already gone. Selene was just packing up and turning her office over for the temporary use of Butler's security detail.

Falkirk was giving his last minute instructions to Tanner in the beta's office, Falkirk then went to his own. Sitting behind Falkirk's Rennie Mackintosh desk was Rhett Butler. The tall and older Alpha, looking a bit out of place in Falkirk's mind. The Alpha sniffed the air and ran his fingers over the gouge marks on the desk, the ones Falkirk tended to make when he was really pissed off about something.

Removing an envelope from his pocket. Falkirk said. “You will be going to Moscow, while I'm away. The FSB have finally settled down after the whole Karla events. Tanner will brief you fully. While there could you give this to the new FSB Director?”

Butler took the ivory, and gold embossed, envelope. Eyeing it with suspicion. Falkirk assured, “Just a formal invitation to visit and a personal dinner.”

“I will ensure he gets it personally, M,” Butler responded.

“You should have everything else in hand,” Falkirk stated looking about his office, thinking he was actually going to miss it. “Goodbye, Butler. Don't do anything I wouldn't do?”
“Ah, good. I get to start World War Three, nuke China and Russia and overthrow the British government. That will be fun.”

“No, Mr Butler. I like China, and director Lin. I have the new FSB Director by his balls, he just needs to know it.... Feel free to do whatever the hell you want with Parliament,” Falkirk nodded to the wiry haired omega at the PA’s desk through the glass wall. “Just leave Mallory alone or he'll blow you to kingdom come.”

Butler gave an unsure nod. “Don't piss off the omegas, check!” Not sure where M's honesty ended and his sarcasm began. “Do enjoy your holiday, M.”

“Good speed, Mr Butler.”

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Falkirk arrived home, to find James in the middle of the foyer. The bigger alpha cupping both cheeks of a terrified looking Rupert. Nose to nose, James said to the boy, “Can you do me a huge, super-sized favour.”

“Okay, James.” came the meek answer.

Falkirk was about to step in, Rupert looked real scared.

James said to the boy, “Can you take Andrew to the park for, 60, no make that 90 minutes. Before I wring his little neck.”

When Rupert agreed, James let go of Rupert and shouted upstairs, “ANDREW! GET YOUR LITTLE ARSE DOWN HERE!”

Andrew raced down the stairs, his arms full. He whined, “But I'm packing.”

“You're going to the park with Rupert. Papa and I will pack for you!” the stressing James snapped.

“I can pack on my own, I'm big enough, I know what I'm doing...”

“ANDREW!” James took a deep calming breath. “Please, go play. Rupert will go with you.”

Andrew threw his clothes down, stomped down the stairs as loudly as he could, ripped open the front door and slammed it behind him. James mimed throttling him, behind Andrew's back. Rupert ran to catch up to Andrew. Falkirk brushing Rupert's hair as he passed him.

Falkirk went up to his Alpha, and wound his arms about James' waist. Leaning his head on James' shoulder with his nose by the Alpha's neck, where his scent was strongest.

“Do we pay Keading?” James said. “Because of we do, it's no where near enough.”

Falkirk just hugged his alpha tighter. This was one of the longest times James had spent at home in one go.

“What do you expect, coming from us? Placid and docile?” Falkirk said into the muscled neck, nuzzling and rubbing against his alpha. “There's a reason why his teacher said, Andrew doesn't get
on with other alphas.”
Giants in the Playground: Yachting Holiday.

Chapter Summary


Chapter Notes

Thanks for reading, comments and kudos.

Laying along the sunken bench around the helm. Falkirk's left hand held a book while the other had a hold of the large wheel of the yacht. Khaki castaway shorts, with designer-frayed hemming. A loose weave shirt, open to allow the sun to touch his chest. A pair of round prescription sunglasses and a cream brimmed hat completed Falkirk's holiday attire.

James was teaching Andrew and Rupert the art of sailing. His deep voice coming from nearer the bow. Falkirk liked being the passenger and had given a disgruntled huff when James instructed him to take the helm.

Rupert was still highly unsure of his place in their home. It had quickly become clear he was afraid Falkirk and especially James would tire of him and send him away. He would accept almost anything, refusing to voice opinion or desire. His shopping trip for the holiday had been disastrous he had insisted what he had would be fine, even though most of his cloths were becoming too small. Eventually Falkirk had resorted to ordering Rupert to try things on and buying them regardless.

The holiday had been the next issue. Rupert had thought it a ploy to abandon him somewhere. He had not voiced his concern but Falkirk knew it to be true. Shaking his head to dispel the morbid, angry thoughts Falkirk focused on the words of his trashy romance novel. Only time in a stable loving home would heal Rupert's wounds and Falkirk had let Villiers take him once before 'Not again!' Falkirk swore.

“Oh, Driver! Could we avoid the cliffs, please?” James' voice carried over the sound of wind and waves.

Looking up Falkirk saw James' annoyed glare and a wall of cliffs in the distance. Pulling the wheel down the cliffs slowly moved to the left and the open sea came into view again.

“Thank you, Driver. ” James called.

“You're welcome!”

James, Andrew and Rupert wore only shorts. Both Andrew and Rupert were a bit funny not having developed their sea legs yet. Both had fallen at some point, luckily both had been able to swim and it was good practice at recovery.
James came to Falkirk not long after, relieving him of his steering duties. Feeling his stomach growl Falkirk asked if anyone else was hungry and got two enthusiastic responses and one hesitant nod. Rupert offered to help but Falkirk reassured he was doing enough with James.

Coming down the ladder Falkirk was in the galley with a radio and workstation to his right. Towards the bow was the sitting/dining area, and his and James’ cabin at the bow. Behind him was a small cabin with bunk beds and a storage area.

Pulling out a loaf of bread Falkirk started making sandwiches and squash. Without the horizon Falkirk couldn't quite judge the movement and was buffeted about the small galley. Moving to the hatch Falkirk called up and Rupert appeared, he was handed the glasses and jug of squash. Managing to hold the plate Falkirk climbed the ladder to see James lazing in his spot reading his book.

“Lunch,” Falkirk said and plucked his book from the Alpha's grasp.

After lunch Rupert offered to wash but Falkirk reassured him that wasn't necessary.

James called gleefully, “I've got something for you two to do!”

After Falkirk had washed up and reclaimed his spot James took the boys to the side of the boat. With Rupert on Starboard and Andrew on Port James showed them how the cast the fishing lines. Everything was going well until Andrew caught a fish and both boys went very pale as James showed them how to kill and gut the thing, well out of Falkirk’s view. The first Falkirk saw of it was a cleaned fish ready to be packed in the fridge.

With clear horror Rupert felt the rod jerk in his grasp. Falkirk watched as James came up behind him and wrapped his arms around the young Alpha. Rupert seemed to forget the fish as James guided his movements. With quiet instructions and words of encouragement Rupert reeled in a fish. Under James' instruction Rupert cleaned it and placed it beside the first in the fridge.

Falkirk gave a smile, watching Rupert looked to James for approval as he baited the hook. With a smile James patted him on the head and watched the cast before going to see how Andrew was doing.

Andrew went through the same process as Rupert. He caught his second fish and this time had to gut it himself. “Look!” Andrew said, passing his Papa and holding up his fish.

Falkirk gave a smile, liking his fish pre filleted and preferably cooked. “Very good,” Falkirk said and Andrew went to place his fish beside the others.

After another couple fish good enough to eat had been caught James told the boys to relax. Checking the position James took the wheel and steered them to a small bay. Soon enough the sails were down and James told Rupert to release the anchor.

When everything was secure and James had stopped issuing instructions an ‘eep' drew Falkirk's attention.

James was down in a predatory crouch with Andrew in his sights. With a sudden rush of movement James had closed in on his son and thrown him over board. Falkirk looked over the side to see Andrew breaking the surface with an indignant splutter.
A low dangerous chuckle sounded and Falkirk saw Rupert freeze, squarely in James' sights. A bit slower an more gently Rupert was whisked up bridal style and thrown overboard. Falkirk followed his movement and watched him land in the water. Rupert broke the surface of the crystal clear water, Andrew giggling at him not far off.

Looking back. The Alpha was smiling, dangerously. His crystal blue eyes glinting in the sun.

“DON’T YOU BLOODY...”

It was too late. Falkirk's world was spinning and he had just enough time to tuck his legs so he could bomb into the water. Coming up Falkirk took a breath. The defined body of his Alpha was silhouetted against the clear blue skies, looking down from the boat's side. Falkirk threw his sodden hat and glasses at James.

“We will be having words, James Bond. Mark my words!”

“Yeah, yeah, Siberia you keep threatening,” James said, easily catching the projectile. Turning he dropped the glasses wrapped in the hat, onto the bench. With his back turned James didn't see the the shirt coming until the cold went material hit his sun warmed skin.

“There will be repercussions!” Falkirk called.

Squatting down then straightening up James repeated the move a few times before diving into the water with grace and skill, barely making a ripple. He cut through the water just below the surface. Aiming for the two sets of kicking legs.

A scream sounded as both Andrew and Rupert disappeared below the surface. James came up first with a broad smile on his face followed by the spluttering boys. Andrew was the first to retaliate attempting to dunk his Daddy.

After the horse play that Falkirk and Rupert didn't quite take to. James swam with Andrew and Rupert to the beach. Falkirk pulled himself back up up onto the boat. By the time James had returned, Falkirk had filled the small dinghy with the supplies for tonight.

Arriving at the beach Andrew and Rupert had prepared a fire pit and ringed it with stones. A small pile of brush, twigs and branches had also been gathered. Rupert helped Falkirk wrap potatoes in foil and skewer the fish from earlier onto some of the striped branches. Andrew helped set and start the fire. When the initial flames had died down Falkirk placed the wrapped potatoes at the edge of the fire.

With an instruction not to wander too far Andrew went to explore with Rupert following. James sat behind Falkirk wrapping his arms around him and under the fresh shirt Falkirk had put on. Resting his chin on the Omega's shoulder James watched the flames dance and the eyes pop in the fish. Every so often Falkirk broke the contact to lean forward and twist the fish or potatoes to cook the other side. James kissed the long column of his mate's neck, feeling the pulse against his lips. All the time the Alpha's fingers caressed and stroked whatever skin he could.

Using a stick Falkirk rolled a potato towards him, testing it and finding it soft. Nodding to James the alpha went to call the children while Falkirk got the other potatoes out of the embers.

Falkirk noticing both bare chested boys having gained a few scraps after exploring the dense
foliage. Each returning person was given a potato and fish. James with asbestos-fingers picked chunk of fish and potato and ate it. Falkirk waited, true to form Andrew tried to copy his dad and burned his finger tips.

Handing Andrew a fork, Falkirk said, “I'll need to get the TCP out for you two.”

Andrew scowled and glared at his Papa. Rupert just accepted what was going to happen.

“Can we sleep here?” Andrew asked, after dinner and the antiseptic applied to any scrapes. With a wide smile on his small face, turning puppy-dog eyes from Papa to Daddy.

James hummed thoughtfully. “I'm not sure,” James mused.

“You brought hammocks,” Falkirk reminded, spoiling the Alpha's fun.

After dinner James showed them how to build the free standing frame for the hammock. Despite Andrew's desire to see the full array of stars free of light pollution, he fell asleep the moment he lay down.

Rupert wasn't much better. Falkirk made sure he would be warm enough during the night then kissed his forehead and said, “Pleasant dreams.” Knowing Rupert had a problem with nightmares.

Falkirk returned to the fireside, sitting between James' legs. A tin cup appeared with an amber liquid inside. Sighing in happiness, Falkirk slouched down sipping the bourbon and listening to the waves. The warm wind coming in from Africa across the Mediterranean and onto the Turkish coast keeping the chill at bay. James' casual touches were so soothing it caused causing Falkirk to slip into a light dazed state.

A noise drew Falkirk's attention. The fire was well down now.

“Nooo... I'm still...” came a whine from the hammocks some distance off. James was already by Rupert stroking his hair and neck, a gentle whispering could be heard but Falkirk couldn't make out the words.

A sudden jolt and Rupert woke up. James soon calmed him and helped remind him of where he was. Falkirk saw Rupert and James exchange a few quite words, before Rupert lay down again. James settled by Rupert. When it became clear James was going to set up vigil beside the boy Falkirk got up and climbed into his own hammock.

The early morning sun forced Falkirk back into consciousness. Looking across to Rupert, James had fallen asleep leaning against his hammock. The weight from the adult threatened to tip Rupert out. Getting up Falkirk looked passed Rupert's hammock to Andrew. The young Omega had managed to turn onto his stomach during the night and now looked highly uncomfortable with his back arched in line with the hammock.

Going through his morning routine, finding a discrete tree, washing in the sea, brushing his teeth. Freshened up Falkirk raked the embers and added more kindling and drift wood on top. The noise, movement and smoke roused James and the Alpha lifting his weight from the hammock woke Rupert. While the two Alphas washed Falkirk poured oats into a pot then set the pot over the fire.

After washing up and with Andrew still asleep, James walked over to him. Slowly he started rocking the hammock then with a hard yank Andrew rolled out hitting the ground with a sequel.
“James! Must you be so much of an Alpha?” Falkirk admonished.

“He likes playing rough?” James argued.

“Not when I'm asleep,” Andrew hissed, thumping his insensitive father in the leg and storming off into the trees.

A tin kettle was added to the camp fire as well and Falkirk set up four mugs, one with instant coffee and three with tea bags, one Earl Grey and two Chai to which some honey was added.

After Breakfast rubbish was gathered, the fire pit buried and everything was packed into the dinghy. Falkirk paddled back leaving James and the boys to swim to the yacht. On board the yacht, the dinghy was emptied and everything sowed away. Under James' instruction they were soon under way.
Three days straight they had been on the yacht. The longest unbroken time Falkirk and the children had spent on a small sea vessel. An unsympathetic James was overly pleased with himself. Rupert was the first to succumb to sickness, and was teased by Andrew until at breakfast below deck, being inside and in constant motion finally took its toll and the omega ran upstairs to throw up too. Falkirk faring a bit better had not thrown up but had stopped reading and avoided going below deck.

On the fourth day, the Yacht arrived at a small harbour. Everyone welcomed the chance to stand on solid ground. Although Andrew and Rupert didn’t quite believe the ground was solid. Despite the logic Falkirk didn't quite believe it either.

Even though he tried to hide it, Falkirk noticed James wobbled a bit as they walked down the pier.

“Looks like someone isn't quite as sure-footed as he wishes to believe,” Falkirk shot earning a growl from the Alpha.

The small fishing village was perfect for picking up supplies, and the market square was close to the harbour. A few shops were housed in the buildings, most however still shopped at the pop up stalls all around the square.

“Why are we getting so much stuff?” Andrew asked as they loaded up with perishables.

“Because we are going visiting,” Falkirk said as he picked up racks of lamb ribs and bartered a price despite neither Falkirk or the stall holder speaking a common language. Live chickens were then bartered for. Falkirk flinched as the woman he struck a deal with, broke the legs of the live chickens to stop them running away, and handed over the two birds.

Quickly finding James. “Could you?” Falkirk asked handing over the chickens.

With a nasty squawk and crack James dispatched the first chicken and it went limp. Rupert and Andrew going a little pale, with pinched looks on their faces. Both boys flinched in preparation, with another squawk the second chicken had its neck wrung.

“We have to hurry,” James warned, looking at the dead chickens he held.

“Go on ahead. I'll get fruit and veg,” Falkirk said returning to the stalls while James headed back to the harbour with the two boys. Getting the last of the shopping Falkirk returned to the yacht to see Andrew and Rupert with sour expressions on their face while they plucked the chickens.

When it came time to leave even Rupert added his quite protest to Andrew's much louder
complaining. Falkirk reassured them, a few more hours and they could have a good rest and lots of food. Reluctantly the boys followed James’ instruction and they left the harbour heading for a near by island.

As James steered he looked to cliff some distance along the coast line. In the daylight the village could barely be see disappearing amongst the trees and cliffs.

“How are they doing?” Falkirk asked quietly so he didn't draw the attention of the boys near the bow.

Shrugging. “Alright.” James responded, unsurprised that his mate knew he supported the woman who had pulled him out of the water several years ago, or her sons.

Switching his gaze to the dot on the horizon that was their destination, Falkirk let the subject drop. James’ sight lingered on the Turkish coast for a little longer.

A few hours later the yacht came within range of the Carrington Institute island and Falkirk radioed ahead, warning of their imminent arrival. The dome of the observatory came first into view, perched atop of a cliff. The harbour's sea wall stretched between the observatory cliff to the cliff on the opposite side of the cove. Finding the gap, James piloted the yacht between the over lapping sea walls and into the small and private harbour for a hidden, sprawling, terracotta roofed, villa spanning the cove.

Alec stood waiting on the dock that stretched out into the middle of the small harbour. Rupert and Andrew jumped onto the wooded structure to tie up the boat as taught. Before Falkirk could greet the man, Alec froze and looked up to the cliff wall. An almighty splash sounded and Falkirk looked to see Yulian surfacing and swimming up to the ladder at the end of the dock. Daniel jumped from the observatory cliff to land in the water as well.

“Can I do that?” Andrew demanded with an excited gleam in his eye. Rupert looked queasy at the prospect.

“No!” Falkirk answered. When Andrew didn't look disappointed Falkirk turned to an overly innocent looking James. Yulian spoke rapidly to Andrew and Rupert then dragged them off.

By now Daniel had pulled himself up onto the dock. The big alpha stretching his arms and legs after hitting the water from the twenty meter hight.

Alec demanded, in a very omega like hiss, “I thought we agreed no cliff diving?”

“You were the one who told him. And it's better Yulian learn to do it properly,” Daniel responded.

“I agree,” James added, then ducked at the glare Falkirk sent him.

“Agreeing with Daniel, has hell frozen over? Not that it matters, Andrew isn't doing it!” Falkirk shot.

“Falkirk,” James said, “Do you want Andrew sneaking up there to jump, all by himself? You know he will. Landing badly? Braking his neck? Drowning...”

Falkirk frowned, he hated it when James talked sense. During the conversation the Adults unloaded the supplies.
The villa was complex and deceiving, a deliberately confusing layout with multiple routes to each of the four levels and many rooms of the spanning complex. A strange layout to help fool intruders and aid defenders, just as Daniel's grand father intended. On his first trip here, Falkirk had not noticed the internal stairs behind the kitchen so had used the external ones until Daniel had asked him why he always went outside to go down to the ground floor. Courtyards and cloisters, internal walled gardens and a small enclosed pool, added to the complex maze of the structure.

Daniel ignored the door of the villa near the start of the dock, that led into a great hall. Turning right he walked between the villa and the harbour, following the short path to the harbour courtyard. A wind turbine stood the centre. A dull and constant whoop-whoop-whoop, came from the spinning blades above them. There was the external stairs up to the kitchen, another door for the ground level great a hall, the steps down to the beach that ran along one side of the cove. Some patio chairs and tables completed the harbour courtyard.

Daniel went up a set of stone stairs to the upper story, the ones Falkirk always used before knowing about an internal set. The door opened onto a balcony kitchen/sitting area. It looked over the great hall below, on the ground floor. Two corridors came off the balcony, which led to the rest of this floor, and the formal lounge and dining room on the top floor of the villa.

Falkirk collapsed onto the comfortable couch. Still feeling like he was moving, after being on the yacht. Daniel continuing on through one of the corridors, to go change. James and Alec put away the supplies. Over the balcony Falkirk saw Yulian coming out of a bedroom with Andrew and Rupert following. The three boys disappeared under the balcony then emerge from a staircase hidden behind the kitchen. Just passing through they went down the corridor Daniel had disappeared.

Falkirk knew there was study, library and the master bedroom off that corridor, and a staircases leading up the the top floor. More importantly for the adventurous Andrew and Yulian, was the route to the Observatory, helipad and the island side entrance of the villa.

Falkirk thought about following to make sure they didn't get into trouble. In the end, he used his 'Mother's' voice and shouted, “NO! CLIFF DIVING!”

“I'LL TAKE YOU LATER,” James added in warning. Daniel's aggressive growl echoed from the corridor, while adding his own warning to the children.

Falkirk was relegated to cook after a few hours and the children had not returned. James, Daniel and Alec returned with the three grimy children in tow. Andrew tried to tell him about the jungle while James ushered the child passed and to a bathroom. By the time Falkirk served up dinner, the children were in their pyjamas. Andrew had definitely inherited his Papa's hair, free of the salt and with shampoo and conditioner it was sticking up at all angles.

After dinner Daniel led the children to a room in the lowest regularly used part of the house, built into the foundation rocks of the Villa. Andrew pressed his nose to the floor to ceiling window, where the dock stretched out above it and the sea lapped at the glass.

The room had another trick. Daniel went to the computer. The unbroken wall illuminated under the the light of a projector.

“We have...” Daniel started.
“Tomb Raider?” Yulian asked. “The one with the guy who looks like Uncle James?”

“Fine,” Daniel responded and started the film.

Falkirk put down a huge bowl of popcorn on the floor. James placed glasses of Coke on a low table. Alec arrived with blankets and cushions. With the boys watching the film the adults returned upstairs.

While sitting in the harbour courtyard, Falkirk watched over the gently rippling water lapping at the beach on the shallow side of the harbour. The beach along the left, the dock more or less in the middle of the cove with the gently bobbing yacht, and the cliff wall from here Daniel and Yulian dove on the far right.

Daniel brought out a tray of tall glasses, packed with ice, fresh mint and plenty of gin and tonic water. “Granny swears by them in a hot climate,” Daniel said handing out the glasses.

Falkirk just sat with the ice cooled drink, watching the calming motion of the water. It was quite nice, to just sit and listen, and watch. He heard James and Alec talking about the their children. It was momentarily confusing when James mentioned something and Falkirk couldn't remember Andrew doing it, and realised James was talking about Rupert.

Suddenly James and Alec went quiet and gave a mutual dark chuckle. Falkirk braced for what was to come. Both Alphas stood and headed for the dock. Daniel and Falkirk followed, both exchanging long suffering looks. Alec picked up a stone from the ground and joined James on the dock as close to the villa as possible.

“Oh, leave the wee-yins alone!” Daniel said.

Both James and Alec ignored him. They hung over the edge of the decking. Both able to see the boys watching the movie. They were all so tired out they weren't even mucking about, just laying there and almost falling asleep. Alec pulled his arm back and threw the stone, all three boys jumped a mile at the pinging sound of pebble on glass.

Falkirk and Daniel shared a look then silently approached their respective mates. Lifting a foot each, the gentlest of nudges to the vulnerable backside and both alphas tumbled head first into the water.

“I warned them,” Daniel mused.

“That you did, my friend, that you did. Did an active and past Double O scream like little girls though?” Falkirk added.

“You know, I believe they did. Just before the big splash.” Daniel said.

Retuning to their waiting drinks Daniel and Falkirk sat until James and Alec arrived back. The two alphas having to swim to the beach to get back to the villa. James striped off his shirt and sat beside Falkirk hugging him close to let the dampness seep through to the Omega's skin. Falkirk batted the alpha off complaining about cold but soon leaned back against him.

The sun died and the four men went to check on the children. Opening the door of the basement room, Falkirk couldn't help the, “Aww,” sound or the photo he took. A puppy pile with Andrew in the middle had occurred. Rupert, the biggest cocooned Andrew with Yulian snuggling up to
Andrew's other side.

Daniel silently switched off the projector sending the room into darkness. Only the light reflecting off the sea cast an eerie rippling light into the room. Falkirk lay down beside Rupert and put an arm around him. James who had dried out hours ago, lay down behind his mate. Alec lay down beside Yulian with Daniel behind him.
They had spent a few days with Daniel and Alec. Falkirk spent most of his time relaxing in shadowed spots. Basking in the luxury of a silent phone, no email and no one but Andrew bursting in to disturb him. The vacation was closing in and they had to get the yacht back to berth.

Daniel, Alec and Yulian had stood on the edge of the dock and waved them off. Andrew, Rupert and Falkirk waved back while James steered them out of the small harbour. When the Yacht came out of the harbour James gave the orders to switch from engine to sail. Rupert and Andrew under supervision had the yacht under wind power and heading back towards Istanbul.

Tucking Rupert and Andrew into their bunks Falkirk gave both a nuzzle and kiss before joining James on deck. The smug Alpha was bare chested as he reclined on the cockpit bench. A champagne flute in each hand.

“Contraband, commander Bond?” Falkirk drawled coming to sit in the Alpha's lap.

“What the hard assed Vice Admiral doesn't know, won't hurt.” James holding a glass out for Falkirk.

Falkirk lay his head on James' shoulder nuzzling under his chin. He loved indulging in his Omega nature and the mutually reassuring gesture with his Alpha. James plucked the glass from Falkirk's hand allowing the omega to wind his arms around James.

James poured Falkirk's champagne into his own. Holding his glass to Falkirk's lips he gently tilted it up letting his omega take a sip. James didn't quite understand it but Falkirk and Omegas in general liked it when an Alpha shared their food.

The atmosphere was getting a little more sensuous. Falkirk noticed the changing Alpha pheromones and felt himself responding. A growing hardness beneath Falkirk's thigh was answered with a dampness between his legs and a hardening in his own groin. Lifting his head from James' neck Falkirk straddled the Alpha's thighs.

“To... Long!” James purred grasping Falkirk’s hips and grinding him down on his trapped erection. Falkirk responded by nuzzling and liking, and kissing the side of the Alpha's neck.

“Ping!”

James grasped the side of Falkirk's head tilting it up to capture the wide lips of his mate.

“Ping!”

Falkirk ground down as James trust up. Growling James fisted Falkirk's shorts getting frustrated.
There were too many barriers between him and his omega.

Ping!

“Daddy, Papa, something’s getting closer!” Andrew called.

James and Falkirk jumped apart as if burned. Going below deck, Andrew was at the navigation station looking at the screen built into the wall. James and Falkirk looked and saw a couple small boats approaching, at speed.

“Thank you, go to bed, nothing to worry about,” Falkirk said steering Andrew back.

James took over and ushered Andrew into his and Rupert's cabin. Pulling out two large plastic cases, from the store room beside the boys' cabin, James met Falkirk on deck.

James handed the larger case to Falkirk while James opened the other. James prepared the assault rifle for himself and a SMG for Falkirk.

While James prepared the weapons Falkirk opened his case. Pulling out a plastic brick Falkirk started adding other parts to it. Soon he had constructed a quad-copter drone. Falkirk then had an option, there were four payloads with room for only one at a time. Picking the black box with a inflammable symbol etches on it. Falkirk connected the wires before fixing it onto the drone. Removing a set of glasses from the case Falkirk connected them to the remote control unit then put the glasses on.

The green/grey image of night-vision appeared before Falkirk’s eyes. The drone hummed almost silently and shot up.

“I hate this,” Falkirk complained. Not even liking to fly virtually. Piloting the drone out to sea. “I see them. Two hard-bottomed inflatables. Five in each boat, One pilot and four troops. Night vision goggles, Kalashnikov, no insignia. Not likely pirates. I'll need to get closer to drop the flares.”

“Still can’t see them,” James said looking through the scope of the gun.

With a press of the button, Falkirk opened the payload doors on the underside of the drone. Falkirk had a total of six chances without replacing the payload. Falkirk had the drone match speed with the boats then move slightly ahead of the lead boat. With the pressing of a button, a metal cylinder fell from the drone. As the cylinder descended the metal casing split open to drop a white stick into the boat.

Working quickly Falkirk was able to do the same for the second boat. “Shit, I dropped it on someone,” Falkirk said as he saw someone pick up the stick and look at it. Falkirk dropped the other four when he saw the man recognise what it was and throw it overboard. The people in the boat scrambled to find the others.

“Fire works,” James purred. Swinging the drone around Falkirk was just in time to see an idiot in the lead boat pour water of the phosphorus flare and huge fireball erupt. The people not on fire jumped into the water to escape. The second boat went up. They were better prepared, they scooped up the flares that ignited and threw them overboard instead of dousing them.

“Time to go?” Falkirk said, hearing James moving about. The Alpha just grunted an affirmative. Falkirk continued to watch the surviving boat. “They’re on the move again. One boat with one pilot
and six troops.... what's that? I think I see something in the distance, spots of light.”

Falkirk was watching the small flares of light out in the distance. Speculating it might be the point of origin for the to small and faster boats. Feeling the yacht begin to move, Falkirk set the drone to return automatically and removing the head set.

Replacing his glasses Falkirk saw James had prepared a sniper. Picking up the weapon Falkirk took a comfortable position and aimed. By the time the assault boat came into view of the thermal scope the yacht was moving at speed.

The drone's remote unit beeped. Looking up, about a meter above the remote the quad-copter hovered silently. Falkirk plucked the device from the air and removed the weapon and battery pods. Replacing both Falkirk set it down ready for if it was needed again. Quickly going below Falkirk set the first battery pack to charge. Checking the radar there was only one contact now with the distance growing between them and the boat.

A thump came from the boys' cabin. Checking on the boys, Andrew had fallen from the upper bunk. He hadn't even woken up. Andrew curled the blanket round himself and made himself comfortable on the floor. It wasn't the first time he had rolled out of the bed, Falkirk just shook his head and left him.

On deck Falkirk helped James and soon they were making good speed. Seeing the satellite, and normal mobile phones sliding about the recessed cockpit. Falkirk asked, “No single?”

James just shook his head. There was little that could interferer with the Q-Branch issued equipment. Only someone with an equal technological level.

Andrew was the first of the boys up. Feeling the Yacht moving he came up on deck and immediately looked at the prepared weapons, his Papa steering while his Daddy looked out to see with a pair of massive binoculars.

“Is something happening?” Andrew asked.

“Pirates, me laddie, Arrrrr,” James teased.

“Coooool!” Andrew said. His eyes going bright and alert as he looked out to sea in the direction his Daddy had been looking.

“Not cool,” Falkirk admonished but thankful James was making light of it and not mentioning the very real likelihood they weren't pirates.

Andrew ran and jumped through the hatch. “ANDREW FREDERICK BOND, DO NOT DO THAT!” Falkirk shouted while flinching, half expecting a thud, crashing, crying and being called for.

“Rupie, Rupie, Pirates!”

Falkirk rolled his eyes at the nick name that had emerged in their time on Daniel's island. Thankful, at least Andrew hadn't landed on his head.

Rupert came on deck with Andrew pushing him on. The omega was still chattering on about pirates. Rupert rubbed the sleep from his eyes and shielded them from the early morning light.
“Calm down they're not even on radar now,” Falkirk said. It wasn't strictly true, the boat was gone but there was a suspicious plane circling them.

“Are we going back to, Uncle, Daniel's island?” Rupert asked tripping over Daniel's name still not used to considering people as pack members.

“Yes,” James responded before ordering the boys below to wash and have breakfast.

The boys knew something was up as the slow melodic pace became a straight run. Even as motion sickness took them they didn't complain watching Falkirk and James sleep in shifts. They never stopped and maintained speed at all costs.

As night fell on the second day of the chase, Rupert and Andrew were allowed to sleep on the benches that surrounded the cockpit, the motion sickness affecting them worse when below deck. James' alert pheromones was also putting Falkirk and Andrew on edge. While Falkirk and Andrew's distressed pheromones were affecting Rupert and James.

“Who are they?” James growled. The plane had changed from a light aircraft to something bigger, one with wing mounted propeller engines. Falkirk had spotted it with the sniper a few times. It was too far away and they didn't have any anti aircraft weaponry aboard. Their only hope was launching an aerial assault on such a small and fast moving craft was beyond the skill of whoever it was.

“Pick a major power, corporation, politician, general baddie. Between the two of us we could throw a dart at an atlas and find someone we pissed off!” Falkirk responded. “RPG! With self-guidance, and countermeasures. How would I prevent a heat signature lock on? It's no use if there's a chance it could be shot out the sky. I'll get Daniel on it when we get back. Has to be small...”

James sent his mate a concerned look. Just listening to the delusional muttering, on weapons and what to do next time. As a Double O, he didn't think about the next time, only the here and now.

Come the morning light they could see Daniel's island. Going below Falkirk used the radio. Getting only static in response.
Sitting back, with his legs propped up on the wall. Daniel heard his mate and son, squealing and laughing while playing in the water. The rippling and splashing sounds from the water adding to the relaxing atmosphere. Slowly the big alpha took on a deep mahogany tan, under the Mediterranean sun.

Reading the article on his tablet, Daniel clicked a link to examine the supporting evidence. A plain white page appeared with only three words, "Timed Out Error!"

Daniel frowned. Looking to the icon at the bottom of the screen, the Villa's Wi-Fi was down.

Hearing a ringing Daniel put down his tablet and ran up the stairs and into the kitchen. Pick up the land line, Dr Rousseau said, “Your Grace, all wireless telecommunications have failed across the island. We still have the hard lines across the island and to the mainland.”

“Do you know why?” Daniel demanded, of the woman who ran a Carrington Institute research facility on the far side of the island.

“Jamming, your grace...”

Daniel, still standing at the door and looking out to sea, saw the pointed sails of a yacht that left three days ago. A bright streak shot from the yacht, trailing white smoke. A red flare bloomed, a moment later there was the accompanying boom.

Daniel dropped the phone, for it to hang from the cord. The French woman's lyrical voice calling for the man who wasn't there anymore.

Daniel raced down the internal stairs of the kitchen. Then along the great hall to the door for the basement level. Underneath the basement stairs was the bunker entrance. The Big alpha panting quite hard, not of a shape for running quickly. Daniel managed to build up momentum though as he ran through the cave network that made up the bunker under the villa.

In the biggest and deepest cavern of the bunker. Daniel crashed through the door of the clean room. Sitting at one of the old style, military green consoles that lined the room. He took control of a camera on the cliff top observatory. First looking at the Yacht, where Falkirk stood at the bow with a pare of binoculars, looking up and out to sea.

Glancing at the radar image, the large screen showed nothing. Not even the approaching yacht. Using the joystick, Daniel used the camera to scan the sky. He spotted the light aircraft.

Suspecting this was no use, Daniel still pressed the button on the radio's microphone. “Unknown Aircraft, you are entering private and controlled airspace. Adjust heading 45 degrees East!”

There was no answer. Daniel flipped a switch, ever so helpfully marked 'Missile Doors'. 
On the high cliff of the cove, stood a domed observatory. The coving door slid open. Concealed inside the observatory where a telescope should be was a missile magazine. From the front of the rectangular box, a single missile shot out. Streaking across the sky, in the approximate direction of the plane.

Daniel watched the Cessna bank and dive. Without radar the missile was unguided, and Daniel didn't want to activate any of the self guidance systems, in case it locked onto the yacht by accented. The missile would just crash into the sea about a mile from the island. The plane however wasn't going to try its luck by getting any closer. Daniel turned the camera, to see James' Yacht nearing the harbour entrance.

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Alec met the Yacht as it came along side the dock. He caught the line tossed to him by Rupert and tied it to the mooring.

Stepping onto the wooden structure brought relief to both Falkirk and James.

“Go find Yulian,” Falkirk said as casually as possible to the boys.

“Try out the front,” Alec said.

Alec led the way into the villa, via the doors at the end of the dock. He led them round the corner of the great hall and down to the basement level. Behind the stairs was the entrance into the bunker network. The first part of the bunker hand a gangway over the fresh water supply for the villa, then into what looked like a cave system. Reaching a T-junction. One path accessed the generator room, and the hanger under the helipad. The one they took led to the rest of the vast bunker network. Each corridor and room they passed had a heavy metal door raised up.

In the deepest part of the bunker, was a large cavern. Big enough to have a two clean rooms, like greenhouses. Smaller tin sheds. Around the open area, the furniture was very militaristic. A rectangular, metal table with the fixed stools. Metal bunk beds.

Falkirk had been here before, once. This was the control room of the Villa, and it's defences.

James and Alec headed for one of the more solid looking metal sheds, a little like a free standing bank vault. Alec saying they'd deal with weapons.

Falkirk went through the door to one of the glasshouse. There he found Daniel in front of a computer, an old fashioned console from the fifties. Dark green and looking like it weighed a ton.

“Eight ball, corner pocket,” Daniel said, watching one screen. When Falkirk looked it was just an image of little symbols with numbers beside them. He saw one symbol hit another and both vanish.

“What's that?” Falkirk asked.

“A satellite in geostationary orbit, being rammed by a Carrington Institute satellite. It's what was causing the interference. Wireless comms will be up again.” Rolling his chair to another screen, the Scotsman said, “The plane has gone, but that appeared almost right away. They're hanging back.”

Falkirk looked to where Daniel indicated. There was a boat out at sea. A sleek, white, Motor Yacht that should be in a place like Monaco. The camera was able to pick out several men on deck looking through a pair of binocular.

“A warning was sent, by visual Morse code, from the observatory.” Daniel added. Daniel looking
over the top of the screen and out the window. James and Alec were taking the weapons from the store room and laying them on the table, where they began to clean and inspect every gun.

“I would ask if we need to prepare but I think that's in hand,” Daniel said as he began arming the villa's defences. “I can call in the Carrington institute guards from the other outposts. It will take some time, it's a good eight hour trek across the island.”

Nodding his head, Falkirk then said, “This is all a little odd. If they wanted us dead, they could have shot the yacht when it was anchored for the night. They seemed all to willing to herd us here. Now it looks like they're preparing an assault, and don't care who knows. I want to know who they are. Can't we evacuate the kids?”

“The other outposts are only accessible by trekking through the island. By the time someone comes to escort the kids, we'll be in the middle of a fight. If we sent the kids to one of the other station, we will be caught with a man away,” Daniel said.

“Agreed. Will they be safe here?” Falkirk asked.

“Once the doors are sealed, no one is getting in by force.” Daniel said. Suddenly Daniel stood leaning over the monitor and rapped the glass. “THAT ONE IS MINE!”

James smirk at Daniel, holding one of Daniel's or more likely given the history of the island one of his father's or grand fathers custom weapons. James caressing a gun that looked like flint lock pistol from a distance. If it was like the one Falkirk had seen years ago, it was more of a hand held cannon, that took strange custom built ammunition.

“Boys and toys,” Falkirk muttered as he watched the two posturing alphas.

Daniel continued to calibrate the Villa's defences, and arrange for back up. James and Alec prepared the arsenal. Falkirk finally got through to Tanner.

Falkirk had on large headphones, with a mike position in front of his lips. There were several on the call with him. Tanner reported, Butler was in Moscow and was being rushed back.

Mycroft said, “With Deputy Director Butler in Moscow, and M and Deputy Director Carrington about to be attacked. That's the first two tiers of the MI6 Command in danger.” Being pragmatic he said, “After that, the line is a bit muddied. M, a little clarification...”

“Tanner,” Falkirk said.

“M?” the beta said.

“No Tanner, I'm saying you're next in line,” Falkirk said. The beta answered with a quiet, “Oh?”

Mycroft and Mallory acknowledged M's decision on who was to take over in a worst case scenario.

With the help of Captain Sansky, a Royal Navy ship on patrol operation was diverted to the Island. The RAF representative, Group Capt. Bartlet said, “M, why not let us send a jet? It can be there in less than half an hour. We can take the planes from the sky and the boats from the water. The ship will be hours away.”

“With one of your precision missiles?” Falkirk said and when the officer confirmed he was right. Falkirk added. “No one who comes after me or my children, get such and easy death. They will live, they will tell me everything and someone will pay for even thinking of pissing me off.”
Falkirk heard the silence on the other end.

“Nora?” Falkirk said, sure the head of the Navy was there, “If the bastards retreat make sure HMS Dragon picks them up.”

“I know you like Commander Gerald, M, unfortunately it will be HMS Grafton under the command of Commander Brooke to assist. He's a good man, he was my XO, on my first command,” said the clipped woman.

Giving his final orders for Tanner to brief Butler, and Mycroft to start investigating. Casting an eye to Daniel in the room with him, then James and Alec beyond the glass wall, Falkirk said, “Hopefully we will have someone to interrogate.”

Daniel, the only one in the room with him gave a non-committal grunt to the idea. James and Alec were outside so couldn't hear, Falkirk was sure they would never leave a threat alive. One did not ask a Double O for survivors.

Daniel went to a cabinet of metal drawers. Pulling out sets of plans Daniel tucked them under his arm and walked out. Falkirk signed off then followed Daniel out.

On a metal dining table set up between the two glasshouses Daniel laid out the plans. James and Alec joined them. One sheet covered each level of the villa so there was four for the villa. There was also one encompassing the villa, courtyards, dock, helipad and the start of the path to the Observatory.

“Are you going to stay here?” James asked his mate, knowing the answer but hoping.

Placating the Alpha, Falkirk said, “I would prefer not to.” James let out a low growl.

With James' tacit permission. Falkirk pointed to the map, “Primary assault looks like it will come from the sea. We saw one light aircraft and one that could deploy paratroopers. Daniel, where would a skydiver land?”

Before the bigger Alpha could answer, James pointed to an open space out of the Villa's island side gate. Daniel and Alec agreed, the rest of the villa was enclosed by steep cliffs, wind turbines and other hazards that discouraged landing in the courtyards, roof or other spaces.

Pointing to the observatory, Falkirk said, “I'll take the sniper position with Daniel. After we engage I will maintain position letting Daniel returns to the Villa. If thing get bad. There's a secure room in the observatory.”

Daniel confirmed the existence of the auxiliary control room. Reluctantly James agreed to let his Omega fight.

“I'll start here!” Alec said pointing to a courtyard that linked the Helipad, tunnel up to the Observatory and another up to the Villa's main gate. “I'll be able to move to intercept quickly wherever I'm needed.”

“Here!” James said pointing to an external staircase that linked the two upper levels of the villa. It would give him a good view of the harbour and quick access to the top three levels of the Villa.

The four men changed onto combat gear with Falkirk looking a bit swamped in the green fabric. The weapons were checked and holstered. Everything was of either Daniel, his father or grand father's design.
Daniel took his double RCP-80, the two SMG hung on straps crossing over his chest, for easy draw and drop. He also took up his grand father's semi-automatic pistol, the one that looked like an ornately decorated percussion pistol from a distance.

Falkirk picked up a Falcon I as did James, similar to the Walther. Falkirk also took an SMG, RCP-80. James and Alec taking an AR-34 developed by Daniel's father, an old but good assault rifle. Alec took a DY357-LX, an over powered weapon in the style of a magnum, built by Daniel especially for him.

Yulian and Andrew were wide eyed as James and Alec retrieved them. Rupert however knew something was wrong instantly.

Sitting the children at the table. Falkirk said, “We think the pirates followed us back.”

Yulian looked exited and even scented as such. Andrew and Rupert had seen and scented their parents worry and began to worry themselves now. Yulian caught Andrew's scent and it put him on edge. The pheromones of Alphas and omegas beginning to go in circles again of keeping each other on alert.

James said, “We are going to patrol the Villa during the night.”

“Falkirk too?” Rupert asked.

“Yes me to!” Falkirk replied. “I’m a better shot than daddy and uncle Alec, I'll have you know.”

Seeing Rupert blink rapidly, in confusion. Oh, Falkirk realised he said, 'daddy'. While they had adopted him, Rupert still had a Mother, Olivia, a father Edward, and a papa David. James and Falkirk weren’t here to replace them, it wasn't M or her husband's fault they couldn't be around. He did blame David though, who bloody well did have a choice. Falkirk calmed himself, although angry pheromones might be better in the situation.

“You will sleep here tonight. You will not leave!” James growled, interrupting Falkirk's train of thought. Falkirk could see for the first time Andrew consciously wanting to submit to an Alpha. If the circumstances had been different Falkirk would have admonished James and reassured Andrew but they were in a tight squeeze. Alec issued the same waning to Yulian and got emphatic and fearful nodding.

“Rupert, as the oldest you'll be in charge,” Falkirk's said. “You'll sleep here tonight. And are to remain in here until we call you.”

Daniel pointed to the open doorway, “That door will be sealed. Only one of you three will be able to open it. There is an intercom in the control room.”

Daniel's interruption allowed Falkirk a moment to collect himself.

They had decided on what would happen. Looking directly at Rupert Falkirk called him to follow into the control room. James put a hand on Rupert's shoulder and walked with him. The boy's dark eyes darted up to look at James, and he fidgeted nervously with the contact.

Sitting Rupert down beside him at the console. Falkirk patted the nervous boy's knee.

“We don't want you to worry. Hopefully the pirates will stay away. But Rupert there is something else,” Falkirk said to the boy sitting beside him. “Only you are allowed in this room. In the morning, only you will be allowed to open the door. If one of us calls you 'Pooka' you can open the door. Anything else you keep the door closed, that might be us calling and not using Pooka, or not
calling at all. Just wait until Selene, Mycroft, or Sherlock arrive.”

Unsurprisingly, Rupert's big round eyes looked like a deer caught in the headlights of an oncoming truck. “But they're not here?”

“No, Falkirk said. The moment Rupert nodded Falkirk said, “What are you to do?”

In a tone stronger and more sure than Falkirk expected. Rupert said, “I keep the door closed until You, James, Daniel or Alec call me Pooka and ask me to open the door. Or Aunt Selene, Uncle Mycroft, or Uncle Sherlock arrive.”

Falkirk nodded once then said, “If one of us call you Pooka and you think something is wrong with us?”

“I keep the door closed and wait for Aunt Selene, Mycroft or Sherlock. How will I know something is wrong?”

“Good boy,” James said nudging Rupert in the shoulder.

Falkirk reached over Rupert to a console, “This is the CCTV controls for the villa. When we call you switch this one on and you'll see us at the bunker entrance...”

Falkirk took Rupert through the camera operations, and how to open and close the various security doors of the bunker.

While Falkirk dealt with Rupert, James slipped out of the room again. Andrew and Yulian were at the table in the middle of the cavern.

“Rupert's in charge and his decision is final! There will be no arguing!” James ordered making the two boys jump.

“Yes, Daddy.”

“Yes uncle James.”

--

Rupert sat in front of the console watching the screens. Daniel activated the defences then told him not to touch anything.

“Good luck, Pooka,” Daniel said to the boy. Picking up four watch like devices and a tablet. Strapping one of the watches to his wrist Daniel walked out.

Rupert watched the screen, Andrew and Yulian at the door of the cavern they were all in. There was no sound and Rupert watched as Daniel and Alec nuzzled Yulian. Falkirk did the same to Andrew. Looking at the screen Rupert couldn't see James.

“Remember to watch your back,” James whispered making Rupert jump and turn to the source of the voice.

Placing a gentle hand on the back of Rupert's neck James pressed his face to the young Alpha's neck. Rubbing and inhaling. Rupert mimicked the gesture.

After the nuzzling James pulled back looking Rupert in the eye. “Try not to worry too much and get some sleep if you can. We'll see you in the morning.”
Rupert nodded and James pulled him into a hug. The adult Alpha hoping he hadn't just lied to a child.

A few moments later Rupert watched James appear on the monitor, where he gave Andrew a quick nuzzle. James then indicated Andrew and Yulian should stand back. Looking to the camera above the door James gave a thumbs up so Rupert flicked the switch. The thick metal door lowered down and the red glowing switch turned green, indicating the door was sealed. Andrew and Yulian joined Rupert in the control room to watch the adults moving through the corridors.

As the four adults moved passed the four storage rooms James would give the camera a thumbs up and Rupert would seal the door behind them. At the T-Junction intersection the path that went to the generator room and hanger was already sealed, so Rupert sealed the other two doors as the Adults moved passed. Finally the adults emerged from the door under the landing in the villa.

In the villa James indicated they were clear of the last door. A metal door covered the wooden one, and Daniel yanked James back. Along the groove of the tiles of the floor, a wall started to rise up. The section of floor rose until a dull thump sounded. The landing above them, now no longer looked like a floating balcony structure, it looked like a solid piece of stone and plaster.

James knocked the wall, there wasn't even a hint of a hollow sound. The Double O's expert eye didn't see a hint of colour difference or scratch from the movement of the disguising wall.

“It's good,” James mused.

“The bunker was built before the existence of nuclear weapons. But my money would be on the bunker, any day.” Daniel reassured.

Back in the bunker, as he'd been told to, Rupert switched off the monitors. Andrew demeaned he wanted to watch. Rupert got the two other boys out of the glasshouse, he then closed and locked the door behind him. Stuffing the key in his pocket he went to the laptop and started a movie. Yulian and Andrew were soon more interesting in exploring the place without any parental supervision.
Giants in the Playground: A long night

Like a stone window frame, Falkirk and Daniel crouched at the alcove cut right through the cliff wall. The observatory behind them. Below them was the harbour with the yacht moored at the dock. In a happier moment, this was where James let Andrew and a reluctant but convinced Rupert jump from. Because of Keading's instruction and their practice at the pool, even Falkirk had dived from this alcove on this trip.

Falkirk swung his sniper over the Villa, the green hue of the night vision allowed him to see James crouched at his vantage point on the stairs that went between the two upper floors of the villa. Alec should be located below them and to the left, in the Main Courtyard, where the paths for the helipad and the caves to the observatory started.

A small tablet had been propped up on the ledge of the alcove allowing both Daniel and Falkirk to see the radar image. The jamming had ended, dealt with by the Carrington institute using one of its own satellites to do a kamikaze run on the satellite causing the interference.

Seeing the dots nearing the island. Falkirk pressed the button on the watch and announced, “Incoming! Three contacts, by sea! ETA: twenty!”

There were two bursts of static over the watch, indicating acknowledgement, one from James another from Alec. The watch acting as a radio and IFF(Identify, Friend, Foe).

Falkirk hoping the boys were asleep or playing, or something. However, Rupert could see and hear what they were doing if he had been paying attention on how to operate the equipment. A new blip on the screen drew Falkirk's attention.

“The larger plane's inbound, ETA Fifteen,” Falkirk added.

Fifteen minutes later, around the Villa the inconspicuous columns opened automatically. Mini-gun Turrets extended and started firing into the air. The dull roar of the twin engined plane grew and diminished as it flew overhead, keeping out of range of the fire while releasing paratroopers.

“They got one!” Daniel said. It was hard to tell in the inky blackness of night, only a crescent moon and stars for light. There was something obscuring the stars, then a sudden fall which jerked and slowed before it plummeted again, giving a faint scream of terror as it did so.

“Bet he wished he packed three parachutes,” Daniel mused.

“Paratroopers, Back of the Villa,” Falkirk warned over the radio. Expecting Alec to have moved to cover the area already.

“One boat in the harbour,” Falkirk said seeing a boat silently make it's way through the harbour entrance. Using the sniper's scope Falkirk saw the men in the boat were hunkered down low. At the same time men started appearing on the far harbour wall and moving along the beach.

“Double O Seven you're up, get to the beach.” Falkirk ordered.

Nodding to Daniel they took aim and started firing at the men in the boats.
When Falkirk had said there was a parachute incursion, Alec looked up. He saw a few people, or more often their parachutes getting hit by the fire from the turrets.

One paratrooper opened his chute ridiculously low and Alec just knew it would be a stupid, bone-headed manoeuvre a Double O would pull, and most likely work. Breaking from his initial position Alec ran across the main courtyard to the path beside the villa. It wound up and round, bringing him out next to the upper level of the Villa. Heading for the gate, the turrets on top of the posts ignored him because of the watch he wore and continued firing upwards, into the night sky.

Going through the gate, Alec ran along the dirt track. A scream sounded above him and he looked up, hearing a nasty cracking sounds from the tree branches. A body landed face first, with his back folded, literally arse-over-elbow. Even a former Double O had to wince at the gruesomeness of the end.

Moving on Alec heard grunting the a thud. Moving quietly Alec approached, seeing a Merc having cut himself loose from the harness of the chute tangled in a tree. The Merc was picking himself up.

Pulling a knife from his belt Alec moved like a ghost. Grabbing the mercenary from behind and plunging the knife into the junction of his neck. Pulling out the knife, the jugular spurted and then not quite as hard, ending in a pathetic dribbled of blood. Alec dropped the dead body.

Returning in the direction of the Villa. Another scream came from someone landing right in front of Alec. The Paratrooper, collapsing like an accordion when his damaged chute couldn't slow him down enough. Alec shrugged, and moved around the mess in the middle of the track.

Ahead of him there were two Mercs approaching the Villa, in a combat formation. One on point with the other sending constant glances behind them. Something snapped underneath Alec's foot and both turned in unison towards him. Alec was able to shoot the rear man before being forced to dive off the track and into a ditch.

Going silent Alec listened, no mater how hard a person tried they couldn't make their footsteps silent on dry leaves. He could hear the man was approaching.

Alec pulled out this magnum, the click of the hammer being pulled back felt so loud in the tense silence. The Merc stopped moving.

'He is listening too,' Alec thought. Springing up and firing, Alec hit his mark. The man fell back. Alec grimaced when he saw the bullet had penetrated, forcing the fractured body armour into the guy's chest to make very large wound.

With the first of the ridged bottom boats to make it in and land men. It was time for Daniel to join the others. With a nod to Falkirk, their silent goodbye was shared.

To say Daniel ran would be an overstatement. He could do graceful and sharp movements, but basic sustained speed was not the strong suite of the bulky giant. He passed the structure of the Observatory and into a cave system. The sandy path graduated down then veered to the left as the cave opened into a cavern. Standing on the ledge Daniel checked no one was on the path below before following the path round and down. Coming out the cavern Daniel gave a last look to the
ledge several meters above him and spared a final thought for his friend.

Moving to the tiled pathways of the villa's grounds. High walls ether side of the paths gave a maze type feel. Tuning to the left Daniel jogged along, until an opening in the wall. If he continued on he would come to the helipad but he went through the arch and onto the main courtyard of the house.

Ducking back into cover a moment, he caught his breath. Quietly he charged out of cover, aiming for the six men heading for the stairs for the upper level. Grabbing the straggler of the group to used as a shield, while spraying a wide arc of fully-automatic fire. Quickly noticing the Mercenaries' armour was up to stopping the 9mm rounds, the impact at least knocked the men back. Daniel had just enough time to aim properly and fire again, the balaclava and night-vision goggle covered heads his target. The five men wet down permanently this time.

Falkirk's voice came over the watch, “They've breeched the Villa at the dock entrance.”

“I'm on it!” Daniel said and dropped his human shield and shot him in the head, to make sure he wasn't getting back up either.

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Falkirk continued to cover the harbour and Villa from his spot. Picking off individuals from his vantage point. James looked like he was board up on the roof at the far end of the Villa, covering the beach. He’d not seen Daniel since the big Alpha ran off.

A boat entered the harbour at high speed. Falkirk unable to aim the very long rifle quickly enough. The group of a half dozen men mounted the dock and headed for the nearest villa door.

“Bugger!” Falkirk hissed, they got the door open and he couldn't pick them off quickly enough. So engrossed in the boat teams, he took his eye off the tablet and the approaching blip on the screen.

The beating of blades alerted Falkirk to another wave of intruders. Looking up to the peak of the cliff, a helicopter was hovering. Two lines were dangling from it and he could see abseiler coming down.

“They're here!” Was all Falkirk got before someone took a pot-shot from the helicopter.

Ditching the sniper Falkirk picked up the SMG and rounded the observatory. There were two men blocking his access to the observatory entrance. Releasing two controlled bursts of fire, the two men fell to the floor but were pushing themselves back up in moments. Concentrating on one Falkirk released the entire magazine then dropped the weapon.

Running back to his alcove Falkirk picked up the sniper and aimed. The first man rounded the corner of the observatory and right into the sights of Falkirk's gun. The high powered sniper bullet blew his head clean off.

Before Falkirk could chamber the next round the second man staggered round, pointing a gun at him. The guy wheezed, while holding his chest, “M?”

Falkirk dropped the sniper and held up his hands.

“Yes. I'm M,” Falkirk responded. Taking a step back he tripping over the ledge. Just because he
planned the dive didn't make orientating himself in free fall easy.

'Feet first! FEET FIRST!' Falkirk's mind chanted.

It felt like forever before Falkirk orientated his feet down and hit the water, almost before he was ready. It still felt like a hell of an impact and Falkirk nearly took in a lung full of water. Kicking, Falkirk tried to breach the surface as close to the cliff wall as possible. He broke the surface and realised he had been moving away from the wall. Putting a hand to his face he confirmed it wasn't just the nigh causing the bad vision. His glasses gone.

Swimming for the Yacht Falkirk used it for cover. Moving round to the dock he pulled himself out of the water. He intending to go for the external kitchen stairs. Hoping James was still close by. A blurry shadow suddenly moved grabbing him and pressing him against the wall.

A strange Alpha got close enough for scent identification.

'Target: Omega, Adult, male. There was only one of those,' Falkirk's clinical side deduced from the guy's actions. Reaching for his pistol, Falkirk found his holster empty with the gun probably lying at the bottom of the harbour now.

Falkirk wasn't sure if he should be concerned or relived about them wanting him alive. He was inside now if the increased light was to go by. The leader barked a few orders and Falkirk's hands were secured with a zip tie. With the leader at the front and being frogmarched by two others, Falkirk was taken to the basement level of the Villa.

In the room where the boys had watched a movie. Falkirk was pushed against the window with the sea lapping at it. There his ankles were tied too.

From the language Falkirk had guessed one of the Muslim countries. What he saw of the guards' facial features and skin tone confirmed it. They were both Alpha, thin, with sharp chin, cheekbones, and nose. The stubble and unkempt hair giving them an unclean look.

They used Kalashnikovs, even to Falkirk's blurred vision the shape was distinctive. But what bad guy didn't? The guns were everywhere. More telling was the body armour, given they had stood up to a whole magazine of 9mm, fully automatic fire, they weren't from the smaller more troublesome countries.

Falkirk squinted watching the leader pull out a phone. An aerial was swung up, the aerial almost as big as the phone. He couldn't see it well, Falkirk would bet though, that it was not a satellite phone freely available on the market.

The leader left. Falkirk started demanding answers from the two reaming men who just looked at him. He had been leered at and objectified in the past so knew what that looked like, these men weren't doing that, certainly not. They were more like the palace guards in the red uniform and tall Busby hats, just standing there until activated by order or deed

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“They're here!” came Falkirk's panicked voice from the watch James wore.

From his vantage point on the roof James could see flashes from the alcove in the cliff wall. The rate of fire was too quick to be a sniper and it wasn't directed towards the harbour
Jumping from the roof of one wing to another. James raced along red tiles until he could leap into the main court yard. Heading for the gap in the wall that lead to the observatory. He heard the beating of blades of a helicopter coming in over the cliff. A nearby auto-turret aimed, it only clicked as it tried to fire, its magazine empty of ammunition.

Every instinct in James was at war. The Alpha in him called to his mate in trouble, the father and Double O side, however said he needed to deal with the bigger threat, the helicopter. Hoping Falkirk could handle himself James passed through the gap in the wall and ran towards the helipad.

Following the walled path James knew it would be bad. The path had the cliff face to his left and a four meter high wall to his right. It was designed to funnel intruders into the turrets. There was nowhere for James to take cover.

The helicopter was just touching down when James emerged from the path. The entire helipad was enclosed with the same high walls. Men were coming out of the helicopter. James brought the assault rifle to his shoulder, took aim and fired.

As soon as the men had disembarked, the helicopter tried to take off. Under several consecutive shots the canopy window cracked and let James' next shot through. Hitting the pilot the helicopter started to spinning and hit the ground with enough force to split the skids and roll. The spinning blades shattered against the stone an flew off in all directions. James had just enough time to take shelter in the pathway before shrapnel was thrown his way. A broken blade embedding in the wall opposite him.

Wasting no time James re-emerged from the pathway, with gun blazing. The rifle clicked, empty, James dropped it and pulled out his pistol. He needed to close the distance, he ran for the helicopter's wreckage while what was left of the assault team were still picking themselves up after the crash.

One of the men saw him coming and when James fired and hit his chest, the guy only stumbled back. Raising his own weapon the other man aimed at James. James, the slightly quicker got another round off, this time hitting the less protected face. James pressed against the fuselage for cover, immediately smelling the fumes from the growing puddle of fuel.

There were three left. James ran towards the outer-wall firing behind him. The bullet sparked off the ground igniting the fuel. The fire ball forced the three remaining men to separate and fall back. Spinning back round, James fired three times before a built passed his target's armour. James was able to get the next with one bullet, again an unpleasant shot to the balaclava covered face.

With his gun now empty, James rushed the last man. James grasped the barrel of the Kalashnikov forcing it away and fire into the air. They grappled with the gun for a moment before James brought up his knee to the other man's crotch, which James followed with a swift jab to the guy's chin. The man stumbled back so James gave a nasty uppercut. The guy's head whipped back, and his mouth spurted blood and broken teeth.

Gabbing the dazed and bleeding guy by collar, James spun him round and held him in a neck lock. Pulling out a knife from his belt, James slit the guy's throat and let the body fall from his grasp.

James surveyed the mess as he popped the pistol's magazine and replaced it with a new one. A shudder went through the helipad and it started to descend below ground level. Not knowing what was going and not liking it James ran and leapt for the path but it was to late. James' fingertips
grasped the floor of the path before he fell back down.

The surrounding walls ended and the underground hanger opened up around him. James stood on the landing pad in the middle of the hanger. Only one person he knew of could be doing this and James glared at the nearest camera. The door at the far end of the hanger slid open. With a final glare James moved to the door.

A clunk sounded and the helipad started to rise back up. Taking the bodies, wreckage and flames with it. James though about hitching a ride but trusted there was a reason Rupert was doing this.

James ducked under the slowly opening door and it started to seal behind him without fully opening. Following the tunnel James waited at the next door ducking under before it was fully open.

In the room he entered, machines hummed and there was a big metal, vertical cylinder in the centre. 'The wind turbine?' James guessed at. The far door was already opening. Going on James ducked under it.

This tunnel James recognised although he had never been this far along it. Coming the the T-junction at the end, one door was open, the other two were not. The metal door descended behind James and the one to his right opened. Moving back towards the villa, over the reservoir and finally reached the bunker entrance.

The metal security door was still closed, and made no sign of opening. James was getting impatient. He remembered there was a path that led to the reservoir, but James doubted there was anything of interest that way. Finally the meal security door started to rise up and reveal the normal looking wooden doors. James pressed down on the handle of the revealed door and opened it, onto the stone wall.

“This is getting ridiculous!”

The faux wall started lowering.

“Remove you hand,” A voice snapped and James froze on hearing his Omega. “Who are you? You're far too organised and well equipped to be your normal Islamic Extremists. Saudi? Iranian?”

There was someone else speaking a little loudly in Arabic, to be heard over Falkirk's continued demands. The Arabic voice was in a one sided conversation, with gaps for someone to respond. The owner of the Arabic voice as on the phone, James realised.

Stepping out from the bunker access, James was beside the stairs that led up. Falkirk's voice was coming from the doorway near the bottom of the stairs. The Arabic voice coming from the landing above James, the man himself was perching on the banister with his back to the stairwell and basement.

Seeing the wall begin to silently raise up, to conceal the bunker entrance again. James used it as a boost, so he could jump up and catch the landing banister, right beside the guy on the phone. With a quick hard yank, James grabbed the back of the guy's shirt and pulled him back. While the guy screamed and landed on his head. James climbed over the solid banister.

A Merc came from the room Falkirk was in. He went to his boss, whose brains were spread out over the floor. When he looked up, he was jumped on by James. The butt of a handgun to the
Merc's head and he was out for the count.

James heard someone calling from the room with Falkirk. The omega still making demands of his captors. Falkirk yelped as flesh hit flesh, so James charged round the corner and through the doorway. Shooting the guard before he knew what was happening.

Going over to Falkirk. James looked him over. He was wet, without his glasses and there was a red bruise on his cheek.

“About time, Double O Seven! Letting the leader scream was a big risk...”

With his omega being snippy with him, James knew Falkirk was unharmed.

“Do stop complaining! Why can an M never be grateful!” James pulled out his bloodied knife and slit the zip-ties around Falkirk’s hands and ankles.

Getting the sodden omega to his feet. James looked into the squinting green eyes. “I...”

“I can't see more than a meter,” Falkirk acknowledged. “I'll stay here.”

James pulled Falkirk to the concealed bunker entente. The Double O looked around, unable to see a camera.

“He should be asleep and even if he's not, Rupert has been told not to open the door,” Falkirk stated. The wall descended.

“I'm a bad influence,” James muttered. “Can you make it?”

Nodding. Falkirk said, “Yes.”

James pulled his omega close, smelling the alert pheromones. He cupped the back of his mate's skull and kissed him. Before Falkirk could respond, James pushed his mate towards the revealed wooden doors. He remained until the wall covered the door again, taking his omega from view.

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Eventually Falkirk came to the bunker within the bunker. The metal door slid up. He had expected Andrew and Yulian to be there. He saw the two, sleeping soundly in the bunks at the back of the darkened room. A sad smile came to him, seeing the bottles of Coke, sweets and empty crisp packets, more than three children should ever eat in one night. They'd had a party.

Falkirk headed for the glasshouse. There he found Rupert watching the monitors. The boy glanced at him, “I'm...”

“We will discuss your disobedience later,” Falkirk said. Rupert cringed and sunk lower into his chair.

Pulling up a chair. Falkirk squinted at the screen and leaned in close. “I'll need you to be my eyes, How many intruders left?” Falkirk asked tapping a fixed screen just outside he reading-vision distance.

“Seven!” Rupert said. Falkirk taking note, Rupert didn't need to look.
Falkirk leaned closer to the radar screen. There was another incoming plane. There was one survivor, more than enough along with all the equipment that would be left. It was time to end this. Falkirk brought the full defences on line.

The dome of the observatory opened, and a missile launcher extended out. A single ground to air missile was deployed. The plane disappeared from radar a moment later. Now it was the turn for the motor yacht still out at sea. It tried to run, the missile was faster.

“How many intruders?” Falkirk asked.

“Seven! Falkirk there are others!”

Falkirk rolled his chair closer to Rupert. He still needed to stand to see the screen. The camera label was for the 'Pearl Trail', the route to one of the research stations. A dozen men were quick marching over the uneven ground, in two columns.

Falkirk grabbed the mike and pressed the talk button. “Carrington Institute Guards incoming!”

“Steinberg to Villa,” came a new voice over the frequency they used. “We're five minutes out.”

Alec said, “Careful, I'm still out back and hostiles are still about.”

This felt like the home stretch. The end in sight. Falkirk switched radio channel, “Vice Admiral McLair to Commander Brooke, HMS Grafton, Do you read?”

A gravelled Scots voice answered, “We read, sir.”

“ETA Commander?” Falkirk asked.

“Four hours, Sir!”

“Best speed Commander,” Falkirk snapped.

“Rupert?”

“Three left inside,” Rupert said. “Uncle Alec's cleared all but one.”

Falkirk stood coming to Rupert and placing a reassuring hand on the back of his neck. Both watching James and Daniel dealing with the last three intruders inside the villa.

Rupert looked up to Falkirk, “I...”

“Not now. Now is the time we do our duty. We only look back, afterwards,” Falkirk said in a reassuring tone.

Alec was at the main gate in a brawl, which ended when a dozen guards melted from the jungle. James was in a fire fight at the top of the stairs that led to the bunker access. Daniel was on the top floor of the villa, someone was scuttling back trying to shoot the imposing Alpha with an empty gun. An aching blow and the man fell still.

“Daniel, Is he alive?” Falkirk said into the watch.
“Aye laddie.”

“Then James is running out of bullets on sea level.”

They watched Daniel go through the maze of corridors. Daniel came to the kitchen, going down the stairs down to the great hall. Daniel shot wildly around the corner of the stairs, forcing the intruder out of cover and into James' line of sight.

Rupert looked at the image in confusion. “He did that deliberately,” Rupert stated.

“Oh?” Falkirk said. He saw for himself. “What do you mean?”

“Well...” Rupert hesitated, “Uncle Daniel could have come up behind that guy, but he deliberately missed so James could....” he waved at the screen.

Falkirk made a hum and brushed Rupert's dark brown hair. “Very observant” he said impressed with the young Alpha's ability to read a situation while under extreme stress.

“I'm wet and cold,” Falkirk mused standing up and going to go get a shower and change. “Open the door for James.”

Before he left the control room Falkirk stopped and looked at Rupert. “I didn't know your father as well as I would have wished and I thought I knew you Papa better. Your Mother however, would have been impressed and proud. As am I.”

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The kids remained in the bunker under Rupert's care. Falkirk paced the dock where the Carrington institute guards laid out the bodies. So far all were of middle eastern extraction. The weapons and any technology had also been gathered.

With the sun starting to lighten the sky. The two support boats from HMS Grafton arrived and tied up to the dock. From the second boat came the Captain, Cmdr Martin Brooke. Falkirk walked up to him introducing himself face to face. They exchanged pleasantries with the Commander reaffirming he had been ordered to assist, without protest or deviation.

“You have a rather advance medical set up, do you not?” Falkirk asked indicating the ship anchored beyond the harbour.

“Yes, we were assisting in the refugee patrols” Brooke confirmed.

“I need full autopsies, DNA, fingerprints, photos the full works on them!” Falkirk said indicating the corpses in the dock.

“And that one needs to be bagged and returned to London.” Falkirk continued indicating the survivor tied and kneeling with two Carrington guards covering him. The one James tried to take alive had been found dead, the blow to his head harder than the Double O intended, or so James said. As M, Falkirk wasn't surprised James and Alec were incapable of leaving survivors.

“Aye Aye, Sir” Brooke responded.
Another Helicopter arrived, this one a sleek executive AgustaWestland AW109. The silver 'cI' logo on the side of the dark grey fuselage.

“Taxi's here!” Daniel said.

Falkirk remained until HMS Grafton had loaded its cargo and started to disappear.

Daniel turned over the shutting up of the villa to the woman who ran the research outposts of the island. The two families then went for the helicopter. Falkirk and James sat on one of the bench seats, with Rupert and Andrew between them. Daniel and Alec in a smiler position on the opposite row of seats. Andrew and Yulian rather confused to why their parents were dozing off in the day time. It was a miracle the two youngest saw almost nothing. Even the blood stains had been cleaned up before they made their way to the helicopter.

At a military airfield, graciously offered by the Turkish authorities they waited. An RAF TriStar landed. The grey jet liner taxied to a halt, and extended its gangway stairs. The inside was basic, rows of empty seats meant for taking troops to the war zones of the world.

On the hard uncomfortable seat, Falkirk found Rupert choosing to sit beside him. Falkirk put his arm around the boy and pulled him close. James then putting an arm around Falkirk, from the omega's other side. Falkirk was beginning to doze off again, when the captain interrupted, “Welcome aboard. Flight time to London City, will be a little under two hours...”

Falkirk fell asleep before the pilot finished his speech. Stroking Rupert's hair and snuggling against James. While ignoring Alec telling Yulian and Andrew to pick a seat and sit.
They had been back a few days. Falkirk's fury had grown in the absence of a target. Investigations take time. So far, the owner of an almost disused airfield in Turkey had been found dead. One of his light aircraft unaccounted for. The other aircraft were a complete mystery, MI6 still needed to trace the helicopter and the skydiver's plane.

Some of the equipment was more helpful. The parachutes and armour had been of particular use, having been traced to a firm that supplied black ops equipment. The type of equipment that didn't come with branding, model numbers, serial or batch numbers. It was down to clinical and meticulous assessment of the craftsmanship to figure out the manufacture. Almost untraceable and would likely need an operative to go in to get their client list.

Tanner had observed, accurately, “A little more refined than the usual Muslim fanatic.”

Falkirk thanked his chief of staff and the various others who had briefed him. After the others shuffled out of the room, it left James, Alec and Daniel in the office.

James, who stood by the curving windows at the front of the office finally spoke.

“You aren't going to do something silly, like not sending me, M?”

“Breaking and entering, is hardly a Double O level mission. But yes, you're going, Double O Seven.”

The Double O stalked out, with Alec following. The two going to prepare to raid the Canadian firm.

“You're, concerningly, calm?” Falkirk said to the tall Alpha.

Daniel gave a slight shrug. “When one is contemplating how to make a person's death as horrendous as possible, it comes from one of two motivations. Power or Hate. Contrary to belief, true hate is a cold emotion, so I'm calm.”

“Alec and James are hardly calm,” Falkirk observed.

“That's because they're angry. Anger is a hot emotion,” Daniel said and walked to the door.

When alone, Falkirk looked at the internal wall. The reflection of himself wasn't that good. “What if you have both hate and anger?” he asked himself.

The tall form of Deputy Director Butler passed the other side of the wall. Falkirk waved the man in
before Butler could knock on the door.

“M? Do you want me to ask how things are?”

“No!”

“Very well M,” Butler said. Handing over an envelope with a flowing and flourishing ‘M’ on the front, Butler said, “Director Simonov gave me this, before I was whisked back to the UK.”

Falkirk opened the R.S.V.P. accepting his invitation to his Russian counterpart. “At least someone thought I'd survive the night.”

Butler added, “He also wanted me to extend the FSB's unconditional support, against whoever attacked you.”

“Oh, goodie-goodie gumdrops,” Falkirk said, scrubbing his face. “I need him over a barrel, not being nice to me.”

The alpha raised a quizzical eyebrow. Falkirk said, “I just need to fix an old mistake. Nothing you need to know about. At least not until everything... blows up.” Falkirk laughed, it was absurd but it made him laugh.

“On that note, M. I'll take my leave,” Butler said and stood.

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“... one asked for M. Another scent identified me,” Falkirk said to Selene.

Not a good homecoming for the woman. An eight hour flight, jet-lagged and the first thing she did was come round to find out what had happened.

James opened the door of the library, surprising both Falkirk and Selene. The Double O said, “It's done! Q-Branch have the client lists. They supply mostly Canadian and US forces, from what I can tell. Navy SEALs, Delta Force, and the like,”

“I'll start hounding Q-Branch for details tomorrow,” Falkirk said. He then looked between the two alphas. “There's something else. Rupert's started asking questions about what he saw. He hasn't told Andrew anything, but Andrew's not stupid and both he and Yulian have overheard us talking.”

Selene said, “Cody will know something's happened, the second he talks to Andrew and the others.”

James asked, “So what are we going to do?”

Falkirk said, “I was thinking of, carefully, confronting what we do. And that sometimes bad people will come after us. Show them we need to be careful and ready, but not live in fear.”

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The kids wanted to understand. Instead of a quiet conversation Falkirk rallied in as many as who would come. It was a given Daniel, Alec, Selene and Keading would be there. Sherlock flounced in, with Rosie held in his arms, while John followed in their wake. Mallory also arrived with
Colum and Darren.

Stories were told. Mallory talking about Ireland and the troubles. Darren told how he was an IRA terrorists. Daniel spoke about being an operative for the Carrington Institute. Alec and James mentioned a few bits from missions. John whacked Sherlock, and glared at the detective when his story became a bit graphic for their audience.

When a break in the conversation came, James pulled Rupert against himself, and gave a nod. “You did something?”

It took a few more prompts from James before Rupert spoke. His head down and casting his eyes around the large group just looking at him.

“Couldn't sleep, so I went back to the monitors and switched them on,” With his head down Rupert told how he saw Falkirk getting captured and how he had brought James to near where Falkirk was being held.

It was the first time Falkirk had heard how James got to him. He'd been concentrating on the facts and evidence rather than the story. In the bunker, he had been impressed with Rupert's ability to maintain composure under stress and fear. The fact Rupert opened a secure door Falkirk had overlooked, accustomed to operatives doing what was needed rather than what they were told.

At the demand of Cody and Andrew, Sherlock told them about this case or that case. The detective getting a few more warning whacks to his arm or leg, when he started getting too graphic. An argument between Sherlock and John slowly brewed, the detective saying he couldn't cut out the key facts. The Doctor insisting Sherlock didn't need to go into forensic detail of wound depth, purification or the other gross things the children wanted to hear about.

Noticing Rupert looking down and withdrawn, despite James' best efforts. Falkirk caught his Alpha's gaze and jerked his head, in silent instruction to follow.

He'd debriefed his operatives so much, habit had Falkirk sitting behind his desk without thinking about it. James and Rupert took the chairs opposite him.

“You're still worried about disobeying us?” Falkirk said and Rupert nodded. “There's a fine line. Knowing when to obey and when not to. It is something that can never be taught, only known. James is the best person I know at it.” Falkirk not realising his voice had hardened and he was looking intently at Rupert.

“You're not angry?” Rupert asked hesitantly.

The question was so not part of ‘the dance’, Falkirk realised he was treating the situation like Rupert was a Double O. As M he was meant to be exasperated, annoyed, generally-angry, and sometimes downright furious when debriefing his Double Os, to stop them developing run-away egos and make them think about the repercussions to their action. Hardly ever was his anger genuine.

Falkirk thought about it for a moment then smiled. Sitting straight up and putting his elbows on the desk Falkirk steepled his finger. He gazed at Rupert coolly. Consciously keeping his tone soft and calm, the one he liked using.

“There is a procedure, a sort of dance for situations like this. Your mother did it with me, when I
was sitting across from her. She did it with James too," Falkirk said pointing to Rupert in his chair. James was smirking with his charming twinkle in his eye, that even the old M, privately, admitted affected her. “Like your Mother before me. I have done this with many more, and more times than I could count.”

Seeing James, already in the cocky, 'I don't do anything!' mentality. Falkirk instructed, “Slouch slightly, own your chair Rupert, like it's your throne. Like James is doing.”

Falkirk smiled, as Rupert looked at James. The small, adorable, alpha, copied the bigger alpha, right down to resting the ankle of one foot on his knee of his other leg.

“I start with something like,” Falkirk's tone instantly hardened to that of M's, “You disobeyed my orders, endangered your charges in doing so.”

Rupert flinched at the tone. James taunted, “He saved you!”

“Shut it, Double O Seven! We're reviewing Rupert's action.” Falkirk let his voice return to his soft one. “Now Rupert, you say something along the lines of ‘I know my priorities. Andrew and Yulian were safe. Protected by multiple safety door between us and the villa. They were fine...”

“Too wordy,” James said. “Rupert, you say: 'I did what was right. The others were safe and I saved you'.”

Falkirk held out a hand to Rupert, “Come on. You try.”

“I, I...”

Falkirk held up his hand to stop Rupert. “I did my duty, I saved you, I am right. That is the mentality you want. Now give mean old M what-for!”

“I didn't want to lose my home,” Rupert admitted quietly.

“HA!” James shouted, nudging Rupert and giving the boy a wide smile. “What dose Big-Bad-M say to that!”

James was chuckling and beaming a proud smile. Rupert ducked his head, to hide the blush. James rubbed the boy's shoulder and brushing his neck with his fingers.

“I do this,” Falkirk said and stood. Coming round the desk, he indicated Rupert should stand. Taking the chair Rupert had been using, Falkirk set it down in front of the fireplace. Holding out his hand, Rupert took it and climbed up to stand on the chair like Falkirk wanted him to.

“This came back yesterday,” Falkirk said. “Do you know what it is?”

Rupert was first distracted by Falkirk's arm coming around him and being leaned against by the omega. Standing on the chair he was now a bit taller than the omega. Then James on his other side hugged him too. The three looking to the picture above the fireplace.

Rupert blinked, trying not to let the emotion choke him. He focused on the picture of the snowflake. In the middle, kind of like the movie Charlotte's web, this time in the crystal rather than the structure of a web. He saw letters almost hidden in the hatching of the pencil etchings. 'Falkirk Bond nee Holmes.' Then down one of the arms of the snow flake, he saw 'Daniel Carrington'
beside Alec's name, with Yulian below. Spanning out on another arm, first was James then two names side by side.

“Me?” Rupert whispered.

Falkirk reached up and brushed the name added beside Andrew's. “This is our family, which is part of our pack. We are not all related by blood, but that doesn't stop Daniel, Alec, Selene and Keading being aunts and uncles to Andrew, or you. Just like Mycroft, Sherlock, John, Darren, Gareth.”

“Who's George?” Rupert asked, wanting to change the subject. Feeling his eyes sting and not wanting to cry. He looked to James who'd started laughing quietly.

Falkirk said, “George, we call him G, is someone else without much family, that I sort of took under my wing,”

Still all leaning against each other. Falkirk kissed Rupert's cheek, “Thank you for saving me.”

“I helped my family,” Rupert said looking back at Falkirk.

James purred, “Now that's how you beat M,” Falkirk slapped the back of the alpha's head. “I mean, yes you did save Falkirk. Thank you.”

The door slammed open. A wild eyed Andrew stood on the threshold, “Uncle John was nearly burned alive in a bonfire! And BLOWN up! And uncle Sherlock nearly drank poison!”

“SHERLOCK!” Falkirk roared, storming out of the library. “So help me... and JOHN how could you let him tell...”

James laughed and helped Rupert back down to the floor. The two followed the sound of Falkirk's shouting, into the lounge, were everyone was in overlapping and very loud conversations.

Chapter End Notes

Hopefully that bit between Falkirk, James and Rupert came off well. It was meant to be rather light, with James trying to get Rupert to be a bit cocky, and ending on a sweet note. Rather than traumatising Rupert.
On the second day of the new school year Falkirk's car was a bit busier than the previous year. Always, the car picked up Selene, Keading and their children first. Then it would collect Colum and Yulian before arriving at Falkirk's house. The day before, Daniel and Alec had taken Yulian for his first day of school. The rest of the time Yulian would go by Falkirk's car. Colum was attending Mallory's old school and keeping the children together wasn't a good enough reason for the Pack Alpha overrule him, so he was the only one who wasn't here.

Falkirk glanced to the side. To Rupert on the far side of Andrew tugging at his new school blazer. The little thing still effected the young alpha, like not being shipped off to boarding school. Looking up again, Falkirk watched his little brother reading a book.

James had wanted to be here for the first day of term, but they traced the satellite that blocked the communications during the attack. James was now in New Mexico where Hammer Industries had a private launch site for satellites. MI6 needed to know who commissioned, owned and operated the one used during the attack.

Keading was still the primary carer for all the children. Being the known, primary carer for the children to the head of MI6 and the Prime Minister, and with his own MI6 security detail he had been approached to look after the children of other prominent figures. After making sure it was alright, Keading refused.

Falkirk straightened the blazers, ties and hair, doing all the mum things before kissing Andrew and Rupert and sending them towards the main gate and waiting until they passed the security check point. Cody complained about getting the same treatment from Selene before he too was sent towards the school gate.

Falkirk took Yulian's hand and escorted him to the side gate, where the youngest class entered. The teacher there seemed surprised to be seeing Falkirk again while she was welcoming Yulian.

Waving Yulian off, the child ran into the yard. Falkirk gave a goodbye to the teacher and walked away. Almost out of ear shot Falkirk heard the teacher shouting, “Yulian get off Robert! We do not tackle other students…”

“Like Fathers like son,” Falkirk muttered making Selene snort a laugh. Only getting a glimpse of the fight from where they were.

There was an errand to run and with the driver knowing, Falkirk didn't need to give instruction. It took some time to get to the picturesque house. White, two stories, with big bay windows either side of the door. It was a large house for London with a substantial garden, with enough room for quite a few trees.

Falkirk walked up the path. Ringing the bell at the door, he waited.

“Hello?” a voice said coming from around the side. Victoria stood tall and elegant, even in her jeans and red body warmer. A gloved hand holding a pair of secateurs was casually perched against her hip.

While they exchanged a pleasant greeting, Victoria indicated Falkirk should follow her around the
side of the house where a trellis supported yellow climbing roses. She was musing about something attacking them and snipped off dead branches.

She asked, “So is the presence of M business or pleasure?”

“Pleasure I hope,” Falkirk responded pulling out an ivory envelope and handing it to her.

Victoria removed her gloves to open the envelope. She gave an absent minded hummed. “How nice,” she said reading the invitation, disguising her suspicion well.

Moving round to the back and entering through the open kitchen door. Victoria placed a kettle on a gas burner in the traditional kitchen.

“So who else is coming?” she asked preparing cups and teapot. Victoria was a perfect host placing a plate of home made scones on the table then the pot of tea and cups.

“Well it's an informal get to know you for the new Director of the FSB,” Falkirk informed and saw the almost imperceptible hitch in the woman's posture. “Control and Guillam will be there along with Myself. You are a trustee of MI6 and I believe you Simonov ran together in the old days.”

“We had a few run-ins, if that's what you mean. I don't think he would like me there,” Victoria said pleasantly.

“Not to put too fine a point on it, but after what happened with Mr Simonov's predecessor. I want to send a strong message. There is no stronger message than inviting the woman who put two bullets in him,” Falkirk returned, and took a sip of the fragrant tea, not familiar with the blend.

Falkirk smiled, sweetly. “The choice is of course, fully yours, but I would so enjoy having your company as well. I would hope we could be friends, Ms Winslow.”

Victoria was a master of the game and knew an order when she heard one, no matter how nice its presentation.

“For you. I will come,” She said with such sweetness and light, to mask her fury. Her M had been good at the oh so sweet act too. She didn't have the advantage of being an unassuming omega that the new M did.

Thanking Victoria for the tea, it was time to start the day. Falkirk headed for the office.

As Falkirk made his way through the building. A mousy, omega girl stepped out.

“Should you not be working, Alice,” Falkirk said, to the MI6 sanctioned torturer. She asked for a word, so they walked the rest of the way to Falkirk's office in silence.

Only in Falkirk's office, with the door firmly closed did Alec let out a huff of exasperation and said, “Something's wrong with the survivor. He's not right in the head.”

“I figured that myself.”

“NO!” the omega shouted, for the first time Falkirk could remember. “No one understands! He's not right! I don't know, he's, he's, I DON'T KNOW! He just isn't right.”
With a sigh, the omega slumped into a chair where she cradled her head. Falkirk patted her shoulder as he made his way around his desk.

Tanner burst in, pulling to a stop seeing Alice having a crisis of confidence. Falkirk waved for the man to speak.

“M, two developments. Fitz wants to see you in Q-Branch. The other is this,” Tanner activated the display on the glass wall. “The left is from what we believe to be the leader of the group to attack the Villa, the one Double O Seven threw from the landing. The other is one of dozens of unaccounted partial-fingerprint, associated with the murder of Special Agent Caitlin Todd. The perpetrator in her murder was identified and killed, so the print was deemed to be circumstantial and irrelevant to the case. Both prints are from the same man, M.”

“Look into it,” Falkirk ordered. Tanner left to follow up the fingerprint. Falkirk held out his hand for Alice, “Care for a walk?”

The girl nodded and followed Falkirk without taking his hand. She mused as they walked, “I know when someone is hiding something. I see when they're on the verge of giving it up... It's like he's... hypnotised or something.”

“Hypnotised?”

The girl shrugged. “If I break him, he won't tell me the truth, he'll just give me the answers I want to hear. He knows what he had to do. He knew he had to attack the villa. He knew the plan was for you to be killed for a camera. He told me all that freely. The problem is the 'why'. I believe that he doesn't knows why he had to do what he did. He doesn't know why he hated you. He's confused about it himself.”

Falkirk stopped. Something niggled at him. From when he was Q, and a Double O came up against a girl who defied her size, sex, gender and age. To being M and learning of places like the Village.

“Have you considered mental conditioning?” Falkirk said and watched the omega frown in confusion.

“Conditioning wouldn't...”

“...The public know nothing of what's been done. Even the few cases I've seen verge on science fiction. I can put you in touch with some real experts.”

Alice nodded. Falkirk said he would make the arrangements as they entered the large under ground room that was Q-Branch's main office. A small man, waved frantically at them from inside on of the glass fronted offices at the back. The little Scots omega beamed a smile at them.

“M, good, you're here. Sorry, I didn't want to go... up, you know, up there,” Fitz said, meaning out of the part of MI6 he felt comfortable in.

Falkirk nodded, “What did you find?”

“I've been going over the radios, phones and other electronics. The components are standard but the interesting thing is the construction conforms to a system used by America,” Fitz said

Falkirk looked at the radio in a clear evidence box. Peter from Cyber division had said something
similar about the transmission-data collected from the Villa. It conformed to a form of encryption used by the Americans.

That was now three points of evidence in favour of the US, the customer invoices, the software and hardware. Too many for Falkirk's liking.

“M,” Alice said. “Isn't Mr Tanner going to contact the Americans about the...”

Falkirk didn't know what was happening, so didn't want to tip anyone's hand. He pulled out his phone and stopped Tanner following up the fingerprint via official channels. They would have to be more discreet.
“BASTARDS! Bastards. If he wants a war I'll give him a fucking war,” Falkirk raged.

They were in Falkirk's secure office, a hidden place in the depth of MI6. Falkirk had been called down. He knew something was up when he was the last to arrive to a full office. Mycroft, Mallory, Smiley and Guillam were in attendance. Most likely Tanner's doing.

Defiantly not Tanner's doing was the little bald beta with very staring eyes putting everyone else on edge. Even Alice, who was not one to show fear. No.1 for his part had a detached-from-events, smile, while preparing his cup of tea and helping himself to one of the small cakes in the middle of the table.

The sole survivor's conditioning had broken, thanks to the help of No.1. Between No.1, Dr Dean and Alice, the survivor had recovered some damaged memories and spoken of a prison. From what the prisoner could remember it was easy to find the records of his capture and imprisonment, and even his fabricated death certificate. He was a conditioned soldier, straight out of a sci-fi novel. He couldn't remember his name before the prison where they slowly they fostered a hate within him, then before his mission focused it on Falkirk.

Knowing they had to look at known Terrorists, who were recorded as dead. MI6 had identified all of the mercenaries. They were a mix of prisoners captured in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Iran and many places in between. Falkirk had heard of camps being set up for the individuals deemed too sensitive to be sent to the overt prisons like Guantánamo Bay. It appeared these mercenaries were from one, or a few of them.

“I could call in the Ambassador. If they know they risk being exposed...” Mallory trailed off.

Looking around, getting no support for a diplomatic solution.

“I could go say hello,” James said pacing like a lion in too small a cage.

“I like that Idea,” Alec added.

“It's him, not them,” Daniel said, cold hate radiated off him. “It's time to finish what I started.”

Falkirk saw the two most dominant alphas coming to agreement, with just a look shared between them. If anything rang alarm bells in Falkirk's mind it was James and Daniel in perfect agreement. So far their affection for the mutual people in their lives was the only common ground. Both maintained a truce because of them. Everything else was negotiated and fought over. It didn't help that both Alec and Falkirk were also wanted to lash out with deadly retribution.

“Friends, Enemies and unable to tell one from the other. Ah, the good old days,” Smiley muttered as he cleaned his thick glasses with his tie. Although not blatantly mentioned, he was giving
“Agreed we go slowly. We do not confront anyone yet,” Falkirk said. “I don't want guilt, or doubt, when our wrath descends. We make sure whether it's him or them we need to deal with.”

“Oh-oo-oo,” a small sound of excitement from No.1. “May I see your response first hand, M?”

Smiley looked from the strange beta and back to Falkirk, “M, do the MI6 Trustees know you are friends with, him?”

“Oh, yes. They do,” No.1 said and looked around, to see if he got the answer right.

“Yes,” Falkirk said to Smiley. “They even know I visit No.1 and another in The Village.”

“What's The Village?” Mallory asked. He was politely told a Prime Minister didn't have the clearance to know that secret.

At the end of the meeting, Falkirk waited, and gestured the others to go. Only when it was Smiley and himself, did the older alpha take out a inhaler. Shaking the small 'L' shaped device, he then took one puff of the medication. He waited a minute, before putting his lips around the nozzle again and pressing down on the aerosol can that stuck up, to take the second puff.

“Don't ask,” Smiley wheezed after taking the medicine.

“Okay,” Falkirk said. He offered his arm for the alpha to take. As they walked through the halls of MI6, Smiley leaning heavily on Falkirk's supporting arm.

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The Sunday training session took on new meaning. Especially for Rupert who had never cared for them, but after witnessing the events on the island forced himself to make up for lost time. He didn't have the inherent talent of some, but he had something else, focused determination. Rupert and Cody, the two oldest were now in open competition for top spot of the kids. Selene and James preening like proud parents, watching the target practice of the two boys.

The adult omegas sat on the terrace and watched the others on the lawn below.

“I didn't ask about your sister,” Falkirk said to Keading. The omega and Selene's trip to America having been overlooked in the chaos.

“Good she had a daughter, an Omega as well,” Keading informed going on to talk about his trip back home. Both Falkirk and Darren engaged in the conversation.

Moving onto Darren complaining about being dragged to the party conference where Gareth gave a rousing speech. They then spent some time touring the constituencies. Darren told a story of some old pervert who put a hand on his arse and how he cold-clocked the bastard. Darren also told how Gareth had figuratively torn the guy to shreds along with the local MP. That that type of conduct was no longer acceptable, especially when only a few months from polling day and the press were looking for anything to crucify a politician with.

With a normal conversation going on. Keading said, “Falkirk, The time's not been good,”
“If you wait for the prefect moment, it will never come,” Falkirk said with an encouraging smile.

“Okay,” Keading said. “With everyone but Michelle at school. I was planning on volunteering. The charity stuff I do for you. Well I was thinking I could do more, you know, not just giving them your money on time, or asking Darren for some politician's number. I want to help actually out myself. I'll still look after the kids when they get back from school and stuff...”

Darren was giggling. Even Falkirk was smiling, “Take a breath before you pass out. Sounds like great idea.”

Keading beamed a bright smile at them. “I've been talking to Stella, she runs a refuge...”

Hudson came out, interrupting the conversation. “Mr Wade to see you, Sir. I have shown him to the Library.”

Going through Falkirk found the older alpha, dressed in his typical a loud Hawaiian shirt, studying the drawing above the fire place. And swearing under his breath while fiddling with his phone.

“Help me, Kiddo. The boys back home are desperate to get a good look of this,” the Old Alpha said and handed Falkirk his phone. “I'm meant to be all subtly, ah shit, but I can't be assed!”

Taking the phone. Falkirk trusted Jack more than anyone outside of the pack. He said, “It's the coating on the windows, the further away you are the more opaque they become.”

Taking the photo, the pack diagram personal but in no way Top Secret. Falkirk then handed back the camera.

Tucking the returned phone away. Wade's demeanour changed, becoming just a bit more tense.

“Kiddo... one of our guys has been watching your investigation. We're not liking what we're seeing. This is not just me talking, this comes from a full audit of ourselves. Every one of our agents and operatives have been accounted for. All equipment and resources too. Saying that, I am not actually here. I am not speaking and I am defiantly not saying what I am about to say. We have done nothing, know nothing, endorsed nothing.”

Taking his seat behind the desk. “So you know what happened?” Falkirk said.

“Kiddo! I told you, we are the epitome of 'dumb Americans'. We're completely ignorant in everything,” Wade said with a big smile on his face. Noticing Falkirk not being taken in by it, more quietly he said, “Do you trust me?”

Falkirk looked into the eyes of the standing man. He bowed his head, “Yes, yes I do.”

“Then, Kiddo, I promise this. We were not involved, despite the evidence.”

Falkirk nodded, and slouched in his chair. Closing his eyes, he whispered, “I know.”

“You...” Wade was visibly stumped. “You know who attacked you?”

“I'm just so pissed off! I want... I can, I can... if I start talking I'll end up ranting like Moriarty. I think I'm closer to him than I would like, Jack.”
“Damn, Kiddo! I'm here because I understand. When someone comes after you and yours, you want to strike back even harder. Trespassers will be shot, survivors will be shot again, and all that.”

They fell into silence for a little while. Wade then said, “Now if you'll excuse me, I'm officially on a coffee run to Starbucks. President's going to be pissed, he asked for a hot chocolate a day and a half ago.”

Falkirk manage a weak laugh, for the attempted joke. Falkirk showed his guest to the door where there was car waiting with blacked out windows. Falkirk waited until Wade entered and the car pulled away.

When Falkirk returned to the library James, Selene, Daniel and Alec were waiting for him. The others waited patiently for Falkirk to put his thoughts on order.

“A man I consider a friend is either telling me the truth, or lying to me and I'm not seeing it. Then again, Jack could have been the one being lied to. Then Jack would be perpetuating a lie he believes to be true,” Falkirk said. After a moment's silence he added, “No, that doesn't feel right. I'm confidant we can consider the evidence pointing to America, suspect.”

Daniel added his own thoughts. “Everyone and country has a style, hard to break. The British are quite lazy, in the first instance. Talking until it's almost too late. When they decide something needs to be done, it's usually with a bunch of old fossils wanting to live out some glory, while the young men die. Officious and Bureaucratic in short.”

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“America?” Falkirk said.

“In the first instance, they like to throw money about and let others get there hands dirty. When they do enter a fight. They jump in with both feet, lots of soldiers, helicopters, the whole nine yards.” With a small smile he added, “I'd describe them as very, not subtle.”

Alec mused, “We were attacked by mercenaries.”

Falkirk said, “No we weren't. I think the point Daniel was making, if it was America they would have just paid the men. Or would have sent a cruse missile. No, we were attacked by conditioned, elite, soldiers. Someone wanted us fighting, scared, bleeding, dying. Ultimately me getting my head hacked off for YouTube.”

“The attack on the Villa was a motivated by fanaticism and hate,” Daniel added. “I sent a couple of his operatives back in chunks. MI6 is guilty of protecting me and refusing my extradition. Then Laddie, you go waltzing into Iran with arms loaded with gifts for for the devil, what is he to think?”

Falkirk looked around those in the room. “We shouldn't attack David directly. I do have an idea though.”

James said, “You do scare me when you smile like that, Falkirk.”

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The chair rose through the floor and stopped within the ring of consoles. Falkirk looked to the badge pinned to his lapel, making sure the penny-farthing design was prominently displayed.
Tossing the long scarf around his neck, Falkirk stood. Using the rainbow umbrella as a walking stick he exited the room with the images of The Village playing on the walls.

With a buzz the front door of the large house opened automatically. Taking a deep smell of the fresh sea air, Falkirk stepped outside.

A woman in a bright, multi-coloured cape smiled, “Number 2!”

“Good morning, Number 78,” Falkirk returned, like they were the best of friends. Falkirk strolled along the narrow streets. Calling hello and having hellos called to him.

There it was, a sky blue, rondavel with small crescent shaped garden. The strange bald beta was pottering about the garden, tending the bird feeders.

“Hello, Number 56!” Falkirk called.

The blue staring eyes flicked to Falkirk, even when he ran the place No.1 struggled against the mental triggers of the ’2’ badge, the scarf and umbrella. It took him a moment to smile and say, “Number 2, welcome, welcome. So good to see you again. Come in and sit down.”

Falkirk stepped through the small gap in the low wall. He sat at the bistro table, by the stable doors. Falkirk waited while the bald man, dressed in black suite trimmed in salmon made some tea and brought it out.

Being mother, No.1 poured the tea. “So have you decided on what to do?”

“Yes. So I need something a little different. Something outside of our expertise,” Falkirk mused.

No.1 hummed in response as he inspected Falkirk, with a strange side to side sweeping head movement, as if inspecting an insect from all angles.

“Not the usual containment?” No1 asked in his typical soft, dreamy, almost absent-minded voice.

“No. I want someone to remember. Remember the pain and hatred he once bore and who it was originally directed at,” Falkirk informed.

“He knows who he is to hate?” No1 asked. While sipping his tea, “Number 2, are you sure you don't want milk. I find tea without milk, so uncivilised.”

“No, thank you. And from a child the man I want you to help learned to hate the missiles, mortars and snipers he was being crushed under,” Falkirk said.

“What you ask, is exceedingly simple,” No.1 mused. “Although... if you'd been there in the sixties, that was the heyday for mental conditioning...”

“May I have another cup of tea?” Falkirk interrupted pleasantly.

“Oh yes. Do have one of those little torts, they are excellent,” No1 responded and Falkirk helped himself to the a slice of the stripy cake.

“You know,” No.1 mused with a soft smile and twinkle in his eyes. “I'm reminded of something. Like Giants in the Playground, everyone gets crushed beneath them. This, sounds, like... FUN!”
“Double O Three welcome back,” Falkirk said coming into his office and finding the guest chair already occupied. If the Double O wasn't tied to a wall, it meant he'd come through the breaking of his bond.

“You should have told me!”

Falkirk was a bit confused. A couple of his favourite Double Os had read him the riot act. Even the others had expressed their concerns, in more professionally terms. “Told you? About my holiday? Mr Fairbanks, Deputy Director Butler...”

“I'm not taking about the attack! Syphilis!” Fairbanks snapped.

“Oh, that. It was irrelevant. You were bound,” Falkirk responded.

The angry Double O surged to his feet to pace the room. “She infected me! How could I be so stupid to bond with her! ON A MISSION!”

“Bourbon?” Falkirk asked, picking up the decanter from behind him. Fairbanks nodded and Falkirk poured the second glass before handing it to the other man. “You were, and are, my priority. I hoped in time you would come to know the woman as she was and not as your physiology dictated her to be. I wouldn't have alienated you by telling you things you weren't ready to hear.”

Fairbanks sat back down. Sipping at the smoky amber liquid. Relishing the burn of the first hard liquor he'd had in over a month.

“I feel stupid,” Fairbanks admitted hanging his head. His boss chuckled, when Fairbanks looked up he followed his boss’ line of sight. M was looking through the internal glass wall to the communal office beyond.

Falkirk mused, “The only reason you can't see the scars of my stupidity is because Silva came along and blew up the office and we needed to rebuild it. Just like me your stupidity was named physiology. Me, for my Alpha. You, for your Omega.”

Seeing Fairbanks had said his piece, Falkirk dismissed him. Just as the Double O walked through the door Falkirk thought he heard a 'thanks' but it was so low and fast Falkirk wasn't truly sure if he imagined it.

--

“Sir Thomas?” the ward sister called. Falkirk had just been visiting Brayan. The recovering Alpha was proud to be up and moving without too much support. The aphasia was still prominent in the
speech patterns of the man.

“Miss Barett would like a word,” the sister informed. After telling her he couldn't wait much longer the sister went to get the social worker for Brayan.

Falkirk was led into a small office where the Beta guided Falkirk to sit in a low soft chair. It felt a bit too much like one of those used by psychs for their assessments, so put Falkirk on edge.

It quickly emerged Barett was gearing up for Brayan's discharge. It would be at least a few months away perhaps early next year. Falkirk listened to her advice, he pulled out a notebook and started writing down a few points.

Falkirk tucked the notebook back into his pocket as the meeting came to an end.

Falkirk arrived home to find the house full for the Sunday training session with Daniel. Andrew was cheering Rupert, as the little alpha did a tracking exercise where he shot a small drone that buzzed about the garden. Cody was glaring a bit. Falkirk wasn't sure if it was a lie or not when Daniel called, “A tie. Sixty-six percent accuracy each!”

Rupert, the better sport beamed a bright smile. Getting hugs from Andrew, and pats James. Cody sulked, no matter what Selene or Keading did.

--

Mrs Bridges, Falkirk and Hudson sat at the dining room table. Mrs Bridges had a small notebook and a large piece of paper in front of her, the seating plan for the table. Hudson wore a pair of tortoise shell half moon glasses, with his own notepad in front of him. Falkirk had a laptop.

“Control, and Simonov have type II diabetes so no added sugar. Nor can either take grapefruit. Control is on other medication, so he won't be drinking,” Falkirk mused with Mrs Bridges and Hudson taking careful note.

“Sir, I don't believe we have sufficient fish cutlery,” Hudson said.

Falkirk gave his permission for Hudson to make up the numbers of anything insufficient. Adding, “One kitchen maid and two foot men. An MI6 security team will also be using the flat above the garage.”

“Will they need fed as well?” Mrs Bridges asked.

Nodding “Coffee, juice and foods they can graze on, rather than a meal.” Falkirk informed.

“Will Mr Bond be present?” Hudson asked.

Falkirk realised they had been at the planning for hours.

--

After dropping the kids off at the school Selene raised the partition between them and the driver.

“I'm not sure I like Keading going to that refuge,” Selene admitted.
Keading had been volunteering at a shelter for Omegas escaping bad bonds. Falkirk gave what he could, money and a fair amount. Keading had been acting as his representative and now wanted a to do more.

“Keading is safe and wants to bring that to others,” Falkirk responded.

“He comes home and... He refuses to talk! He gossip, tells me everything but not now!”

Falkirk could see and scent the distress Keading caused Selene.

“He has told me a few horrific stories. They are not things I would wish on anyone, although I have made threats...” Falkirk trailed off. “You support him and so will I. I will also try to find some time to spare, and I'll go to this safe house myself.”

“Thanks,” the still very concerned woman said.

--

James, sitting in the chair across from his, no not in this situation, in this situation Falkirk was M and James was Double O Seven. James had been right, that strange smile M got was something to be feared. There was imagination and darkness in M, a dangerous combination.

Double O Seven and M just looked at each other. Neither willing or able to back down. One of them had to, James decided it was him.

“Every time before, I got my arse handed to me by Daniel after challenging you. This time, I'm not going to act like an alpha. I'm not going to order you. I'm not going to put my foot down. As Double O Seven though, I hope you bloody well know what you're doing, M. I don't see why you can't just send me?”

Falkirk smiled sadly. “I cannot send you for the same reason we were not attacked directly. We're all the best of friends, officially. Now, the worst time in our history will be the worst in someone else's.”

Tanner knocked and came in, “They're ready for you, M.”

Falkirk stood, James following. The Alpha a dark cloud of annoyance, suspicion and anger. They picked up Selene, Alec and Daniel on their way through the building.

Within the depths of MI6. Falkirk and the group met up with, No.1 and Alice who waited in a small office. Screens monitored the survivor of the assault on Daniel's Villa. The screen showed the man kneeling on a mat, raising then lowering in prayer. A compass sat off to the side so he would know he was facing the correct direction. He was ready, a weapon turned and now turned again. All that was left was to let this hate filled grenade return to its one time master.

Alice said, “Joe asked to go outside.”

No.1 added, “He is rather an amenable character.”

Falkirk looked to Alec, Selene and Daniel and asked them to secure the roof. Falkirk waited for the man, code named Joe, to stop his prayers. He and James then went to the brig. They found Joe
sitting on the bench at the back of the cell.

Joe stood and came to the glass wall. His hazel eyes jumped from James to Q. A slight flatness to his accent, his English very good, “I wish to apologise for our attack. I have no quarrel against you or the British.”

James just growled. Falkirk said, “I was told you'd like some fresh air.” Falkirk waved to the brig officer and the glass door slid to the side. He then held his arm out, in invitation for the prisoner dressed in green scrubs and slippers to step out.

Joe had a thin almost gaunt face. With neat, very short beard and well trimmed hair. His height touching six foot tall. “I won't extend my hand. I've no right to ask for forgiveness.”

Surprising Falkirk and the prisoner, James did extend his hand. Joe took it. The handshake was very awkward and stiff. Falkirk then extended his hand, and the long tanned fingers clasped around his in turn.

Joe and Falkirk walked through the building, with James a step behind. The Double O still on edge.

On the riverside of MI6, about half way up the building there was a flat roof. Some workers sneaked cigarettes here. There was also a compact missile luncher here to protect the building. Daniel, Alec and Selene had made sure the area was empty.

Joe broke from Falkirk's side to stand in the middle of the roof. He closed his eyes and turned his face to the sun. Taking several deep breaths.

James turned on his heels. In parting his whispered to Falkirk, “This is beyond fucked up!” The Double O stormed off.

Cautiously No.1 stepped into the light. He stood beside Falkirk. “This is marvellous,” No.1 squeaked in happiness.

Falkirk hummed, non-committally. Just watching Joe, being happy to see the sun. Daniel came up to Falkirk and No.1. The big Alpha just watched Joe with them for a few minutes. Daniel whispered, “Have you thought about what will happen if the head of Mossad is assassinated by a Palestinian?”

No.1 giggled at the prospect. Falkirk looked at the bald man, he then took off his glasses to scrub his face.

Daniel said, “Laddie, if you ever thought my advice was worth a damn. Send James, Alec and me.”

Falkirk turned away. As he entered the building he tossed over his shoulder, “I will send a message! To everyone!”

No.1 giggled again.

With lightning speed, Daniel rounded on the smaller Beta. Grabbing No.1 by the neck and slamming him against the wall. The big alpha glared into the glassy pale-blue eyes of the insane man.

A throat cleared, and one of the men in all black suits took a step closer. Pulling back one side of
the black jacket and nestled over the black shirt was the black gun in a black holster. “We cannot allow harm to come to No.1, Quartermaster.”

“Take him. You have thirty seconds before I shoot him.” Daniel threw No.1 towards his minders/bodyguards.

No.1 glanced back to the angry Alpha, “M knows, I told him. Many will be crushed in this fight. Not that I care, really. That will always be M's weakness. He cares about those little inconsequential people. The powerless ones.”

--

Arriving home. Falkirk was looking at his phone. A security alert having gone off, for a breach at Skyfall. Checking James’ tracker Falkirk figured he could ignore the alert from Skyfall. The tracker was at Skyfall, Falkirk suspecting James to be the one who broke in. The Alpha only had a few reactions to deal with his emotions. Running home was the least self-destructive of them. No matter what James said, he was far more sentimental than he let on, and did still consider Skyfall home.

Entering the house, Keading was waiting for him. Keading looked to the library. He explained there had been a fight between Andrew and Rupert. Keading had spoken to everyone involved or witnessed it. It was a childish argument similar to the stories Falkirk had heard from teachers before.

Keading sent the kids to the car, so Cody and Yulian were out of earshot. Keading then said, “Rupert's very scared, of being set away I think. Andrew's been throwing a tantrum in his room.”

Falkirk thanked the other Omega and waved him and the others off. Going through to the library, he found Rupert sitting in one of the guest chairs in front of the desk. The young alpha turned red rimmed eyes to Falkirk. The scent of fear was heavy and rank in the room.

“I punched Andrew,” Rupert admitted very quietly, lowering his head and baring his neck. He stood too.

Falkirk took a breath and sat behind the desk. The two boys had been growing closer and as Rupert had become more comfortable he had not been so tolerant of Andrew's behaviour. Falkirk had no illusions. Andrew was wilful, confrontational, opinionated and assertive to the point of being a bully. His teacher had reprimanded him for fighting and Falkirk had been called in to the School a few times because of it.

Falkirk asked for Rupert's side of the story. It was similar to stories Falkirk had heard dozens of times. A silly argument over the best 'Doctor', with Andrew refusing to let someone have a different opinion to himself. Working himself up and not backing down in the face of an Alpha, ending up in a physical fight.

Falkirk tapped is fingers on the desk top a few times before telling Rupert, “It will be all-right Rupert. Keep in mind what I do, I promise that no matter what I say it will be alright.”

Instructing Rupert to stay where he was Falkirk called up to Andrew, for him to come down. Falkirk haring each stomping step of the still angry child. Coming in to the library Andrew clasped his nose at the scent. Usually Falkirk would instruct his son on proper etiquette but this time let him be. Instructing Andrew to sit in the chair beside Rupert, Falkirk returned to his own.
Almost instantly Andrew defended himself, his voice flat from holding his nose, “I didn't do anything HE started it!”

“Is that so,” Falkirk mused. Despite Falkirk's warning tears sprang in Rupert's eyes “Well Rupert will have to leave. I will not have a violent alpha hurting my child.”

Andrew's eyes widened in horror. He knew Rupert had been abandoned and now his Papa was going to do the same. “But...” Andrew hesitantly said.

“Don't worry Rupert will be going back to boarding school,” Falkirk said to Andrew in a soft reassuring voice. It was dawning on Andrew, there were potentially disastrous repercussions to his actions. Falkirk could scent Andrew's anxiety and fear now as well, the omega's mixing with the alpha's.

“Wasn't Rupert's fault,” Andrew admitted quietly.

“Go on,” Falkirk ordered his tone going very stern and commanding. Quietly and with his head bowed and neck exposed Andrew told his Papa the story of the fight. Including how he started it by tackling Rupert.

“Truth or Lie, Action or inaction there are consequences to everything. At best you will bear the consequences at worst another will,” Falkirk said tone hard. The fact Falkirk had been considering this concept that very morning not lost on him.

“'m sorry,” Andrew said, wiping his eyes and dribble of snot from his little nose.

“At least you were honest, eventually,” Falkirk said, letting his tone go soft again. “Go to your room. I'll talk to you in a bit. Think on what you did and said. And all the trouble it can cause.”

Andrew nodded and Falkirk dismissed him. With Andrew scared straight and now with something to consider Falkirk's attention tuned back to Rupert.

Coming out from behind his desk to sit on the chair beside Rupert's. Tucking the small alpha under his arm, Falkirk said, “I'm sorry you had to hear that. Andrew has to learn there are repercussions to his actions.”

Rupert only gave a little shrug in answer. Falkirk said, “Repeat after me, This is my home.”

“‘This is your...”

“My, this is my home,” Falkirk interrupted Rupert. When Rupert repeated the line Falkirk then said, “This is where I live.”

Rupert was almost silent as he repeated the line Falkirk said.

“This is where I am loved.” after Rupert repeated the last one Falkirk kissed the boy's forehead. “I hope you believe it Rupert, this is your home, it is where you live and you are loved... even by Andrew.”

After a while Falkirk rubbed his cheek against the top of Rupert's head. “You know you're not the first, Colum and Yulian have both fought with Andrew.”
“They're not bigger than him.” Rupert muttered.

“Dose it make it right if Andrew only picks fights with Alphas smaller than him? Well, Cody's fought with him too. I do worry. Andrew has James' arrogance. I can see a day when he sets off someone who won't pull their punches or stop.”

“How angry will James be?” Rupert asked, speaking into Falkirk's collar bone.

“James will understand,” Falkirk responded. “James isn't the type to say the L-word. So he shows it. He shows it by wanting you here, by not letting you go to a school he hated. By sharing in everything he likes. And by sharing in everything you an Andrew like. By coming back whenever he leaves.”

Falkirk leaned back. He wiped the wet cheek, and gave Rupert another kiss to the forehead. “I had better go talk to Andrew. He's probably stewed enough by now.”

Rupert managed a weak smile for Falkirk, before the omega headed for the door. Before leaving, Falkirk said, “Your family loves you.”
James arrived home from Skyfall just in time to see the kids being ushered into a car and told to go get his white tie on.

Rupert, Andrew and Yulian had been placed in the careful custody of Keading for the night. Selene was stationed in the flat above the garage, coordinating the on site security.

As Deputy Director, Daniel would be coming and as his mate so would Alec. Also coming would be Rhett Butler and his mate Kara Milovy. George Smiley, Peter Guillam, Mycroft and Victoria, would be alone. While Capt. Sansky, Gp. Capt. Bartlett and Col. Forman were bringing a plus one. With the three guests from Russia it was going to be a full table. It was a meeting of the FSB and MI5, MI6 and their military intelligence counterparts.

Group Captain Bartlett, Falkirk only ever met in arranged meetings or a crisis. He was like Smiley or Falkirk's father, one of those Alphas who relied on there mental prowess or personality rather than their physical attributes. He was shorter than Falkirk and although fit enough was round in face and body.

Col Forman was army through and through. He was practically born in uniform. His family had been in the Army for generations and had a passion for it. Falkirk quite liked him, he was charming and a bit old fashioned.

James stood behind his mate, the two facing the wardrobe's full length mirror. For an Omega Falkirk was rather tall, the same height as the Alpha reaching round from behind. A moment of though went through James' mind, from when Falkirk was shorter and he was over a head taller than the Omega, and tying a bow-tie was a little easier for the Alpha. Now James peeked over Falkirk's shoulder, to awkwardly reach over a tall man in order to do the task.

“You two had better not be screwing in there!” Alec called and knocked on the bedroom door.

“Bugger off!” James growled in response.

Falkirk said, “If he and Daniel are here we had better be going.”

As Falkirk moved off, James caught his arm and pulled the omega back. James cupped his cheek and brushed his thumb over the dark red lips before placing a kiss on them. James then pulled back and straightened Falkirk's white bow-tie before steering Falkirk towards the door and sending him off with a pinch to the bum. Falkirk giving a brief glare over the top of his glasses before pulling the door closed behind him.

James finished dressing and joined Falkirk down stairs. Butler and his mate were the first proper guests to arrive, Daniel and Alec not counting as guests any more. The tall elegant Beta Butler
introduced as his wife Kara. James, rather charming to the attractive blond Russian woman.

Falkirk noticed James was not so charming when Sansky arrived. The Alpha female who was introduced as Sansky's wife, and Falkirk knew this was nasty even in his own head, she was the ugliest person he had ever seen. Hair a shade of orangey-yellowy-red that was only seen from a bottle, or rust polluted pond. Washed out, pale green eyes not helped by the black round glasses magnifying them. A sense of fashion even Falkirk cringed at. She was also quite short. To top it all off was her personality, that could only be kindly described as bracing. Falkirk showed her and Capt. Sansky to the lounge where Hudson and a footman stood with trays of cocktails. He ran back to the front door to await the next guest.

Next came Victoria, the heels giving her a hight and elegant arch to her back. Like most Double O's she knew of her attributes and used them to their full potential. She wore her hair up to emphasise the line of her neck. She wore a simple and elegant, light cream, dress and a necklace of some dark metal. Knowing Butler from both her time at MI6 and the trusties she was able to mingle easily.

At the appointed time. Falkirk came to the bottom of the steps of his house, with Rhett Butler at his side to make the introductions. The police escorted car arrived. Opening his door before anyone did it for him, Simonov, another small alpha with greying hair, got out. He was abrupt and charming with a twinkle in his blue eyes. It was a bit odd but he kissed Falkirk's hand. It was not usually a gesture used for Omega men but as Simonov drew back Falkirk saw his eye flick to the door where James was standing. Falkirk realised the short alpha was poking the lion to see what would happen. Falkirk and James' bond was strong, where a strange Alpha was concerned so James saw no threat to his claim over the Omega and ignored the gesture.

Falkirk noticed James go very tense. He glanced to the car and saw a beautiful dark haired woman who held the title, Triple-X.

Guiding Falkirk's arm through his, Simonov and Falkirk walked up the steps. An on-edge Butler was left to greet the Russian Director's companion. James let his mate and older alpha pass, and made sure he was between his omega and Katja coming up the steps with Butler.

Falkirk and Simonov entered the lounge and he felt the Alpha tense seeing Victoria speaking to Col. Forman. Falkirk forced himself, to not let the smirk lift his lips. The games they played, Simonov didn't even know what the game was even when he tried to play it.

“I believe you know Victoria, Director Simonov,” Falkirk said innocently, loud enough to drawn the woman's attention. She held herself high and unrepentant in the face of the man she shot.

Falkirk spoke with Simonov for a bit before the guest moved to mingled with the other in the room. There was a strong mix of Russian and English being spoked with Alec and Kara being of Russian decent and James and Butler being fluent. Even Falkirk had picked up basic conversational, and expert profanity in his time with Alec.

At seven they were called to the table. Falkirk sat in his usual place with Simonov to his right and on his left Smiley then Victoria.

“Not a typical layout?” Simonov observed.

Falkirk always sat at the foot of the table. The Guest of Honour(Simonov) should be to the right of the head where James sat. Falkirk gave Simonov a challenging half smile and the Russian laughed.
“The power does not reside at the head,” Simonov whispered, knowing full well it to be true.

Simonov had been switching between Russian and English depending on who he had been speaking to. In Russian he had expressed an interest in hearing Kara play. In English she responded that she was participating at a concert at the Royal Albert Hall. In English, Simonov promised to attend. He then held a brief conversation with James before tuning to Alec asking, “I am most curious, Karla made so few mistakes. I don’t know how you, such a big mistake he made.”

“Because he wasn’t as good as he though he was,” Alec responded ending the conversation.

“We never know how good we are until we meet our equal and opposite,” Simonov mused looking at Falkirk but he kept Victoria in his sight as well.

After coffee the party broke into two groups. James took Victoria by the arm escorting her to the lounge. The various partners followed including Alec. A brief, silent, exchange occurred between Guillam and Smiley, ending when the older alpha got up and followed James to the other room. Joining James was one of Simonov’s entourage, Katja.

Hudson placed a decanter down along with glasses. Then retrieved an ashtray and table lighter. Falkirk knew Simonov smoked and wanted to put him at ease. He wasn’t surprised when everyone ended up lighting up. Daniel had brought cigars and Butler joined him. As both their rough voices indicated Sansky and Foreman of Army Intelligence lit up cigarettes. Even Mycroft and Falkirk indulged. Falkirk rather concerned for Guillam who looked a bit green after taking a drag on one of Daniel’s cigars.

“I tell you, I half expected to be tied to a chair and tortured,” Simonov said, laughing at his own joke. It was about the second round of drinks when he made it.

Falkirk saw a cream flash, through the frosting on the dinning room doors. Simonov excused himself for a moment. “I promise, I won’t bug your beautiful home,” he said before going into the hall.

Hudson came in. “Phone call,” he whispered to Falkirk.

Getting up Falkirk made an excuse and followed Hudson out. The butler indicated the library door. Falkirk went to the door, turning the handle he slowly swung it open. A hushed conversation ended and Simonov and Victoria looked like a pair of teenagers caught in a compromising situation.

“I was hoping the three of us could have a quiet chat,” Falkirk said stepping in and closing the door. Simonov tried to charm his way out of the situation. Victoria remained steadfastly silent. Falkirk said, “I do not care, but you need to know that I know.”

Going to his desk Falkirk pressed his finger to the hidden scanner and the drawer popped open. Removing a file he placed it on the desk. Speaking only to Victoria. “I do not actually doubt you. But this needs to be said. If you have or if you ever compromise this country you will not see me coming, either of you.”

Walking to the door. Falkirk looked back at the silent pair. “Mr Simonov, Mrs Simonov,” Falkirk said and walked out.

Falkirk returned to the dining room and refilled his glass. Simonov returned a few moments later.
Eventually the party started to break up. On leaving, Simonov insisted, “You must come to Russia. M. I so wish to return the favour.” Just a hit of a threat in the man's words.

“I would very much enjoy that,” Falkirk returned.

When it came down to just Daniel, Alec and Victoria. Falkirk offered the woman a private night cap. She followed Falkirk into the library where Falkirk poured a bourbon from his concealed bar and a Scotch for Victoria.

Brushing the file on his desk, the pages askew, she had looked at the file Falkirk had compiled. The most damaging evidence had been a picture of her and Simonov, him with his arm still bound from the shots she had taken. It was now missing as Falkirk looked through the file.

Victoria confessed to everything in the file and more. She did not make any proclamations of innocence or guilt she just laid out the events as she remembered them. Two young operatives fighting, hating, then loving. When the MI6 hierarchy had found out she had been ordered to prove her loyalty. Victoria placed two bullets in Simonov's chest. He survived, barely, it was enough to convince MI6 but she admitted she couldn't make the shots instantly fatal.

“Despite your affiliations. I don't believe you would act against the United Kingdom. The moment that changes you will be executed. Keep your association quiet but if you hide anything from me...” Falkirk trailed off, letting the unspoken threat hang.

“Without a doubt you are the strangest M I have ever know,” Victoria stated, then noticed the way the omega was looking at her. Something twigged, the way M had her over a barrel. “What the bloody hell do you want!”

“I was wondering when you'd twig,” Falkirk said. Like he did before he opened the hidden drawer. “As of now, Mrs Simonov, you are hereby reactivated.”

“And I thought the last M had the monopoly on being a Bitch!”

Falkirk smirked, and handed over an 'Eyes Only' folder for Victoria to read.

Flicking through the folder. Victoria recognised the subject, “What's this got to do with one of my old black-bagging operations?”

“Skip to Page 30, Project Nightshade.”

Victoria flicked to part of the file she'd never seen before. Skimming it, only one word came to her, “Bugger!”

“Your mission, Mrs Simonov, is to retrieve Nightshade with minimal fall out. Use your personal relationship with the new FSB Director if necessary. We would prefer if the Russians never know about Nightshade.”

“M,” Victoria acknowledged and dropped the folder on Falkirk's desk.

Falkirk showed her to the door where she turned back to Falkirk, “Is it true you have never burned an Operative?”

Falkirk gave her a sad smile, “One.”
Victoria shared a look between James and Alec then said, “Goodnight, M.”

When finally alone. James slouched down on the couch and Falkirk pressed against him. Handing Falkirk the glass of bourbon he held. James asked, “Yulian again?”

“Rupert,” Falkirk answered, assuming James was talking about the bruise on Andrew's cheek.

“Does him good. It teaches him there are boundaries that if he pushes, others will push back,” James mused, typically Alpha in his mentality of aggression and assertiveness. “Just imagine if his arrogance grew, unchecked, he'd be you.”

Thumping the Alpha in the chest. Falkirk said, “Me! What about you?” Falkirk sighed and took a sip before he added, ”Fine. I'm not going to deploy Silva II."

A hand came to rest on Falkirk's neck and started to stroke it. “Good,” James said. “So when are Alec and I going to kill the bastard?”

“I don't know. I didn't want my fingerprints near this. No.1 was the first to warn me. So easily, so much harm could be done, to so many...”

Falkirk just lay his head against James' chest. Impotent anger filling him.
Falkirk arrived at his office, the day after the dinner party. Plans and plans formulating and chasing around each other around his mind. He didn't know what to do. He couldn't let what happened to them slide. There had to be a retaliation or everyone would think M and the United Kingdom was a walk over.

Tanner came in, a tablet held in his hand. “M, Director Simonov's movements are in accordance with his schedule. No strange meetings. He's booked tickets for the Ballet and the Royal Albert Hall, which wasn't unexpected.”

“Move on,” Falkirk said, he wasn't concerned about Simonov.

“There's this,” Tanner said and placed down a crisp sheet of the ivory paper on Falkirk's desk.

Reading it, Falkirk said, “Can't someone take five minuets to do this right. This is someone's life we're talking about for god's sake! Don't their family deserve more than a computer generated mail-merge...”

Falkirk pulled out an identical sheaf of the heavy stock, off white paper. Taking out his fountain pen, he unscrewed the cap and started to rewrite the letter of condolence.

Coming to a part of the letter. Falkirk looked to Tanner, “Lieutenant Kyle Adams, the third?”

The hereditary number was not used outside the monarchy in Britain. Tanner confirmed Falkirk's deduction when he said, “Lt. Adams was the US Naval Intelligence Liaison.”

“What happened to him?” Falkirk said, continuing to write the letter to the officer's parents.

“So far it looks like a mugging gone wrong. Given who Lt. Adams is, we are looking into it along with the police. We've extended an invitation to NCIS so their major incident unit will be here soon.”

Falkirk handed back the finished letter. Binning the one that had just been printed off. “Tanner, can you arrange for a meeting with Mycroft. I need his advice.”

“Will do, M.” Tanner said and headed out.

Falkirk sat for only a few moments before getting up. Going down to MI6's brig. He went to the cell with Joe in it.

The man codenamed 'Joe Bloggs' flicked his hazel eyes to Falkirk and raised an eyebrow. Slowly and in a controlled way, Joe placed down the book he'd been reading.
“Do you hate anyone?” Falkirk asked.

“I remember so little,” Joe said. “I do wish to meet the man who sent me after you. I remember hating you, but not knowing why. I remember, Yousuf, telling us the plan of filming you while you were beheaded. I knew I hated you enough to do it, but always the why alluded me.”

Falkirk paced in front of the cell. They talked for a while.

Joe eventually cut to the point of his guest’s visit. “You can't do it. You can't send me back, the way your enemy sent me to you?”

Falkirk shook his head. “No. I can't let you be the first of many caught between David and I. And if he dies at the hands of someone like you, there will be so much more blood.”

“Well I'm here if you need me.”

--

There was knocking on the bedroom door. Andrew swung it open. His bruised chin had healed completely and now he had Rupert were closer than ever.

“Happy birthday!” Andrew and Rupert said together.

Rupert whispered something to Andrew and handed him the tray. Andrew came to place the tray across his Papa’s lap. Then climbed in between his parents.

Thanking Andrew Falkirk gave him a nuzzle and kiss. Noticing Rupert was hanging back, still standing at the threshold of the open door. Falkirk invited the young alpha in but he refused with a shake of the head.

The bedroom was considered a sanctuary. Alphas who weren't the mate or offspring were not usually welcome and faced a violent defence from the dominant Alpha. Even Alec in their old flat and Hudson here refused to enter. Only the maid, a beta female, entered and never with James or Falkirk present.

“You can come in,” James assured.

Rupert cautiously entered, by only a single step. He stood near the dressing table by the door.

Falkirk inspected the burnt and scraped toast. Then poked the, something, somewhere, somehow, between raw slightly scrambled eggs and an omelet. There was also a mug of tea so strong it looked undrinkable.

“You can come closer,” Falkirk said to Rupert, dreading having to take bite.

After a glance to James, Rupert moved to the bottom corner of the bed. Getting fed up James got up, and went round to Rupert who cringed at the sudden closeness. Sweeping the young Alpha into his arms James deposited the pyjama clad boy beside Andrew then climbed in beside him.

Falkirk reached across and stoked Rupert's hair. “Thank you for breakfast in bed.”
The time came when he couldn't put it off any longer. Falkirk scraped a piece of egg onto the toast and ate it. Giving a small choke, "Next time perhaps a little less salt, please."

James gave Rupert a nuzzle then Andrew. "Okay, you two. Go get our own breakfast. Without a fist fight!"

James none to gently shove the two boys out of bed, depositing them on the floor. Falkirk avoided the next bite by saying, "James! Could you please not start a fist fight?"

"Yeah!" Andrew spat picking himself up from the floor. James whipped his head to his son, and released a ferocious snarl at point blank range. Andrew just winced a bit and wiped his face, "Eww, you spat."

"Go," James said. "Or no surprise next weekend."

Andrew shot out of the room. Rupert, rubbing his bumped elbow following.

Turning back to his Omega, James reached for the plate. Picking up a triangle of toast, and tapping it against the white porcelain. "God, you could use it as a shiv."

"It's the thought that counts," Falkirk defended.

"Well I never thought bread could be a weaponized," James said, getting the mug thrust towards him and being told to tip it down the sink.

Falkirk put the tray on the night stand. He scraped the contents of the plate into the little bin and put the empty plate back on the tray.

James returned with the empty mug. Holding out the mug, he said, "I was thinking. Andrew's never seen Skyfall, and it's been ages since Kincade has seen him. You think he'd like to go up north?"

"Is that the surprise you mentioned?"

James shook his head. "That was just a bluff to give us piece to hide the breakfast," James then looked off, "Rupert might not like going."

Falkirk looked up to his alpha, standing there in just his boxer shorts. A frown on the handsome round face and although meeting eyes, James's gaze was unseeing. Falkirk suspected James was the one with the hang-up.

Taking James' hand and pressing it to his cheek. James broke out of his deep gaze to look at him again. Falkirk said, "I think, Rupert would like to know about his family. Even if it's painful. And he will have us there."

James gave a little nod. Falkirk stood and kissed his alpha's cheek. Parting, James called, "Remember to be back on time tonight. Everyone is coming round for drinks and nibbles."

"Oh, I like nibbles," Falkirk said, heading for the bathroom, while James grabbed a dressing gown and went to see what the kids were up to.

As Falkirk left that morning, Hudson held out a Tupperware box. Inside was a small thermal flask with tea and some cured salmon and rye bread. Thanking the butler, Falkirk headed for his waiting
A lean blond man sat beside the driver. With only Omegas allowed at the refuge, and Falkirk's preferred 009 on assignment it left Thomas, 006 to be drafted in as bodyguard.

Falkirk was just finishing his tea when the car pulled up at Keading's where the omega jumped in. Giving Falkirk a nuzzle along with the happy birthday. He then said, “Are you sure you want to do this today?”

Falkirk nodded. “Selene won't be happy until I can tell her you're safe.”

“I am safe,” Keading said ducking his head. “Just... some don't want us talking about what goes on.”

“I understand,” Falkirk assured. The two fell silent for the rest of the journey.

Arriving on a nondescript London street the car let them off at the corner. Keading insisting they shouldn't draw too much attention, so walked the last few hundred yards. Falkirk had dressed casually in striped trousers and a patch work cardigan. Double O Six, in soft jeans and a brown jumper. All very casual. The area seemed safe enough although a little run down.

Standing outside a large, red brick, terrace house. It was two stories plus a basement. Several steps led up to the front door. Keading buzzed and a rather short female Omega opened it.

“This is Thomas McLair,” Keading said indicating Falkirk and then pointing to Double O Six, “And he's Stuart Thomas.”

The small Omega with very dark hair down the full length of her back was introduced as Margot Tyrell. She had an air of absent-ness but her brown eyes would suddenly clear and focus when she noticed something. Dressed in long black dress with the dark make up and hair it gave her the appearance of a witch.

“Well come in, that's why you're here. To nosey around,” her voice was quiet and conveyed she didn't like Falkirk or 006.

The scent of fear and distress stagnated in the air despite the ceiling fans and air conditioning. Following the black dressed Omega through to the back of the house they came to a kitchen where Falkirk met the other Omega who ran the refuge.

A bit older than Falkirk with blond, shoulder length hair she was introduced as Stella Gibson. Another short formidable woman and ex-police officer, she had a calm articulate voice and also seemed to be able to weigh Falkirk and 006 with just a glance. Gibson was a bit more diplomatic than her companion and thanked Falkirk for his 'kind support'. Falkirk didn't buy it, Gibson didn't want him there but didn't want to alienate him or his money.

Keading knew what he was doing and when Margot gave him a name he filled a mug with some soup and disappeared. Margot refused to talk and barely acknowledged Falkirk and it was left to Gibson to interact with him.

Falkirk, 006 and Gibson were making sandwiches. Some were placed on a single plate on the large kitchen table. While Gibson placed others on another plate. Keading retuned and he and Margot took the plate way along with a jug of juice and some stacked plastic cups.
A few of the residents came into the kitchen. Most wrapped in blankets. Very subdued. Gibson identified a few to Falkirk as they came in. The recovering Omegas weren't in the mood for conversation so Falkirk made no attempt to engage them. The plate was passed around and Falkirk poured juice from a jug. It was made with warm water so it was a bit more soothing and smelled sweet and fragrant.

After lunch the group of Omegas left as silently as they arrived. Falkirk helped clear and wash the dishes before Gibson put the kettle on again. She, Falkirk and 006 had a cup of tea in the calm between storms.

“Why are you here?” Gibson challenged.

Seeing she wanted more than just the 'I want to help' line Falkirk thought about his motivations before deciding on the one that brought him here today.

“I wanted to help but I have little time so I give money. Keading wanted to do something more practical so volunteered. His Alpha has become concerned, noticing some changes in Keading since volunteering. So I reassured her I would watch over him.”

A bit more confrontational Gibson challenged, “Yes, I noticed that. A subordinate omega will defer to a superior Omega but Subordinate Alpha wouldn't defer to an Omega no matter how superior, only to a superior Alpha”

“How very traditional,” Falkirk mused.

“A politician deflects. A lawyer explains at length why they won't answer. Military just refuse to answer. You have an odd technique of appearing to answer while you flat out refuse or tell me just enough,” Gibson stated.

“Most astute,” Falkirk responded getting a sharp, “There! That! You answered, just enough!”

The ex police officer seemed exhilarated by the challenge.

Falkirk stated, “Perhaps I like to know who and what I'm dealing with. Perhaps I don't like being on the back foot but am willing to share ground. Perhaps I find comfort in Quid Pro Quo rather than an interrogation.”

Gibson leaned forward to weigh Falkirk in her gaze a moment then leaned back. “The Met and I parted company when an Omega came in making an accusation. The person he was accusing was powerful, very powerful. The chief inspector took one look at the statement and tore it to shreds in front of me and omega both. The Omega was thrown out and told, 'Stop causing good people trouble'. We were warned to not listen to liars. I was there when his body was fished out of the Thames. Officially it was suicide. I never believe it.”

Falkirk could see how painful the memory was for the other Omega. It didn't go unnoticed the story was anonymised. She either didn't trust Falkirk with the truth or was scared of the people involved. Falkirk caught 006's eye and indicated the hall door. Taking the hint Thomas withdrew from the kitchen, closing the door behind him. Falkirk reassured, Gibson, 006 would remain where he was and wouldn't wander.

Falkirk gave a warning, that what he said was private. Only continuing when Gibson agreed to not
talk. Falkirk told the other omega about his papa, when in a supposed safe place an alpha came to him during his heat. Gibson interrupted saying, that it was a familiar story as she cast her eyes to the ceiling.

Falkirk continued on, describing how with the help of an police officer his papa was going to press charges. Everything was progressing well until Falkirk's Papa learned he was pregnant. Both Gibson an Falkirk knowing then and even today, the Alpha would have control of any pups produced even by heat assisted rape.

Falkirk finished by saying, “My papa, painted my father into a corner. When the scandal was about to break, my papa gave my father an out. My father recognised and supported both of us, while giving up all claim to us.”

Gibson's look wasn't quite so hostile. Although she did appear to be thinking hard about something. After a few moments of silence. Falkirk said, “It wasn't here but a place like it my Papa stayed.”

“Keading?” Gibson asked.

“There are parts of that story that are not mine to tell, other parts neither of us can speak of. Saying that, when I joined MI6 my Father and I butted heads and on one occasion Keading was in the middle of it. He has been part of my life since.”

“His son, is your brother.” Gibson deduced.

Falkirk had the thought of introducing her to Sherlock. Outwardly Falkirk only nodded.

Gibson was still wary of Falkirk but she was less hostile. Her politeness became more genuine. The conversation moved to the running and needs of the refuge.

“Are you sure secrecy is your best defence?” Falkirk asked after Gibson explained only vetted officers and social service staff along with a few charity affiliates knew of the refuge's location.

“Security through obscurity is a fundamentally flawed principal. You never knew it has been breached until it's to late.”

“It's all we have,” Gibson responded.

“I could...”

“NO!” Gibson interrupted Falkirk. “This is a safe place. I will not have soldiers floating about even Omega ones.” Gibson indicating the closed door where 006 should be standing guard.

Letting the matter drop. “Don't let Stuart hear you calling him a soldier, he was RAF,” Falkirk said.

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Falkirk glanced up as his office door opened. He then glanced to the dark windows and the lights of London outside.

“So, dear brother?” Mycroft said, taking off his long dark coat and hanging it on the stand by the door. He then took a seat across from Falkirk.
Falkirk grit his teeth, “What have you got for me, Mycroft?”

Mycroft sighed and relaxed. A rather relieved smile graced his lips. “Director of European Operations, Dorien Green. I’ve approached her. She's also very ambitious so would welcome anything to get rid of her boss, the more humiliating and irredeemable his downfall the better.”

Falkirk wasn't listening he was watching the human hurricane coming their way.

Jake Wade slammed the door open. He ignored the little scream Mycroft gave. The old alpha slammed his hands on Falkirk's desk and got within a inch of the seated omega's face.

“Do it! I don't fucking care what it is. Just DO It!”

Falkirk gave a subtle wave of his fingers, to stop his overprotective bodyguard and his even more protective friend, Selene. Selene closed the door, and remained standing outside just in case.

“I don't follow?” Falkirk said to the irate alpha. The pheromones emanating from the Alpha, broadcasting the scent of his rage to anyone who could interpret the que.

“David!” Jack roared.

Mycroft, trying to deflect said, “Who?”

Jack rounded on the taller and much thinner alpha. Grabbing Mycroft's tie and bringing the taller man's face right in front of his own.

“My apologies,” came the rather calm, purring southern drawl. “That's pronounce Da-veed.”

Jack let go of Mycroft and turned back to Falkirk. The omega sitting back, with his legs crossed and hands clasped in his lap. Completely unafraid, and a little bored looking. Jack shouted, “I WANT YOU TO... TO GO TO WAR... TO... TO... SHOVE A NUKE UP THAT BASTARD'S WRINKLY ASS... STICK HIS FEET IN CEMENT AND DROP HIM IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN...SOMETHING!”

Falkirk's voice was just as cool as his posture, “I know why I want David's death to be as bad as the one he planned for me and my family. What's your angle?”

“You don't know?” Jack said, taken aback. “You, you hand wrote the letter? You have to know!”

Falkirk cursed his memory. He'd only hand written one letter in the past few days. “Someone... eh, the third of his name? US Navy?”

Jack gave a single nod. “Do you believe in coincidence, Kiddo? A Mossad operative is about to walk in your front door, as a Special Agent of NCIS. Can you think of a reason she would need to be here? Can you think of a reason why she would need to do it as an NCIS Agent. Can you think of any way to guarantee her access using NCIS credentials.”

Falkirk took a sharp, annoyed breath through his nose. “David knows about Joe! Why, though? Why didn't David just wait until I deployed him?”

“If he knows about Joe,” Mycroft said. “David might have considered M chose a different target.
One closer to us, for the moment at least. We tracked Joe and his equipment to David and Ari. If Joe were to assassinate Simonov the evidence would still, for the most part, point to Director David. The assassination of Simonov on British soil by a Mossad secret weapon, would be a complete and utter disaster for Israel. David is desperate.”

Jack sat down. Looking older now the flush of anger had abated. “Now we know what lengths David will go to. Ryan is looking into Special Agent Todd's murder. Seeing if Ari's actions in America could have been sanctioned. And all of Ziva David's actions, and even if her position was planned from the beginning. I want that bastard dead! Lt Adams I'm sure died on his orders. Now, possibly Todd too.”

Tanner arrived, heeding Falkirk's summons. Falkirk asked him, “When does the NCIS team arrive?”

“They're here... in London I mean. They've meet with the coroner and then the police. They aren't scheduled to be here at MI6 until the day after tomorrow,” Tanner said.

Falkirk asked the beta to get Daniel, James and Alec. While the others were summoned. Falkirk looked to the two in his office, “I'm open to suggestions. Plan of action?”

“Dorien Green is still a good idea,” Mycroft said.

James arrived, at the moment an idea came to Falkirk. The Double O said, “I really do shit myself when you smile like that Falkirk.”
They had to park about half a mile from their destination. The silver haired man, took a swig of his coffee as he got out of the rental 4x4, Lexus. The other three bickering and bantering like kids as they got out too. Being guests in a country where not even the local police were regularly armed, meant none of the four had a side-arm.

“Best behaviour, or you'll disappear. I've heard... OW!” the older man's hand connecting with his head got DiNozzo to stop.

“Best behaviour, because we're guests,” Gibbs said.

“But boss,” DiNozzo said safely out of arm's reach. “Abby obsessed over the guy in charge. Something about the 'Inner Omega Strength'.

McGee adding, “He's one of the best hacker and programmers out there. You think we'll meet him? I could get his autograph?”

DiNozzo saddled up beside the beta and smiled at him, “Someone got a crush?...OW!”

Gibbs shook his fingers, DiNozzo's head feeling harder than usual.

McGee shoved the alpha away. “You know, he doesn't have a name.”

“Sir Thomas,” Gibbs said, and McGee just shook his head.

McGee said, “He only used that name since he was eighteen.”

“Cool,” DiNozzo said.

Gibbs glanced at the only one not taking part in the usual banter. He looked ahead quickly before she noticed him.

The four walked along the pavement. The stop-start traffic to their right, and the buildings lining banks of the Thames to their left. Even from a distance they could see the pale building up ahead, and the heavy armed police presence around it.

The road side of MI6 was not as striking as the riverside. It looked like any pale stoned office block, with black windows. They entered the main doors, and a beta with very close cropped hair came forwards.
“Welcome, I'm sorry we have to meet under these circumstances. I'm Bill Tanner, Chief of Staff.”

Gibbs took the offered hand and introduced himself, DiNozzo, McGee and David. Tanner indicated the reception and the airport type scanners, “Step this way and we'll get your Visitor passes sorted.”

Gibbs was the first to get his photo taken and issued a lanyard containing the small plastic card with his picture printed on it. He was also the first to step into the cylindrical chamber. The Arms of the scanner circled right round him. From his place, he could see the ghost-like image of himself appear on the guard's computer screen. With an all clear he was able to step beyond security.

Once they were all through. Tanner said, “Where would you like to begin?”

Gibbs said, “We would like to see where Lt. Adams worked, speak with who he worked with. And we were told Lt. Adams' uniform is here?”

“If it's here, I think it would be in his locker?”

McGee said, “Why wouldn't he be wearing it?”

Tanner looked a little uncomfortable. He started guiding the group through the building as he spoke.

“A throwback to the IRA troubles. Military personnel are banned from wearing their uniform when not on Active Duty or at official functions, that includes commuting. We request even foreign personnel do not wear uniforms when not on duty. Most change when the arrive and just before leaving return to their civilian attire.”

“Why,” DiNozzo added. “Isn't there peace?”

Tanner gave a slight shrug. “Much of the IRA switched to organised crime after the Good Friday Agreement. Feuds have lasted much longer. There's still bitterness on all sides.”

Tanner let out a little laugh, “Colonel Preston, you'll meet him he worked with Lt. Adams', he was in Ireland during the troubles. He was involved with a riot where live rounds were used by the security forces. He now refuses to turn his back on M's PA, Darren was a bona fide, bomb making terrorist. So yes, Mr DiNozzo we are at peace, officially. Unofficially, everyone is still watching their backs.”

Coming to a set of lifts. Both doors guarded by armed men. Tanner said, “Where would you like to go first? To check out Lt. Adams' locker or his office.”

Gibbs stilled, for the briefest of moments, unnoticed by all. He said, “It would be quicker of we split up. McGee and I can go to Lt Adams' office. David and DiNozzo can go to Adams' locker.”

Tanner beckoned one of the guards over, ordering the man with the rifle and dressed in black body armour to take David and Cainozoic to PT&A.

The male and female alphas followed the guard into the lift, with only a down arrow above it. While Gibbs and the others went for the lift with only an up arrow.
In the confined space, DiNozzo looked at their escort. Getting rather close, “So are you like the place guards? Just stand there and do nothing.”

“No, sir. Please stand back sir,” the guard enunciated, in brisk tones of someone who’d served in the military.

DiNozzo shared a smirk with David. He wiggled his eyebrows playfully at her and she just rolled her eyes in response.

“So,” DiNozzo said to the guard. “Was it true about that thing about M's PA?”

The guard’s cheek twitched, trying to stop a smile. “Darren's adorable, sir. Although, his IED Class is now mandatory for most of MI6's security and operatives, and we're even getting some Army Bomb disposal units coming to him.”

“You're not joking?”

“No, sir. Omegas around here tend to be dangerous, so be polite! The ones that aren't dangerous are friends with the ones that are.”

“Noted,” DiNozzo said.

The doors opened onto a long tunnel. People moved about, going from one room to others. Most wearing tracksuits. David asked, “This a gym?”

“Physical Training and Assessment,” came the clipped response from the guard. “Fourth on the right, is the general locker room.”

The first door on the left was closed, grunts and bangs coming from beyond it. The first door on the right they glimpsed a group in blue tracksuits being put through their paces, in what looked like quite a large hall.

“How big is this place?” DiNozzo said.

“Very,” the guard answered. “We couldn't expand on the surface, so we went down for the space we needed.”

They passed doors, with rooms full of exercise equipment, another had a pool. All along the right. The rooms on the left were an interesting mystery. DiNozzo said, “What would happen if I peeked in side that door.”

The guard looked to the door on the left of the corridor. '009: Mission Prep' was on the board beside it. The guard said, “Probably shot. You never know when they're using live rounds, Sir.”

The guard opened the locker room door and indicated the two agents should go in. There was a small office with a corridor either side of it. DiNozzo knocked at the small window by the door. One the the instructors in red tracksuit slid the window open.

“We need to see the locker of Lt Adams,” DiNozzo said, showing his NCIS ID. And on request his MI6 Visitor ID.

The instructor in his red tracksuit looked up the computer first, then grabbed the master key. He
led them around the office.

“Oh, co-ed,” DiNozzo cooed. His eyes landing on a tall alpha woman, dropping her towel and getting dressed. Ziva hit his arm, without DiNozzo's notice.

The locker room was quite deep. Like most locker rooms it was tiled. Benches between each row of lockers.

“Locker, 'AG3', care to have the honours,” the instructor said, handing DiNozzo the master key.

Pulling on some gloves first, DiNozzo took the key and slid it into the lock. The locker was rather wide. Made of wood, rather than the thin metal ones he was used to. Inside the formal navy blue, double breasted uniform jacket could hang face on without being crushed.

DiNozzo stated with a quick search, without removing anything. When nothing jumped out at him, he lifted the hanger off the rail and handed the jacket to David. She patted down the uniform and searched the pockets. DiNozzo moved on to the small cubbyhole at the bottom, finding some change, an I-pod.

“These lockers even have inbuilt chargers!” DiNozzo said, finding the I-pod connected to a USB port. There was even a socket for a shaver or toothbrush. “Oh, what do we have here, someone was expecting a good time!”

“No one mentioned a lady,” David said, glancing at the strip of condoms DiNozzo held. “Nothing in the uniform.”

After checking the locker. DiNozzo said, “Nothing... unless there's something on the I-pod more than his work out tunes.”

“Let's head back to Gibbs,” David said. “Perhaps there's a pretty girl, lady or boi in the office.”

“I wouldn't go throwing words like girl and boi around,” the guard warned. “Omega, is the respectful term.”

“I'll remember,” DiNozzo said. David only gave the guard a nod in acknowledgement.

Coming out of the locker room, DiNozzo glanced to one of the interesting doors on the opposite side of the corridor. The guard said, “You want a peek?” DiNozzo nodded eagerly.

The guard pushed open the door of the training room.

DiNozzo was cautious as he stepped through and into a small anti-room. There was a heavily reinforced door ahead of him, with a red light flashing and a 'Do Not Enter' sign illuminated above it.

The guard pointed to a door to the right. DiNozzo climbed the narrow metal stairs beyond the side door. At the top was a narrow corridor, and on the left hand side the wall was made of glass. They were looking down on a maze. DiNozzo's eyes went wide, watching the blond man moving quickly, shooting or fighting anyone who crossed his path.

In the mock-up of an office. The Double O grabbed one of the men helping him prepare, and used him as a human shield while he shot the three other baddies.
“That was so cool,” DiNozzo said, bouncing and cheering.

The Guard leaned in and whispered, “He's one of the ones, you don't say 'boi', around.”

“He's an omega?” DiNozzo said, looking to the guard. Noticing it was only the guard beside him. DiNozzo plastered on a smile, an oh so innocent smile.

The guard turned and looked behind himself. “Now, I do wonder where she went?”


“Yeah, right,” the guard said. “Move it, DiNozzo!”

Ducking his head, DiNozzo was pushed ahead of the guard. The guard hammered on the glass wall. At the bottom of the stairs, at the entrance to the training area was the sweaty omega male.

“Double O Nine,” greeted the guard.

“Double O Five,” returned, Maloney. “So she took the opportunity?”

“Well do you see her?” Addison shot back.

DiNozzo demanded, “What's going on?”

“We'll let your bosses explain,” Addison said and ushered DiNozzo out. The NCIS agent looked up and down the corridor, not seeing the missing agent.

“HA!” cried Addison, “You lost, Nathan. She stole my ID!”

“Oh, what are Mossad teaching them!” 009 said. “She should have swiped a random ID en route, so we wouldn't know whose ID she had.”

DiNozzo's attention was bouncing from man to man. Unsure of what was going on. They led him to a dark place, a very long and narrow tunnel. He was lead through more corridors and rooms until they reached a glass fronted room with a few dozen people in it.

McGee was in a corner, the beta trying to look tiny. Gibbs, DiNozzo wanted to go nowhere near him, it looked like his boss would kill anyone who go close enough. Director Vance was the next he identified. He recognised the two heavy set guys, the younger one he couldn't name but knew him to be high up in the CIA and the other was someone to do with the government. The little, black haired woman, wearing a red dress he didn't know. An older man beside a tall lady, seemed to be as clueless as DiNozzo. The other man no one dared near, stood in the middle of the room, a wild mane of dark hair and square dark-framed glasses perched on his nose. That was the guy Abby showed him. And he looked, very, scarily, pissed off.

“DiNozzo,” McGee whispered coming up to him. “They think Ziva had something to do with Adams' death.”

“Imposable,” DiNozzo said. Only getting a concerned expression from the other agent. “Come on, this is Ziva... right? She couldn't...”
“They think Ari was a ploy to get Ziva into NCIS,” McGee hissed.

All colour drained from DiNozzo's face. “No,” he whispered to himself as much as McGee.

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The short Alpha woman moved quickly. Careful to not look like she was rushing, or act suspiciously and draw the attention of the workers she was passing. Hive mentality, as long as she looked like she was one of them they wouldn't notice her.

Waving the ID card she picked pocketed over the sensor the doors slid open. The guard behind the semi circular desk looked at her. He reached out quickly. Ziva jumped the desk and tackled the guard to the ground. Hitting his head off the ground, he went still.

Ziva knelt at the desk. Rapidly her eyes scanned the screens. Most of the security cameras covered empty cells.

Her eyes landed on a strange cell, a free standing glass box in the middle of an empty room.

“Bongo!”

She looked at the 'ident', the small number at the top of the screen that identified the location of the cell. She swore, her target wasn't in the brig. He was in a fall-back location across the river.

For a moment she debated on the best way to get to the building on the far side of the Thames. She remembered there was a tunnel that connected Q Branch to the satellite Building.

Grabbing the Brig Guard's key card. She then pulled the glock from the guard's holster. A red light shone just where the webbing between her thumb and index finger pressed against the grip.

“Damn!” she said. She'd been warned of this. MI6 had experimented with biometric security for its guns. It was a disaster waiting to happen for its operatives. For guards and bodyguards, it was useful to only allow authorised personnel to fire them. So in situations just like this, an intruder couldn't just grab a gun and be armed.

Dropping the useless weapon, Ziva moved out quickly. She needed to deal with the situation, like her father wanted. Getting to a lift, she went down again. The doors opened. Her heart thundered so much she was surprised no one else could hear it. This was Q Branch. The most dangerous place to be in MI6. The people here were trained to watch each other so a stranger like her would be noticed.

Ahead of her was the long corridor, with a security checkpoint directly ahead. Veering to the left before the checkpoint, she headed for the service door. She prayed the Brig Guard had clearance, she waved the card over the sensor. There was a dull click as the lock disengaged. She pressed down on the handle and opened the metal door.

These tunnels were much smaller, darker and more eerie. She walked along the metal gangway. Around her were the power cables, sewage pipes, fresh water and all the other utilities needed by Q-Branch. The tunnel also supplied utilities to a building across the Thames which MI6 controlled and the location of her target.

She emerged into the basement of the building. Going to the metal stairs, she went up. She moved
through a room of arches and pillars. Careful of the open space, heading for the frosted glass that was in the centre.

“I need a piss.”

Ziva darted behind a pillar.

Another voice answered the first, “Well it's not like anything's gonna happen.”

A moment later a guard marched passed, moving quickly towards a door. Peeking out from behind the pillar, she saw the other guard on patrol. She waited until he turned and walked behind the frosted glass.

She ran, making sure her footfalls were silent against the concrete floor. Waving the key card, not sure which one. The glass door clicked and she pushed it open. In the centre of the area concealed by the frosted glass was the glass cage she was looking for.

A man sat huddled on the floor of the glass box, with his back against the bench. She approached quietly. She had no means of quickly ending her target, so every muscle tensed. Her heart thundered. Her breathing became shallow and fast. The adrenalin surged through her and made her tremble.

She waved the card at the pedestal near the door. The glass door slid open and the man looked up. Stubbly faced, not bearded. Almost black eyes, not hazel. Long wavy hair, not short. Unknown. It was not her target. When the man stood, he was 5' 9” not the 6’ Ziva expected.

Ziva whipped her head round at the sound of half a dozen armed guards coming through the frosted door, with their assault rifles aimed at her. A threatening click, brought her attention to the man in front of her, who now had a Walter pointed at her.

The frosted glass cleared with a cracking sound. Ziva's eyes landed on the man in the middle of the group first. M's glasses glinted, she couldn't see his eyes and that was freighting. Then a movement drew her eyes to... she jumped like Gibbs’ glance was a physical blow. He just gazed at her, then looked away and guilt crushed her insides. DiNozzo was looking at her like a hopeful puppy. McGee was looking away. A flash of red drew her attention to the short alpha woman, with cascade of black wiry hair. Dorien Green, the Director of Mossad's European operations, with arms crossed drummed her talon link nails against her biceps.

Rage emanating from the entire group. The wall of the glass cell and the once frosted glass wall not diminishing it.

“May I introduce Mr Masood, Double O Four... Officer, Ziva, Da-veed!” M's voice echoed from the speakers all around the room.
“Officer David,”

“I object to that term!” called a short woman, wearing a red dress. Green, continued when she had everyone's attention, “There is no Officer of Mossad here!”

Falkirk acknowledged the woman, with a nod. He went back to looking at the prisoner inside the glass cell. “Special Agent,”

Director Vance cleared his throat, “NCIS agents may not take orders from anyone outside the chain of command. If any Agent does, they are not acting with the authority of NCIS.”

Falkirk looked at the woman in the cell again. “Well, you're not Mossad the Director of European Operations says so. You're not NCIS, according to director Vance. Who are you, Ms David? Who are you working for? What was your mission in coming here today? Were you, along with your brother, complicit in the murder of Special Agent Todd. Were you complicit in the attack against myself, my family and pack? Were you complicit in the murder of Lieutenant Kyle Adams?”

The dark haired woman inside the bright cell just glared at him.

“Not going to answer?” Falkirk said. Lifting his arm, a small omega woman came forward. Falkirk put his hand on the brown haired woman's far shoulder. “Allow me to introduce Alice. You and she, will be getting very close. You are a spy, caught assaulting the home of Britain's Foreign Intelligence. Burned by everyone I can check with. Although, do you think if I called, would daddy, could daddy afford to acknowledge you given the crimes we're talking about? Be under no illusion, Ms David, there will be no trial, there will be no negotiation, there will be no Geneva convention. Your existence is at my whim.”

Ziva swallowed dryly. Her eyes flicking to the woman at Falkirk's side. Knowing fine well who Alice was.

“I, the, I,” Ziva was blinking, and held her stomach. The word she whispered was quiet and terrified, “Baby.”

Falkirk stepped up to the glass. His nose almost touching it. “Why should I care? I had to lie to my children, kiss them, and then pretend everything was alright as I picked up a gun and went out into the night! I had to kill! I was to be beheaded for some propaganda video! Possibly with my sons watching!”

Falkirk turned away quickly. He'd managed to be quiet as he said his hate fuelled words. If he didn't stop, he'd start ranting and his anger would boil until his rage erupted in a way that someone
like Moriarty would only dream of.

Ziva was left standing in the glass cage. She held her head in one hand. Blinking rapidly, in the sudden absence of the angry head of MI6.

“Take that off!”

Ziva looked up to Gibbs on the other side of the glass. The silver haired man was glaring at the left side of her chest, coolly and dangerously. She looked down, and noticed the badge folded over her jacket's breast pocket. She took off the badge and dropped it on the bench.

“One chance,” Gibbs said very quietly to Ziva. Able to smell the female omega standing and listening nearby. How the unassuming girl could be an MI6 interrogator he didn't know. “When were you given the order to kill this, 'Joe'?"

“I..."

“Don't you lie to me!” Gibbs interrupted. Able to read his subordinate like a book, or at least he thought he had been able to, until today.

“Just before leaving the States. My father e-mailed me, with the mission.” Ziva admitted.

“Pray Abby can confirm that.” Gibbs turned away. “If she can't I'll shoot you myself.”

“Gibbs!” Ziva called, stopping her boss. “Can you ask DiNozzo to come over, I need to tell him something.”

Gibbs didn't respond, he didn't even look back. She watched her very angry boss making his way through the groups of people. Ziva. getting the feeling of being an exhibit in the zoo with all these people around her cell.

“Hullo Lass,” said a tall man leaning against the glass. Ziva studied the man a moment, recognising the real life version of a man she'd seen her father brooding over.

“You know me lass?”

Ziva shook her head. “I saw your picture in my father's office. That was all.”

Daniel nodded. “He's hated me from the first time we met. He was a Handler for a couple Operatives sent to shut down a project at the Carrington Institute. I sent his men back in chunks! Along with every assassin he sent afterwards. He even tried to assassinate me when I got my amnesty and started working here.”

“What has that got to do with me?” Ziva demanded.

Daniel shrugged. “When someone doesn't let go, they become bitter. Don't expect to see your father again. He's gone too far now for this to end with anything less than blood.”

From across the room, Falkirk watched Daniel stepping away from the cell and joining Alec, James and Selene. There were many groups here. Three Double Os, not counting James. The NCIS team, one of whom was in the cell. Jack Wade, Jack Ryan, Dorien Green, Mycroft and Vance were in a group. Off in a corner, were the two guests Falkirk wanted to talk to.
“Victoria,” Falkirk said. She and Simonov looked at him. “Have you spoken to Director Simonov?”

“She has,” Simonov spoke before Victoria could. “I am not pleased.”

“I would imagine not,” Falkirk said.

“No one can have that weapon!” Simonov hissed.

Falkirk nodded. “I completely understand. That is why I would like to, officially, ask for the FSB’s assistance in destroying it safely. Mrs Simonov will represent MI6’s interests. I believe Russia had a testing range, for similar devices. I will attend to witness its destruction, along with Secretary Wade, Director Ryan, Director Lin... a few hand picked guests.”

“I suppose that would be an acceptable compromise,” Simonov said.

“WHAT!” a loud back sounded to accompany the word.

Everyone jumped, a few reaching for a side arm. All looked to DiNozzo at the cell, his fist still pressed to the glass after punching it.

Victoria said quietly, “I wonder what that's about?”

“I believe Ms David just told him, she's pregnant.” Falkirk said.

Victoria quietly asked, “M, are you still going to let Alice loose on her?”

“No,” Falkirk said. “I won't allow harm to come to an innocent.”

--

Falkirk and Simonov walked arm in arm along the concourse of London City. On the far side of the short man, was Victoria. She would be accompanying the FSB Director back to accomplish her mission.

In the public area of the airport. Simonov was speaking of his attendance of the Royal Philharmonic at the Royal Albert Hall. Especially of Butler's wife and her Cello. “A most Exquisite performance,” came the thick Russian drawl.

“Are you alright?” Simonov asked after Falkirk failed to respond.

Knowing he was probably scenting of fear Falkirk shook his head slightly, “I though a man in you position would know. I don't like planes.”

Falkirk didn't know if it was genuine or a show but Simonov stopped. Letting go of Falkirk's arm he faced him. In a charming soft drawl, “Then I must insist you stay here. Forget protocol. I would not feel right causing you distress.”

As Falkirk attempted to reassure his guest. Simonov took Falkirk's hand and gave it a kiss. “For me, stay please.”
He was being flirted with by someone old enough to be his father and Falkirk couldn't help the blush. It was no wonder the man had been able to sweep Victoria off her feet.

So on the concourse Sir Thomas McLair and Ivan Simonov separated. The first meeting somewhat of a success. The next would be another story.

--

Falkirk sat at his desk at MI6. James, Alec and Daniel were in the room. They flicked through folders, of intelligence, maps and photos. Tanner acting a bit like a weather man as he indicated the information brought up on the wall behind him.

When Tanner had finished. Falkirk looked at the three other seated men. “Director Green has officially been informed of our intentions. She will approach the appropriate Israeli Ministers and brief them on the situation. Their choice in limited given the evidence. If they don't turn a blind eye to our actions, the UK and America will have to consider Eli David's actions as sanctioned by their government.”

“Does that mean we can go in!” James demanded.

“Yes, Double O Seven,” Falkirk said. A slow, nasty, smile growing on James' face. Alec swore excitedly in Russian. Falkirk added, “I spoke with Thomas, his Double O status has been temporarily rescinded. Alec, you are hereby reactivated as Double O Six,”

“Yes!” the blond said, jumping out of his chair and pumping his fist in the air.

Falkirk looked to Daniel. “Addison has also relinquished his Double O status. Daniel, Double O Five?”

“I'll take it,” the Scotsman said.

“The plan,” Falkirk said, putting down a new folder. “Eli David probably suspects you're coming. Anyone who gets in your way is irrelevant.”

“YOU WANT THE BASTARD ALIVE!” James shouted, the only one to see the plan so far. The folder in the Operative's hands was the only one in existence.

“I wish to look my enemy in the eye, before he dies. Is that so much to ask?” Falkirk said, calmly.

James' mouth worked a bit, deciding what and how to say something. Eventually he said, “Fine! But the bastard dies!”

Falkirk smiled, the one James said frightened him. “If he does not die, it will be by an act of god.”

Chapter End Notes

The baby part came from reading Ziva's bio. I've not seen the episodes myself, she was still in NCIS when I stopped watching it. So there will be discrepancies. So like everything else, it will be AU.
Tanner stood at the display wall. Indicated Tel Aviv on the map, “Latest intelligence puts Director David at his home, about three miles outside the city. He’s fortified his position, with several bodyguards and an unknown number of elite military personnel. Bond, Carrington and Trevelyan, touched down twenty minutes ago. They’re expected, local Police are on the look out for them. Their names and descriptions have been widely circulated…”

Lestrade having to stand in Falkirk’s busy office during the presentation. When Tanner had finished with the latest it was his turn. Lestrade didn’t bother to push his way through the full office. Everyone was looking at him anyway.

“We believe we’ve traced the three individuals suspected of Lt. Adams’ murder, to an address in Highgate. We have decided to conduct a pre-dawn raid, to take the suspects by surprise,” Lestrade looked to the silver haired man standing nearer to curving outer window of the office, “Agent Gibbs, would you care to join us?”

“Yes,” the man growled.

Falkirk looked around his guests, “Well if that is all for today, I will see everyone Monday.”

Tanner led the guests out, and escorted them to the entrance. Lestrade and Gibbs talking quietly. Mycroft and Jack Ryan entered into a discussion too, as they left.

“So Kiddo, where we going?” Wade said, joining Falkirk. The omega just gave a smirk and infuriating shrug.

The two headed for the garage where Falkirk had requested a larger car for the journey. The Jaguar limo had been extended from the standard XJ chassis, and larger rear doors added. The big Alpha went in first. Clearly far more comfortable in his loud Hawaiian shirt and tan slacks than the formal suits he had to wear now.

When they arrived at the first destination, Falkirk looked at his watch. Only half past two. “Care for a drink? I’m sure Roebuck won’t be ready.”

“Sure Kiddo,” Wade said, following Falkirk into the club with the motif of a Golden Hind above the main doors like a ship’s figure head. He stopped when he came to a set of portraits, of the illustrious heads of MI6 who were also members of the club. Pointing Falkirk’s he burst out laughing, “Kiddo? Did they really get you to play dress up?”

Falkirk glanced at his own club portrait and the old Alpha smirking at it. “I upset everyone by not wearing uniform. So I caved. I was given my honorary rank, joined the recruits of some survival training, and gave a speech at the turning out for that year.”
Wade chuckled and caught up to Falkirk, “So you became, Admiral Sir Thomas McLair.”

“Vice Admiral,” corrected an old man in the room they entered, and invited Falkirk and Wade to join him. Roebuck called a porter to take their order.

--

Falkirk sat on the bench seat that wrapped around the side and behind the driver. Across from him was Wade and Admiral Roebuck. The two older Alphas had taken advantage of the bar set long the other side of the cabin, and helped themselves to Falkirk's bourbon.

The car pulled to a stop. Falkirk teased, “I'll be a minute, don't have too good a time.”

“No Sir, Vice Admiral, Sir,” Jack said, giving a palm-on British salute. Roebuck correcting the American, “My man, one doesn't salute unless wearing a hat.”

Roebuck then called to Falkirk, “And you my boy, you can't give me an order.” Falkirk salutes in response. Roebuck blasted, “That's how an American salutes!”

Falkirk left them. Selene had arrived at the school in her own car. They met up just outside of the school.

The three older boys ran from the School's main gate. Rupert happy to get a cuddle from Falkirk in front of everyone. Andrew whined and struggled on his turn.

Cody made sure he was far enough away from his mother to avoid a cuddle or heaven forbid a kiss. The young alpha didn't count on the reflexes and strength of an ex-Double O, he was in Selene's arms before he knew it, struggling against cooing kisses in front of the whole school. The dark haired boy going bright red, and being laughed at by Rupert and Andrew.

Falkirk and Selene called a goodbye to each other. The Alpha taking her son to her car and ultimately home. Falkirk going round the side of the school for the gate to the youngest class. The teacher on the gate, on seeing them called for Yulian.

The small brown haired boy came through the turnstile gate. Falkirk knelt to hug his god son.

On the way back to the car, Falkirk had Yulian's hand one side and Rupert's the other. Andrew demanded, “Where are we going?”

“It's a surprise,” Falkirk answered.

“But it's Daddy who takes us on surprise trips,” Andrew said with a hint of confusion.

“I can do it too.”

Andrew mentioned Falkirk's car being bigger than the usual one. While Rupert stretched his neck, to look at something, “Is that Uncle Geoffrey?”

“Yes. I thought he'd like to come as well, so I invited him.”

Falkirk opened the boot of his official car. Beside the overnight bags of Jack, Roebuck and the
ones Falkirk had already prepared. The Kid's school bags were tossed in.

They then got in. The Kids joining Falkirk on the bench seat. Roebuck and Rupert exchanging stiff greetings. Jack then looked to Andrew, “So, how's the swinging arm? Broken any more windows?”

Andrew was very confused as he said, “I've not broken any windows.”

“Sure you did,” Jack stressed. Whispering, “Remember, I gave you fifty bucks to take the rap.”

Andrew thought hard, his face suddenly brightened. “You broke Mr Lee's window!”

“No I didn't,” stressed Wade as Falkirk burst out laughing. “That's it, you don't know what a fall guy is, I want my fifty bucks back.”

“What fifty bucks?” Andrew said innocently.

Falkirk burst out laughing again. Wade grumbled about getting fleeced by a seven year old.

Roebuck tried to talk to Rupert. Ending up with Wade asking the old alpha, “Do you know what kids are?”

“Of course I do,” grumbled Roebuck. “They're those little loud things too young to enlist. Really, one should be able to deposit them at Britannia and collect them when they have reached the rank of Lieutenant. Nothing lower, still too immature.”

Falkirk asked the three boys about their day at school. Rupert was rather clinical, talking about classes. Andrew beamed a big smile at his Papa, “The teacher said I had to be the mum in the play. I said, NO!”

“So I have a letter about that?”

Andrew thought hard, then nodded, “It's in my bag.” the two older Alphas were sniggering to themselves.

Falkirk then looked at Yulian and without prompt he said, “I got a letter too! Devon said Papa was freak, so I pushed him. I didn't even do it hard! But he started crying like a big baby!”

Out of the corner of Falkirk's eye, he could see the two alphas trying not to laugh their arses off. Falkirk took a calming breath, “Yulian, just because someone says a mean thing, doesn't mean you can push them!”

“But daddy said I wasn't allowed to punch them?” Yulian said innocently. “Papa said I should knee them in the goolies when no one is watching. I didn't know what goolies are so I just pushed Devon.”

Falkirk glared at the two laughing alphas. Wade snorted and looked away. Roebuck's face contorted with the effort to stay straight. Centring himself, Falkirk looked back at the innocent child sitting on his right. Yulian's brown eyes big and openly curious.

“Yulian,” Falkirk said calmly. “I think I will leave this for your parents to deal with.”
The car stopped a couple of hours later, for the group to have dinner. They then carried on the journey for another few hours. Rupert read a book aloud to Yulian and even Andrew started listening. The kids tuning out of the politics and stuff the adults discussed over drinks.

The second stop of that night was a hotel. After signing in, the two older Alphas headed for the bar, while Falkirk ushered the kids to the lift. The family room had a Double bed, a single, a couch that when the back cushions were taken off become another bed and a folded out camp bed.

Rupert was sent to get ready for bed first. Coming out of the bathroom in light blue pyjamas hemmed in dark blue he went to the made up couch. Pulling back the quilt Rupert climbed in.

James and Falkirk generally discouraged Andrew from sleeping with them. Omegas craved physical contact especially from their Alpha. They wanted to encourage independence in Andrew and encouraging him to sleep alone was part of that. It did not however, stop Andrew from jumping into Falkirk's bed with big beseeching eyes.

Falkirk rolled his eyes and went to the bathroom. He came out in tartan flannel pyjamas finding Yulian and Andrew snuggled under the quilt of the large bed.

“Rupert,” Falkirk called. The young Alpha dropped his concealed gaze to look at Falkirk directly.

“You can join us,” Falkirk offered, heading for the bed. Falkirk could see the desire to join them but wasn't surprised when Rupert refused. Falkirk went to sit beside Rupert. Putting an arm round him.

“It's okay,” Falkirk reassured quietly.

“We piled together” Andrew said, confused by the older Alpha's actions.

Leaning in close. So only Rupert would hear, Falkirk whispered, “It's alright, you are welcome, wanted and so very Loved.”

After kissing Rupert's forehead, Falkirk went to his own bed. Pulling back the cover Andrew complained about the cold air. Getting in Falkirk made himself comfortable. The two boy's on Falkirk's left side tossed and turned for a bit. And possibly elbowing and punching each other subtly.

“Remember it will only be too late when it's time to get up,” Falkirk said to Rupert. Making sure everyone was ready Falkirk flipped the light switch and the room was plunged into darkness.

Falkirk had lost count of how many times Andrew and Yulian had moved. “Would you two lay at peace!” Falkirk admonished after Andrew turned again.

“Getting comfy,” Andrew mumbled.

Rupert's voice came from the darkness “Falkirk?"”

“Yes,” Falkirk responded with a soft patient tone.

“Can I...”

Falkirk lifted the covers and said, “Hurry up!”
Soon Falkirk found himself with a nervous Alpha pressing under his chin and an Omega on the other side, with another small alpha on Andrew's far side. Bringing up his hand Falkirk started stroking and caressing their necks. Rupert gave a few nuzzling gestures pressing his nose to Falkirk's neck.

With Falkirk's reassuring pheromones and the calming gesture the two boys soon blissed out. The ultra calm state soon led to a deep sleep for all.

--

A sudden impact into his side woke Falkirk with a jolt. Rupert was still pressed against his neck breathing in his scent. During the night the two youngest had manoeuvred themselves to lie across the way. Yulian was pressed along the headboard, with his legs threatening to kick the bedside lamp at any moment. Andrew's head and arm now poked out the side of the bed and his foot was pressed against Falkirk's rib cage. Every time Andrew moved Falkirk rocked with the force.

Checking his phone Falkirk decided to have a shower in peace before the kids woke. Getting the water to the right temperature, Falkirk stepped into the cubical.

The handle of the door jiggled.

'Typical!' Falkirk mused internally as a knock followed the handle jiggle.

“Papa, need a wee!” Andrew called.

Eventually dressed in casual attire Falkirk led the way to the dining room. The older Alphas joined them, a little worse for ware.

“This seems entirely too familiar,” Roebuck mused.

Falkirk hummed as he looked up from scanning the morning papers with raised eyebrows and expectant look, completely uncomprehending.

“All to familiar!” Roebuck said.

Completely lost Falkirk said, “I don’t follow.”

“Everyone in their own world. The children whispering. The adults, silent. Reminds me of my marriage” Roebuck said.

Wade snorted, “Not my marriages. When any of my wives were unhappy, they showed it. You know throwing things, coffee pots, vases, knives that sort of thing. And screaming, I swear once the USGS pitched up to find the epicentre of an earthquake when Moffy realised I blew of her Mom's birthday to go fishing with Greer.”

Falkirk went back to his paper, while Wade reminisced over his wives. There was something to be said for someone who still believed in love after five failed marriages.

The group were on the road again soon enough. Roebuck and Wade taking the bench this time, the two older Alphas catching up on their rest. Falkirk sat on the back seat with Andrew, Rupert and Yulian. The kids playing the silly car games everyone played on long journeys. Car bingo being
the one of the moment, the first to ten of their chosen make would win. Andrew, of course called bingo first on seeing his tenth Fiat.

Lowering his paper Falkirk cleared his throat and indicated ahead of them. Andrew read the upcoming sign, “Welcome, to, Glasgow. We're in Scotland!”

A few hours later, Falkirk did the same thing of indicating a sign.

“Welcome to Arbroath,” Andrew read. Then it dawned on him, “Submarines!”

Falkirk gave a smile in response, “We'll see.”

In a misty valley Falkirk's car drove up to a gate. It waited and waited then a guard came to the back window. Roebuck lowered his window and the guard asked, “Sir Thomas McLair?”

“Other side my boy,” Roebuck commented gruffly.

Coming round the car, the guard stood by Falkirk’s lowered window.

“Sir Thomas McLair?” the guard asked again. Falkirk confirmed his identity. “Could you confirm, Sir. Are you here in a professional or personal capacity?”

Falkirk couldn't keep the secret any longer. “Personal. A guests of George Windom, for the return of HMS Vanguard.”

“Thank you Sir! It won't be much longer,” the guard said and returned to the guard house by the gate. The Driver was then given instruction along with the motor bike escorts. A bundle of badges were also handed over. Ray, Falkirk's bodyguard handed the badges to Andrew. Who handed them out to everyone in the back of the car.

“This is as far as we can go,” the driver said coming to a stop.

Getting out Falkirk made sure Andrew, Rupert and Yulian had their visitor passes pinned properly and visible. There were other families milling about awaiting the return of their loved ones.

With the other families they watched as the Submarine came into view, guided by the tug boats. Eventually it was secured and the crew was allowed to disembark.

“Wait!” Falkirk said with a firm hold on Andrew, who tried to greet the pack member. Or just wanted an up close look at the sleek grey hulk poking out of the water.

Handsomely dressed in his dark blue uniform and peeked cap, G had to give a brief interview and shake hands with several people waiting on him. One of the agreements for the silence of the press was a story each. There had also been a documentary cameraman on board following the young King.

When he was finally allowed to pick up his belongings G walked off. He was about to go in a different direction, away from the waiting families. Falkirk nudged his son, “Now!”

Andrew who had a soft spot for the wavy haired, blue eyed Alpha ran. G was surprised to be barrelled into by a young Omega. When he recognised who it was he looked up. Spotting Falkirk, G waved before reaching down to give Andrew a hug. Eventually Andrew let the Blond Alpha
stand and they walked towards Falkirk.

“Who's the new one?” G asked looking to Rupert.

“Rupert lives with us now!” Andrew declared. Falkirk introduced his adopted, god son.

Noticing the pain the talk caused. G reached out to the young Alpha and tousled the dark wavy locks, “Another stray? I must say, I'm glad I'm not the only one, now.”

Rupert just answered with an oh, unsure how to respond. Then said, “Are you the king?”

“No, not me, never. I'm just, G.”

Falkirk chuckled. He then introduced G to Wade. The big Alpha beamed a smile at the young man and gave a firm handshake.

“If memory serves,” Roebuck interrupted. “There's a pub this way!”

“Oh, yeah,” said Wade, patting Roebuck on the shoulder, “It's your round.”

--

G decided to forego his flight to accompany Falkirk back down. Something Falkirk expected.

Claiming the space beside G, Andrew talked at length. Asking endless questions about G's time on the submarine.

Roebuck still complaining about the cost of a pint at the Arbroath pub. Getting to one point he repeated often, the whole car said, “It was twenty-three pence in my day.”

The old alpha grumbled to himself. Getting no sympathy from the others in the car.

Around the table, at the restaurant they stopped at once they reached England again. Andrew was listening to some of the stories G was telling. The young man talking about meeting a new friend, and getting a dressing down for some silly prank.

Wade's phone started ringing. The others still talked while he answered and the moment he did a shrill voice screamed at him.

“WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU!”

Cautiously putting the phone back to his ear Wade said, “Jesus woman, only my wives can talk to me like that.”

“I DON'T GIVE A RAT'S ASS!” Wade pulling his phone away again, everyone around the table and some of the restaurant hearing the irate woman's shout. “WE'VE GOT THE ISRAELIS HERE. RYAN'S A.W.O.L. YOU'RE GOD KNOWS WHERE.”

“Listen to me good,” Wade hissed into the phone. “Don't let the ambassador in. We know nothing about anything happening in Israel. We can't help with anything happening in Israel.”

“What the hell does that mean?”
Wade looked to the blond young man in across the table from him, and smirked. “CJ, I'd like to introduce you to someone. Switch to video.”

Wade handed over his phone, “You mind? She won't scream at you.”

G took the phone and switched to face time. A long faced woman with red hair appeared on the screen. CJ said, “Let me guess, Wade's son? Not seen your dad ages, or some other bull honky,” “No Ms...?”

“Creeg,” the unimpressed woman said. Giving a slight frown at the strange accent.

“Allow me to introduce myself, His Majesty King George the seventh, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Defender of the faith,”

“Oh really, so you can make me a dame?”

“Well, no,” George noticed the old Texan had move up to M and the two were talking quietly. Focusing on the screen, “No, I could knight you, but to be a dame you would have to be a British citizen to use the title. I could appoint you to the peerage, you could be a Lady.”

“That's so sweet, now put the Rat Bastard back on!”

G held out the phone towards M and Wade, “Rat Bastard?”

Wade grabbed the phone, and before CJ could say anything, “Listen, America knows nothing and that's official. America can't help with what it doesn't know about.”

“But,”

“CJ Creeg!” Snapped Wade. “This is official. We know nothing about anything happening in Israel.”

“In other words we know everything,” CJ said, catching on. “We just can't admit it.”

Wade hung up and took his seat again. Looking to G he said, “Can you arrange a letter or something, saying she's on the short list for a knighthood or something. That'll freak her out good!”

G shrugged, “Talk to M. I only wave the sword about. It's Gareth that decides who gets what. Gareth like me just does what he's told by M.”

Wade looked to Falkirk and got a shrug from the omega. Wade laughed, knowing in a few days time the President's Press Secretary would realise who she had talked to and what she said and would go nuts.

--

Arriving back in London, having driven through the night. Roebuck asked to be dropped off at the club, The Hind. Mycroft and a few others were waiting at there next destination, the place. Both Andrew and Rupert woke at G's soft growl, “Can't I go back to sea?”
“Yes,” Falkirk said sympathetically, “While I become a stay at home mother, baking and cooking and pruning the roses.”

Andrew said his goodbye and lay back down. Snuggling against his Papa.

The moment G opened his door, Mycroft's ingratiating drawl came.

“Welcome Home, Your Majesty.”

“Thank you Mycroft,” G responded with as much courtesy as he could muster.

--

In the Tactical room of MI6's Executive Branch. The large screen in the small Theatre showed a 4x4 vehicle, racing down a rocky road, being perused by at least four others. A sudden white vapour trail went from the fleeing car and hit the road, forcing two of the perusing cars to barrel-roll. The drivers and passengers got out, having survived.

Wade snorted and said, “Oh, that's not good. A couple dozen uninvited Mossad agents in Jordan, that's another shit storm.”

“At least it means there'll be no air support.” Falkirk said. Looking at Wade, “On Sundays I visit...”

“I know kiddo, your injured bodyguard. I'll see you back at the house.” Wade said.

Tanner burst into the room, “M, The Israeli Ambassador has pitched up at Downing Street.”

“Then we had better not keep him waiting,” Falkirk said, “Have Gibbs and Lestrade meet us there.”

--

Eve met them as they entered No.10 Downing Street. She escorted them upstairs to the private office of the prime Minister. She glared at one of the guards on the door. The heavy presence of other guards also careful of the one by the door. She opened the door for them, and Falkirk entered first.

Mallory sat behind his ornate desk, with a cool poker face. The man with his back to the door turned. Falkirk knew his type, weak chinned, weak character with an ego only matched by his self entitlement i.e. a legacy politician.

“Can we make this quick,” Falkirk said, coming up to the desk and seeing the security stills of James, Alec and Daniel being presented to Mallory. “I usually visit Brayan on a Sunday. Since his injury he is easily upset by disruptions to his schedule. Which is why I think this meeting was done now.”

Gibbs came up the other side of the seated Ambassador. Carefully, one by one, he placed three photographs down on the desk for the Ambassador to see. Two men and one woman, each was a head shot form an angle that showed the neat entry wound under their chins.

“These three are suspects in the murder of a Naval Officer,” Gibbs said coolly. “They shot themselves rather than be caught.”
“Death before dishonour?” Falkirk accused. Perching his hip on the desk, and stared down at the seated man.

The Ambassador blasted, “You cannot interrogate me.”

Falkirk leaned in close to the alpha, picking up on his que of fear. “Who's going to stop me? Him?”

Gibbs chuckled, darkly. Everyone turned to look at the Ambassador's bodyguard well and truly surrounded and outclassed.

Touching the three photos on the desk Gibbs said, “They were good. No ID. No hits on fingerprints, or DNA on the known databases,” Tapping the photo of the blond man, “He messed up, just a tiny little bit. They found something on his skin, almost invisible. Abby worked her magic. The Setting Sun, a nightclub in Tel Aviv, he still had the entrance stamp on his right hand.”

Falkirk mused, “Ah yes, you have no idea the trouble my Double Os get into, just before a mission. They all blow off steam before they leave... well they never know if they're coming back or not. Bailing them out isn't too much trouble really, but don't let them know, I have to be appropriately terrifying so they respect me.”

“So,” Mallory said leaning forward “As there was no cooperation from the embassy or Israeli Authorities. To ensure proper religious observance, tomorrow's Israeli papers will carry full page adverts, asking for help identifying those people so they can be buried properly.”

“Of course,” Falkirk added. “We won't be mentioning the 'troubles'. We wouldn't want Mothers, Fathers, grand parents, children, friends learning what these three individuals are accused of. We will just be asking anyone who recognises them to contact the British Consulate, so we can inform their families.”

The Ambassador shot to his feet, and stormed out the room. Pushing passed Wade and Lestrade and calling his bodyguard. All but running from Downing Street, to stop the images of the three perpetrators being splashed all over the news and possibly being identified by someone trying to help.
Falkirk brushed Andrew's hair off his forehead to give him a kiss. He then moved onto Rupert, the boy glaring at Wade, blaming him for taking Falkirk away.

Falkirk cupped Rupert's face and kissed his forehead. Whispering as he pulled back, “The territorial thing is cute, but don't go too far.”

Rupert blushed and ducked his head. Falkirk tapped the boy's nose, for some reason, not sure why but he got a small smile from Rupert for doing it.

“I'll see you soon. Be good for Aunt Selene and Uncle Keading,” Falkirk said to the boys. He and Jack went down to Falkirk's waiting car. He waved to the group standing on the steps of his house.

“So, kiddo, what's the big surprise?” Jack asked as they made their way to the airport.

“It wouldn't be a surprise of I told you,” Falkirk smirked at the older man.

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Several were waiting on Falkirk's car at London City Airport. Jack Ryan, Mycroft, Tanner, and beside Dorian Green was, well she was the acting Director of Mossad at the moment, Orli Elbaz.

The woman with long, straight black hair came up to Falkirk. Elbaz spoke before any formal introductions between her and Falkirk and so very quietly, “Your men have Eli David! He will be returned to us, or there will be reprisals!”

Falkirk shrugged one shoulder. She was acting like an alpha, encroaching into his personal space, close enough her pheromones were meant to intimidate him and force him to submit. He suddenly looked into her eyes, deeply, and held her gaze.

“Consequences? From David's 'bit on the side'? Falkirk laughed. Everyone tensed and took a back-step, except for Elbaz. To the woman in front of him he whispered so only she would hear, "If you can live with the consequences of coming after me, please do so. Because I have become death, the destroyer of worlds.”

Falkirk turned his back on Elbaz, deliberately and provocingly. Green came forward, wrapping a talon-nailed hand around her boss’ arm and pulled Elbaz away.

“M,” called a cautious Tanner coming up to him. The Beta held out a tablet for Falkirk to see as he said, “We're tracking four teams on the trail of 007 and the others.”

“If they wish to interfere...” Falkirk just trailed off and headed for the plane. Beginning the breathing exercise to help control his anxiety. Wade joining him, and tried to help the omega when climbing up the gangway stairs.

Ryan and Mycroft along with a few others surrounded the beta. Tanner looking up, after locking
his tablet. Surprised by the group around him. “Yes?”

Mycroft was the one to ask, “Do you know anything?”

“Even if I did, I wouldn't speak of it,” Tanner said and followed his boss towards the plane outfitted to look like a commercial air liner and not the state of the art military transport/command centre it was.

Ryan of the CIA said, “I heard Director Lin of the Chinese is joining us in Moscow.”

“How did you hear?” demanded Mycroft.

“Some friends of Victoria told me. Did you know she'd been reactivated by MI6?”

Mycroft shook his head. He joined his brother in heading for the plane on the tarmac. The others following.

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What to the world looked like a British Airways, Boing Dreamliner touched down in Moscow. It didn't taxi to the terminal though, but to an isolated part of the airfield. There it extended a gangway and opened the hatch.

Falkirk stepped out. Righting his three piece suit as he came down the stairs. Of the group waiting on him, he went to the Chinese alpha first. His professional relationship with the Chinese Intelligence was mutually respectful and fairly amicable. Thanking Director Lin for her help, he then invited her to join them for the field trip.

Moving on to the next group. Falkirk cast his eyes over them. He knew the ex-Ultra, the US equivalent of a Double O. Older, balder, and a bit more padded on his stomach than Falkirk remembered.

“Mr. Moses,” Falkirk greeted then looked to Victoria and accused, “A reunion, Ms Winslow?”

“Of sorts,” the woman said.

Moses accused Falkirk, “You ordered the death of someone I was to protect.”

Just giving a look to the ex-agent. Falkirk said, “Me? Mr Moses, at the cold war's end, I had just learned to count to twenty, without needing to use my fingers and toes.”

The short bald beta, who hugged a stuffed pig, leaned into Moses and said, “I suddenly feel, very very old.”

“Ms Winslow,” Falkirk said, turning his attention back to Victoria. “Project Nightshade?”

Victoria looked to Simonov, who in turn looked to Moses who looked to Marvin. The bald beta with the pig, gave a smile that lit up his face. Victoria said, “Carrying it made him happy.”

“But where is it!” Demanded Falkirk. Marvin made a small noise that drew Falkirk's attention. Beckoned closer, Falkirk leaned into Marvin and was shown the back of the stuffed pig where there was a zippiier. Inside the padded interior Falkirk saw two ball shaped reservoir and some
Looking to the others, Falkirk asked, “Can he be trusted with that?”

“Yes,” Marvin defended, rather child like as he clutched the pig close to his chest.

Getting ‘why not’ shrugs and nods from the others. Falkirk asked, “What about blowing it up?”

“We get to blow it up?” Marvin said, his eyes going bright and wide.

Falkirk waved to the plane, “The sooner we leave the sooner we get to blow it up.”

Marvin gave the pig a hug and ran up the stairs. Falkirk following him with Simonov, Victoria and the others following behind.

In the plane, Falkirk took the chair behind the desk. Wade sat opposite him. The others were at the tables, or clusters of seats.

Falkirk pulled out the bottle of bourbon and topped up his and Wade’s glasses. The sudden sound of feet thumping up the aisle made both Falkirk and Wade look up. Suspecting Moses of having reported in with his boss, Falkirk headed off director Ryan.

“Please don't spoil the surprise.”

“What are you up to?” Ryan said, leaning over the desk so only the three of them would hear. While brushing off the steward who tried to get him to sit down for take off.

“A weapons test,” Falkirk said innocently. “With some some observers from all affected parties.”

“Oh, God?” Ryan said, turning away.

Wade leaned in closer to Falkirk, “Kiddo, that sounded like a prayer, not a curse.”

The tannoy pinged, “This is Captain Harkness, Our flight time to Ajan, Eastern Russia will be a approximately eight hours. All flight crew....”

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James smirked. So full of himself. Mirrored aviator glasses hid his blue eyes. The bulky earphones cut out a lot of the noise from the propeller driven plane he flew. Somehow, Alec had dozed of in the co-pilot's chair.

Behind James. A hand reached out. A thumb held the middle finger under tension. When half and inch from James' neck, the middle finger sprung forward.

“Fuck!” James whipped his head round to the man behind, glaring at each other.

Squashed into the rear seat, Daniel had his knees up to his chin. And if he stretched it looked like the bigger alpha could rip the plane apart like the Incredible Hulk.

James could see Daniel's lips moving. Tapping the bulky headphone, James shouted, “Can't hear you.”
James didn't need to be a lip reader to make out the 'fuck you!' the other alpha said.

The hessian sack beside Daniel shifted. The big Alpha punched the middle of it, rather gently. They didn't want an accident before they arrived for Falkirk's surprise.

Approaching the abandoned site on the east coast of Russia, James saw the old military base and its single runway. Lowering the landing gear, he brought the plane in to land on nothing but fumes. The moment James taxied to a stop, Daniel opened the hatch and jumped out. The big alpha arching his back to get the kinks out and working his stiff legs.

The brown bag with legs sticking out the bottom of it was tossed out the plane. Alec climbed out the small hatch on the side of the plane a moment after.

Reaching down to the sack with legs, something in Daniel's back went crunch.

“Ahhh, FUCK!”

James took one look at the tall alpha standing bent over and holding his back. He burst out laughing.

“If I could move, I'D WRING YOUR FUCKING NECK BOND!”

Still chuckling, James grabbed the bundle on the concrete and brought David to his feet. Alec rubbed his mate's back while Daniel issued a continuous low growl.

James pushed the prisoner to sit on a piece of concrete, from one of the buildings that had collapsed. He took off the bag and the older man's upper body became visible. Silver hair, matted and stained brown from the dried blood. A black eye. His tailored silver suite, burst at the seems, ripped and grimy.

James just glared at the man who tried to kill him and his family. His friends. Even the twat, James could hear in the background still complaining about his back.

It wasn’t long before the sound of something much bigger than their twin engined porp. built up. The airliner arrived and touched down on the only runway. It taxied to a stop very near them, where it turned so it was pointed back up the runway, ready to take off.

James grabbed David and walked him up to the gangway. Falkirk appeared first and came down the metal stairs. James just watched his mate ignore David and walk right passed them. Falkirk went to stand with Alec who held up Daniel.

Everyone came down the stairs. They milled about, waiting to see what was going to happen.

Falkirk learned all three of his pack-mates had come through unscathed. Daniel was dealing with hours in a tiny cabin, and blaming James for picking the smallest plane he could.

“Daniel, may I borrow your side arm?” Falkirk asked.

“Sure, Laddie,” Daniel ended in a groan as he pulled the gun from his holster.

Taking the pistol, Falkirk aimed at the small plane. He shot the tiers, so it couldn't take off.
Handing back the gun he said, “Alec, take Daniel aboard. We won't be long.”

“I don’t wanna miss the good bit,” Alec whined.

“The good bit is still to come,” Falkirk reassured and watched the two men make slow progress up the narrow stairs.

“Double O Seven,” Falkirk said pleasantly, using his mate's number to ensure he knew this was coming from M. Returning to the larger group of people he ordered the Double O, “I think we can remove Director David's restraints.”

James did as ordered. Elbaz ran up to the Mossad Director. Everyone saw her pass something to the man, Falkirk waved James back when he was going to intervene.

“Marvin, pass the pig.” Falkirk said. The Beta hugged the stuffed pig, slipping his hand into it for a moment. He then held out the pig to Falkirk. Falkirk perched the stuffed animal on the nose of the small plane.

“We're done here,” Falkirk said. “For the time you have left, think on your sins, Mister David.”

Falkirk took James' arm. The Alpha whispered, “You promised he'd die.”

“He will,” Falkirk assured.

It was nice to have James beside him. The Alpha calmed him through the take off and as they flew away. They sat in a cluster of four chairs looking at each other. Daniel was reclining on one. Alec having a post mission drink in another.

Wade took one of the chairs, in the cluster on the opposite side of the aisle. “Kiddo, what's stopping David from running?”

“He can run as far as he wants. There's nothing for hundreds of miles.”

James said, “There were people trailing us. David's men.”

“Tanner?” Falkirk called.

The chief of Staff acknowledged and went to the desk at the front of the cabin. Sitting down, the beta soon brought up a satellite image of the east coast of Russia. The monitors set up all around the cabin showed one plane, them, heading away from the area, while two were closing in on where they left David.

Falkirk took a deep breath and leaned forward. Putting his head between his knees he braced. The ones in the know did the same, Victoria and Simonov who sat together. Moses and Ryan. Marvin gave an excited “Ooo,” as he braced.

The tannoy chimed and the pilot said, “Don't be alarmed. We are about to experience severe turbulence, and for safety reasons we're cutting all electronic power. All crew, prepare EMP hardened protocol.”

Wade like the rest weren't sure what was happening but like the ones who did took the brace position. With his head between his knees he said, “DID HE SAY EMP?”
All the lights in the cabin blinked off. The monitors too. The fading light of day streamed in the windows. The light suddenly changed from orange to bright white. A moment or two later the plane shook and lurched upwards, see-sawing, before levelling out. A glass broke somewhere. A briefcase hit the ceiling before skidding down the aisle.

Through it all, Falkirk hand James leaning over him. One of James' hands, Falkirk clutched to his chest. The other of his alpha's hands brushed and soothed the sensitive spot of his neck. Slowly Falkirk sat up.

The red hue from the windows faded as the white cabin lights flicked on. The monitors flicked on a moment later. Falkirk looked to the monitor closest to him, mounted on the cabin wall. The eastern part of Russia had a slowly expanding doughnut of smoke. A distance away was their plane. The two other planes heading to the epicentre of the explosion were nowhere to be seen.

“You nuked the bastard?” Wade said.

“Yes,” Falkirk smirked. “Thanks for the idea by the way. But I wasn't going anywhere near his 'ass' with it.”

Falkirk looked round the corner of his chair. To where Elbaz sat with Green. Elbaz noticed him watching her. “Do you now understand the length I will go to if provoked?”

“I will not let this rest,” said Elbaz. “And if you think quoting Oppenheimer is a threat, you have another thing coming.”

Simonov stood, so he was easier to see in the cabin, “What did M say exactly?”

“He said he'd turn the world to glass.” The angry alpha woman spat.

“No I didn't!”

Ryan stood, so he could say, “Moses, you said Dr. Bailey was alive and being held by the British.”

Director Lin of China stood from her seat, “Is that the reason for the strange behaviours of the Double Os?” When Falkirk only shrugged she added, “Ms Kew, usually operates in Asia, but she went to South America. Addison, usually Oceania, was spotted going to Africa. Maloney, he was in the middle east, usually Masood's area of operation.”

Falkirk settled deeper into his chair. Letting the speculation fly back and forth. He smiled to himself. Wade was the one who eventually asked him, “Kiddo, can you make more Red Mercury?”

Falkirk's smirk widened. He glanced at the man across the aisle from him, “You might very well say that, I couldn't possibly comment.”

Chapter End Notes

A bit of an odd chapter next week, mostly bits I cut out. Falkirk informing Ziva about her dad(which was meant to be part of this chapter but I wanted to end it on Urquhart's
line). A bit of a reaction to Falkirk's threat. And a bit that should have happened on Falkirk's return with G, but there was enough happening so I took it out. Then onto something more domestic, still action but less world changing.

Thanks for sticking with this epic book on Falkirk's life.
Waving his keycard for the lift, Gibbs held the door for Abby to go in ahead of him. The silver haired man still seethed a bit. Whatever was happening, he was not part of it while stuck here at MI6.

As they descended, Gibbs glanced to the side and the excited little omega beside him. Abby was getting her wish, and there might even be a meeting with the scariest Omega Gibbs had ever met, when M returned from whatever he was doing with the CIA director and the Director of National Intelligence.

One subject had not been raised since Abby came to help in the investigation. A subject beginning with 'Z'. Abby, MI6, and the police both here in London and back in America had confirmed the first Ziva knew of anything was the night before they left for London. But still, Ziva had gone rogue and a naval officer was murdered to get Ziva into this building.

“You're angry,” Abby squeaked, while glancing up at Gibbs. “You try to pretend you're not but I can smell it.”

“Sorry,” Gibbs said, putting a comforting hand on the jittery omega's shoulder. “Just thinking about things.”


Gibbs glanced at the cautious omega. No other had dared bring up the subject.

“I don't know if she is,” Gibbs admitted. “What her father did... what he did to M and his family... but he used Ziva too if your evidence is right.”

Abby asked, “What was M like?”

Gibbs was rather impressed. Even with her acrid fear from confronting an alpha on the difficult talk filling the elevator. Abby had held on longer than anyone else before changing the subject.

Gibbs turned to the short omega so he could cup her face in both hands. He whispered as if this was a secret, “The scariest person I have ever met.”

“You? Frightened?” Abby said, looking like she hadn't believed a word.

“Oh yeah,” Gibbs said, with a nod. “When he's really mad, he stops giving off scent ques for his emotions. It's really creepy. And I saw some video from David's assault, that M, he's a good sniper... apparently a top marksman in MI6.”

Abby was smiling and blushing slightly. Gibbs' emotional ques were improving and he was excited when he spoke and that made her excited.

The elevator pinged and opened. Waiting on them was a young alpha dressed in tailored, navy blue suit. “Welcome, I'm Peter please call me R.”

Gibbs shook the younger man's hand and watched as Abby blushed to the tips of her ears when the
blond hunk shook hers. She then hid behind Gibbs, occasionally peeking out to top up her blush.

R escorted them through the security checkpoint of Q Branch. Gibbs noticing they went ahead of a dozen alphas in different military dress. He could identify the Green Beret of the Royal Marine Commando, but didn't know to which branch the red one belonged. And could see the wings of the RAF on another's uniform.

They were led to the first door on the left hand side of the corridor. R telling them this was the Armoury.

Gibbs said, “I thought M's Personal Assistant was giving us a tour?”

“He is. You even get to see Darren teaching a class today,” R said heading for the gap in the wall behind the reception desk and led them along the narrow corridor. R smiled at Abby, “I'm told you're M's super fan, you know this place?”

Abby nodded, “The then Thomas McLair was assistant to the then Armoury Chief. Now M and Q respectively.”

“Yes, and this is the very place they met,” R opened a door into a room full of guns secured in cabinets with thick glass doors. Around the corner was the workshop with the tools used to produce the custom weapons of MI6.

One wall of the workshop was of thick glass, with a couple doors in it that led onto a testing range. One for an aisle, where there was a control console for the targets and barrier wall from where to fire the weapons to be tested. The other door was for the long target area that ran parallel to the workshop and extended out of sight far beyond it. R indicated second of the doors which was open.

Gibbs stepped through the door first, onto the part of the range where the targets were usually set up. A half dozen tables had been set up with two chairs to each table. A white board, stood in front of all the desks. Seeing two working on an upended chair, he demanded, “Is that a bomb?”

One of the two omegas, given their lean shape and short height looked up. The strawberry blond ducked like most omegas when confronted with a strange Alpha.

The omega with the dark curly hair and strange hazel eyes just shrugged and said, “Yeah, best way to teach the English pricks.”

R said, “Darren does know what he's doing... and is an expert in Irish paramilitary IEDs.”

“Aye, I was bombing the English bastards out-ta ma country before I could walk,” Darren said. Getting back to work on the device he was attaching to the underside of the swivel chair.

Gibbs, Abby and R stood off to the side of the room. The blond whispering assurances it was all for show.

A dozen men and women were led onto the range. They were from a range of Military branches. Darren invited them all to sit. There were sniggers from the exclusively Alpha group about an omega taking the class.

When the group had sat down and made themselves comfortable. Darren said, “Now, I want you to roll y'r chairs back a bit and lean forwards.”

A round headed man on the back row, dressed in camouflage fatigues and green beret was the first to humour Darren. He leaned forward, almost with his head between his knees.
“What the...!”

“And kiss y'r arses good-bye!” Darren flipped the whiteboard round. In thick writing were the words, 'Y'R FECKED YA ENGLISH BASTARDS!!'

By now everyone had looked at the device under their chairs. The round faced Marine shouted, “This is just bollo...” he stood and a loud bang went off. He started screaming. The ones closest to him getting sprayed in red spots.

“Three days without water, ya die, ya fail,” Darren said. “If ya blow up, ya die, ya fail. If ya live ya pass.”

R tapped the shocked Gibbs on the arm and jerked his head. Gibbs followed R to the screaming man on the floor. R grabbed the green battledress fatigues and with Gibbs' help pulled the screaming man form the range. Leaving a trail of red behind on the reinforced concrete floor.

Darren took the shocked Abby's arm and walked her out. He called over his shoulder, “See ya!”

Darren came round the corner of the workshop, to see the ex-Double O, armoury chief brushing off Gibbs and R and standing up. Johnston opened up his fatigues and pulled off the blood packs. Chuckling as he said, “I think the guy beside me kacked himself.”

“No better way to learn than thinking y'r life's on the line,” Darren said. Still with his arm in Abby's, “Me and Leo will show you the best bits, let's start with Guy, nice guy but no one can fecking understand him.”

Abby gulped a few times before she asked, “Is he an omega too?”

“Aye, head Mechanic. Has the best biscuits in all of MI6, don't drink his tea though, it'll melt your insides,” Darren said, walking with Abby and Leo, while Gibbs trailed them.

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Stepping into the brig. Falkirk saw a man sitting on the floor with his back pressed against the glass of the cell. Walking down the cells of the block, Falkirk came to the one with DiNozzo sitting outside of it. Inside was the alpha woman, dressed in white scrubs.

“Ms David, it's my solemn duty to inform you of the death of Eli David last night. You have my condolences,” Falkirk said. Ziva was too experienced, she shut down her emotions to give nothing away. “Due to her relationship with Eli David, Ms Elbaz has decided to step down. Ms Green is now the most senior executive of Mossad. Ms Green wished me to give you a message. She stressed this is a request, and cannot be enforced. As your presence in Israel would be, problematic, she requests that you look to other places to build a home.”

“Home?” DiNozzo said. “Are you letting her go?”

Falkirk glanced at the man standing outside the cell with him. “Assuming Ms David acknowledges her actions were illegal, dishonouring herself, Mossad and Israel. And agrees not to return to Israel...”

“I will never agree to that! Any of it!” Ziva spoke for the first time.

Falkirk nodded and said, “Very well. You are stateless, no one will officially acknowledge you
after your action. So you will stay in that cell. When the baby is born, it will be given to its father. There will be no further visiting after that, so that will be the only time you ever see your child.”

Falkirk walked away. Ziva only glared silently at him.

“Hay, eh, M, sir,” DiNozzo said catching up to him. When Falkirk stopped and waited for the alpha, DiNozzo said, “Is that right? Will you let her go?”

Falkirk nodded. “While she did assault MI6, there's no evidence she was involved or aware of Lt. Adams' murder so her future is at my discretion. Whatever his motivations or perceived slights, Eli David was the one who started this. I ended it so have no doubt Ziva thinks I'm the bad guy. I need an act of contrition from her, or I might as well walk into her cell unarmed and let her kill me quickly.”

“She loved her father.”

Falkirk shrugged, “I wouldn't know about that. Mine was a waist of space. The only talk I had with him worth a damn, I had to kneecap him to get the truth out.”

DiNozzo gave a strained laugh, trying to work out if Falkirk was joking or not.

Falkirk sighed and said, “You, she liked you enough to sleep with you. You've got a baby coming. If anyone can get her to see there is a future, it's you.”

“You said, no visitors?”

“When the baby's born, you and your child will have to leave,” Falkirk said. Then looked the Alpha up and down. “I suppose, we don't have a permanent liaison with NCIS. I could contact Director Vance to float the idea.”

“Me?” DiNozzo said. “I'd work here?”

Falkirk nodded. “It will let you talk to Ziva. I'll go get the ball rolling with Vance.”

Stepping out of the brig and turning left. A familiar southern voice called, “M?”

Falkirk looked to Wade catching up to him. Falkirk said, “I don't think you've ever called me that.”

Wade shrugged. “Last time I remember calling you M, someone had just tried to blow you up with the NSA Director's help. You were rightfully pissed off then. This time, with David it felt different. You wiped him from the face of the Earth.”

Wade stopped, the older Alpha then glanced round, so Falkirk copied him. The corridor was empty save for a guard at the brig entente. Wade said, “I'm your friend and others think so to, so I've been designated spokes person for China, Russia, the US, and everyone else who noticed you just blew your enemy to kingdom come.”

Wade began pacing, a few steps up the corridor and back again. Falkirk took a subtle sniff, taking note of the nervous que, it always reminded Falkirk of solder smoke, that good healthy carcinogenic flux that makes your nostrils burn.

Wade stopped in front of Falkirk, “Thirty two Red Mercury devices, at a conservative estimate. Thirty two, non-nuclear nuclear bombs, with dead man triggers and only you know what else. Anything happens to you and BOOM! Armageddon here we come.”
“M.A.D. no more appropriate acronym.”

“Kiddo,” Wade said, using the old nickname without notice. “006... wait no he wasn't a Double O. Stuart Thomas entered the States. We reviewed the scans of his baggage. He walked through Newark with three Red Mercury Devices and not one bomb detector, sniffer dog, radiological alarm or scanner technician saw anything wrong. Nothing was noticed until the X-Ray scans were reviewed at Langley. Three bombs in America, one in Canada, one in Mexico...”

“I'm not a monster,” Falkirk said and started walking.

“I trust you Kiddo. There are a lot of people deciding how to deal with you, or if they dare deal with you.”

“Then I need to trust you,” Falkirk said. He led his guest deep under ground and into Q Branch, and into the Armoury's workshop.

Wade watched Falkirk punch in a number on the glowing keypad on the glass front of the cabinet. Falkirk pulled out a device with two ball shaped reservoir and between them a small screen and components with lots of wires connecting everything.

“So you've got one in London too?” Wade said, watching Falkirk place the device on a work bench. He was then given a pair of wire snips by the omega.

When Wade accepted the small tool. Falkirk punched in a code on the Red Mercury bomb and the small screen flashed, 'Armed'

“Disarm it,” Falkirk said.

“I don't know what I'm doing.”

“You don't need to. There are booby traps, false triggers, everything an expert looks for. Just have at it Jack.”

Wade shrugged and put an easily assessable green wire between the short stubby blades of the snips. With a gentle squeeze the wire was sheared. The little screen showed a five second countdown, which turned to an animated picture of a mushroom cloud. A ping sounded and a small pendant flag shot up from the base, 'Kaboom!'

Wade looked to the lean omega, “Kiddo?”

“If I put real devices out there, how long until someone finds one. What would Iran, North Korea or even our allies do to get their hands on an undetectable nuclear weapon. They're all fake, just a bluff.”

“JESUS! KIDDO!” Wade sat on one of the high stools. “Here I am, having a heart attack over this, and you're lying to everyone. Remind me never to play poker with you.”

Falkirk pulled out another stool and sat by the alpha who was taking deep breaths. “James and Daniel are the only ones I can't fool... M too when she was alive. I'm good at that deranged fury, because I actually feel it deep inside.”

Brushing the device Falkirk said, “Hopefully, with that little flag and message, if someone finds one they will think I've got decoys along with the real bombs.”

“Kiddo?”
“Yes, Jack?”

“Why are there a bunch of guys trying to get our attention?”

Falkirk could only see a few in the back row, of the people sitting out on the testing range. “They haven't figured the bombs are fake either.”

Darren called from out of view, “M? Heard you were in here?”

The other omega came round the corner and was arm in arm with a nervous omega girl with Agent Gibbs behind. Darren said, “I'd like to introduce you to your biggest fan. She even knows your real name.”

“My real name!” Falkirk looked scandalised. “Oh, that's a state secret.”

“Is it?” squeaked the girl and looked to Gibbs, “Am I in trouble.”

“Oh, yes you are,” Falkirk chuckled and stood. “But nothing a good cup of tea and a piece of something gooey and very chocolaty won't fix.”

“Tea?” Gibbs said with a far off and hunted look.

“There might be coffee available,” Falkirk said. “Jack, you joining us?”

“Sure Kiddo.”

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A week ago he'd been in MI6 watching James high-tailing it with a black bagged David, then the meeting in Mallory's office. It felt much longer though. With the exception of Ziva and DiNozzo everyone had returned home. This Sunday, like last Falkirk had visited his old bodyguard, Brayan. And back home, there should be Darren and Keading to gossip with, perhaps Sherlock too. The kids would be instructed on self defence by James and the others.

When Falkirk got home after the visit to the hospital he could tell something was up. The atmosphere in the house was so heavy. Hudson just flicked his eyes to the living room door, and Falkirk knew the source was in there.

Coming into the lounge Falkirk saw a very round stomached Villiers and his mate sitting. Keading and Darren, sat on the opposing couch, with their arms crossed and silently seethed at the Omega's presence.

“Why don't you come through to the Library,” Falkirk said. Hope and dread churning his stomach. If Villiers had come to his senses, Falkirk didn't know if he could give up Rupert. While hoping the Omega had.

Within the Library Falkirk invited the two to sit. Grigori helped his cumbersome omega down onto the settee.

“Does Rupert know you're here?” Falkirk asked.

“Yes,” Villiers said, simply.

The churning in Falkirk's gut stopped in an instant. Just a coolness in the other omega's tone answered all of Falkirk's question. Only cold, bubbling hate remained. Falkirk was oh so civil as he asked, “And why are you here?”
“A visit, while we're in London. To let him know,” Villiers brushed his very full stomach. “I also brought him a...”

“HE IS NOT A TOY TO BE PICKED UP AND DISCARDED AT YOUR WHIM!” Falkirk cleared his throat to collect himself, “Rupert has two sisters and a brother he already does not see, I don't think one more will make a difference to him. And until you wish to be his parent, you are not welcome in our home.”

Grigori muttered something in Russian. Falkirk laughed, almost a manic sound, “Oh, I wish to teach you some respect too.”

The Alpha surged to his feet. Falkirk did too.

“Come on then!” Falkirk taunted with a challenging smile. An Alpha's oppressive pheromones were nothing compared to that burning ball that could ignite in Falkirk. Grigori wasn't stupid enough to do anything despite his alpha desire to put an omega in his place.

“I ask you now, to leave!” Falkirk ordered. The Library door swing open with Alec and Daniel waiting.

Grigori helped Villiers up. Between Daniel and Alec they were escorted out.

Going upstairs Falkirk found James comforting Rupert. For a man that had never know a father figure he was good at it, Falkirk thought. James and Rupert sat on the floor, with the smaller alpha tucked under James' arm. Rupert's face pressed to the Alpha's chest.

Quietly entering, Falkirk sat beside Rupert so the boy was sandwiched between James and himself.

“I asked David to leave until he wished to be a parent again,” Falkirk said.

“Don't want him back!” came Rupert's muffled voice.

Falkirk could relate. He said, “There might come a day when you want to see him again.”

Rupert insisted, “Don't want to! Never!”

James and Falkirk exchanged a look. Rupert was adamant for the moment. Then very softly, Rupert called, “Papa?”

Falkirk's eyes went wide. James only give an unhelpful raise of his eyebrows, leaving the choice to Falkirk. In the end, Falkirk stroked the dark hair of the boy and said, “Yes, Rupert?”

The boy shrugged, “Nothing, it doesn't matter.”

Falkirk thought it mattered one hell of a lot.

Chapter End Notes

Originally the part with Rupert happened before, and in the hotel room on their way to meet G was when Rupert used 'Papa' for the first time with Falkirk letting him. But I noticed a continuity error i.e. James being away at the time while also at the house. So I moved it to the end. And I wanted to show Wade, Falkirk wasn't a complete monster
and world destruction was a bit far even for him.
Falkirk looked to the man beside him, James had done it. Come the School's autumn break he'd wanted to go up north with the kids so that was where James was taking them.

They travelled via scenic roads, between grassy hills with garnet cliffs poking through the vegetation. Having moved off the main roads they were on the twisting country ones, shadowed by bowed and bent trees. The grey concrete littered with the corpses of the dumb pheasant, everything else had leaned to stay away from the roads or get to out the way of the oncoming cars.

They came round the Zed-Bend, although, all these roads were a constant of back and forth, side to side, of going back as much as you went forward. Falkirk saw a shining green tail plume. The pheasant was sitting safely at the side of the road and it escaped the sound of the oncoming car by jumping right in front them. There was noting James could do, you couldn't see ten yards the roads twisted so much and were so narrow it was dangerous to swerve when an oncoming car could appear in an instant.

“What was that?” Andrew asked looking up. Wondering what the thump was.

Falkirk looked to the two in the back. They were so bored they weren't even fighting. “That's why you Stop, Look, Listen, every time you cross the road.”

Andrew turned to look out the rear window, but there had already been three bends so there was nothing to see. Rupert went back to his book, while Andrew picked up his comic again.

Starting to feel a little sick, Rupert put his book down. The scenery had changed again, from the narrow roads that were surrounded by trees and bushes. They were now in a wide valley, with steep grey mountains lining it. It was dull and dark place, a bit scary until the clouds broke and it was bathed in bright yellow light that brought the green grass and bushes alive and even made the grey rocks sparkle a bit.

"You really came from here?" Rupert asked with excitement in his voice.

When James answered with just a quiet yes, Falkirk looked across to his Alpha. He reached out to brush James' hand, the alpha pulled his back quickly.

"Daddy?" Andrew called and Falkirk hushed him. He knew Andrew would be curious to the acrid scent of nervousness coming off the Alpha but the car was not the place to have the conversation.

Coming to a stop, when still some distance off. James indicated the house in the middle of the valley floor, "There it is."

This would be the first time James had really seen it. He had been close when visiting Kincade. There had been the time he kicked in the back door after an argument with M, but he hadn't actually gone in. The place pulled him back in times of turmoil.

Continuing on, James turned off the road and into the drive when they reached it. Stopping outside the house, the old gamekeeper was waiting for them.

“Ah the pup, and the pups,” Kincade shouted coming up to the car. He doffed his cap to Falkirk,
“And the boss, o’ course.”

The old man took one look at James and ushered the boys on ahead of him and followed after. The old man saying he’d show the boys the house.

James clasped Falkirk's hand. Falkirk waited for James to take the first step to explore the house.

The front door led into a hall with a stair case going to the first floor. Falkirk had the house rebuilt using as much as could be reclaimed from the rubble. All the traditional dark wood panelling was new. At the corners where the reclaimed stone could be seen, it was bright pinkish stone, having been cleaned of the smoke staining.

"It's different," James observed. “Not much but, cleaner, newer, much warmer.”

“Modern insulation and they invented this thing since the house was first built, central heating. Indoor plumbing too.”

James just sent his mate a wane smile. Falkirk leaned in to kiss the Alpha's rough cheek, the touch reminding James he wasn't alone.

Going to the left they entered the lounge with a large open fire which crackled and spat behind the mesh guard. There was a dining room beyond, where James put his head into the secret tunnel. The study was barely looked at then came the gun room, where James froze.

The first gun on the rack was the one James had discarded years before. Falkirk found it by tripping over it out on the moor. James had inspected the rusted and decaying weapon before abandoning it. Falkirk had painstakingly repaired the old rifle and returned it to its home.

For the first time James let go of his mate's hand to pick up his father's gun. He inspected it. Comparing the weapon in his hand, to his memory of the rusted thing he had looked at years before.

"Does it..." James trailed off knowing his mate wouldn't restore something to anything less than perfect. From a drawer Falkirk pulled a box of ammunition. "Perhaps later," James said replacing the gun for now.

Going up stairs James and Falkirk found Andrew and Rupert arguing over a room.

"I can sort this!" Falkirk informed. "You can both sleep in here, with Yulian, Cody and David. Michelle and Rosie will probably sleep in their parent's rooms."

Rupert asked, “David? Your nephew?"

With a shrug, Falkirk corrected, “Your cousin, now.”

Andrew whined, “But Pap...”

Holding up his hand to stop the argument. Falkirk said, "Daniel and Alec will be here in a few days along with Selene and Keading, Sherlock, John and Rosie, Mycroft and Bill, Shane and David. There is not enough room so we're stuffing anyone under eighteen into one room."

Falkirk smiled sweetly, daring Andrew to argue.
The boy crossed his arms and sulked. “So unfair!”

“Ye-sh, it i-sh!” Falkirk cooed, tousling Andrew's already wild hair. Then doing the same to Rupert's wavy locks.

When Falkirk looked round, he saw James with a tender smile. He held out his hand to the alpha and James took it. Falkirk just looked at their interlaced fingers a moment, still his the longer and more slender while James were the ticker and stronger.

Taking James to the room Falkirk had claimed years ago. James said, "This was my parent's room."

There was a small fireplace, again it was lit to get rid of the chill in the disused house. The once formal dressing room had been converted into an en suite.

"I liked the view," Falkirk said looking to the window with the moor and loch beyond. A creak of bed springs, made him look to James again. The blond just sitting on the four poster. Going over, Falkirk cupped the grizzled cheeks of his mate. The bright blue eyes looked up, there was sorrow but for the very first time Falkirk thought James was seeing it through rather than running away from it.

“I'm here, always,” Falkirk said and leaned down to brush his lips against James'.

“‘My omega,” James whispered.

“Yours!”

--

Placing the kettle on the stove, Falkirk pressed the igniter and with a whoosh the blue flame flared before settling. Rupert and Andrew were buttering bread for some sandwiches.

A resonating crack sounded, echoing throughout the kitchen and the mountains outside. Telling Andrew and Rupert to stay where they were Falkirk checked to make sure his suspicions was correct. Going to the rear door Falkirk looked out to James and Kincade, some distance from the house.

Some tins had been set up on a tree and James was testing his Father's gun. Between loading and firing, Falkirk could see his mate and Kincade talking.

"Let them be," Falkirk ordered coming back to the stove. "It's time you should know why Daddy is so nervous of this place."

Coming to sit at the table in the middle of the room, where the boys worked. Falkirk said, "This place holds bad memories for Daddy. This is were he learned of his parents death. It is where he ran to whenever he was in trouble," Falkirk said primarily to Andrew then focused on Rupert "This is also where he and your Mother ran to when they were in trouble. She died near here."

The revelation took Rupert by surprise. Very quietly he said, "What happened?"

"That is one of the reasons James is nervous, he was with M. If you want to know, James wants to
be the one who tells you,” Falkirk informed.

Andrew tilted his head to the side in confusion, “Aren’t you M.”

“There is always an M,” Falkirk said. “I’m the M now. Olivia Mansfield was the M before me. Admiral Hargreaves was the M before her. Miles Messervy before him.”

More aware, Rupert's dark eyes looked to Falkirk. He asked, “Was it like last time?”

That confused Andrew, but Falkirk took it to mean what happened on Daniel's Island. Falkirk said, “Being M, means some people will hate me. Very, very much. But Papa is very smart and has outsmarted everyone else.”

“What did you do?” Andrew asked.

Standing when the kettle began to sing. Falkirk kissed the top of Andrew's head as he went to take the kettle from the stove. He said, “I do what I'm good at. I showed everyone how angry I was and they decided it would be best if we all got along rather than fight.”

--

Early the next day James and Rupert took a walk to the chapel. Kincade arrived, coming in the back door without knocking and just calling out it was him. His appearance wasn't a big surprise, Falkirk had seen him pass the kitchen window while he prepared a late breakfast. Andrew had been drafted in to help with the cooking, in order to give James and Rupert some time alone.

"The pup was touched by the gun," Kincade said.

"What gun?" Andrew asked in confusion.

"Not you little pup, your dad," Kincade said while he poured the tea form the pot into a mug to which he added four sugars and milk. Taking a sip, “Mmmm, This tea tastes funny.”

"Daddy isn't pup he had a mum not a Papa," Andrew responded.

"Pup, bairn, child it all means the bloody same," Kincade grumbled while spooning in more sugar to his tea.

Falkirk placed three plates down, James and Rupert hadn't returned yet and there was no telling how long they would be. Andrew offered to go get James and Rupert, but Falkirk told him to sit. They sat round the large pine table in the kitchen to have their breakfast.

"He's Emma's" Kincade asked after Falkirk told him why James and Rupert needed time. Falkirk gave the old Alpha a brief rundown on Rupert's history. Then casually mentioned it was 'M' not 'Emma'.

Finishing up with breakfast, Falkirk started clearing away the plates. Kincade patted Andrew's shoulder, "Come on Little Pup."

Falkirk shooed Andrew out after Kincade.

When James and Rupert returned Falkirk plated up the sausage, bacon and scrambled egg, he had
kept warm in the oven. Neither wanted to eat. Rupert poked at the eggs, while James just spun his coffee mug round and round. Falkirk kissed the top of Rupert's head then James', whenever he passed close to one or the other. Neither reacted.

“I did have a mum and dad,” Rupert said, almost to himself. The confusion was understandable to Falkirk. The complicated relationships of the past were less common now but still around. Two alphas that were married, tended to have their own bound omegas to help keep their instincts controlled in the otherwise confrontational relationship. Rupert had been abandoned by his biological maternal progenitor, Villiers. But his non-biological mother, M, and his father had died and it wasn't their fault they weren't here. And in the old relationship style, M was Rupert's mother.

Falkirk stood behind Rupert's chair and draped his arms around the boy's neck. James even came out of his own thoughts to lay a hand over Rupert's

The moment was broken by Andrew returning, carrying a pile of logs across his arms. Rupert broke away, to help and soon all the logs that had been used had been replaced. Under Kincade's watch and direction the two boys learned how to clean and rebuild the fires in the grates. Andrew even getting to light them, with the long taper.

In the afternoon more cans were placed on the dead tree. Falkirk watched as the old gamekeeper and James supervised the boys. Watching the boys hitting their marks, very regularly, Kincade said, “And I thought the Pup was a crack shot.”

Switching from the replicas and toys, was no big leap for Rupert or Andrew. The rifle they used was heavier with more of a kick, that they adapted to with the skill and experience they had gained over the Sunday training sessions.

After Rupert and Andrew had hit the targets a few times Rupert asked, "Who's the best shot?"

"Daddy!" Andrew declared with complete faith

"Aye the Pup's a crack shot," Kincade added.

James sent his mate a smirk and held out his Father's gun. “Papa?”

With James smiling at him like that, with the twinkle in those beautiful blue eyes Falkirk couldn't refuse. It took the Omega several shots to get back in to his stride. Then a competition started. Whoever missed was knocked out.

The weight of the gun took it's toll on Andrew and he was the first to miss. The barrel dipping just as he fired his shot on the third round. Then it was Rupert who missed on fifth round. Kincade, James and Falkirk went for several rounds before Kincade missed. Eventually it was boredom that tipped Falkirk's hand and dipped the barrel.

"Again!" James demanded, not taken in and refusing to take the gun back.

"I need a drink," Kincade grumbled and heading towards the house. The cold forced the kids inside a while ago. James and Falkirk continued their competition.

"I'm done!" Falkirk declared, handing James his gun back.

"But..."
"You win my Alpha," Falkirk said over his shoulder.

"Not properly!" James complained. Catching up to Falkirk the omega took his arm and cuddled it, while James sulked.

--

The first peace and quiet of his vacation was on day three. Falkirk sipped a cup of tea, while curled up in a big wing back chair. He just gazed at the dancing flame of the wood fire. James was out visiting the village a few miles away. Andrew and Rupert were off exploring, with a warning to not go to far.

The heavy thump of feet woke Falkirk from his doze. Going through to the kitchen Falkirk greeted Kincade as he gutted some fish. Falkirk went to the window, and saw the sun close to the peaks on the west.

“Are Andrew and Rupert back?”

“Don't think so,” Kincade said, moving onto the next fish.

James arrived back to Falkirk pacing about. The twilight was upon the glen and the children had not returned.

Despite his reassuring words it was Kincade's scent that was putting Falkirk on edge. The old Alpha was getting concerned. James and Kincade stepped out into the dying light. Falkirk undeterred followed them. James instructed Falkirk to only go to the chapel and back.

Trudging over the uneven ground Falkirk could see the torch light from James and Kincade in the distance. The two alphas were fanning out, getting further apart from each other the further they went from the house. Falkirk knew the two Alphas were the best chance to find the boys and he had just been given a task to occupy him.

By the time Falkirk had rounded the loch and came to the chapel the sun had disappeared. He circled the perimeter of the building and looking about. Coming back to the door, Falkirk went inside.

The inside of the building was dark and cold with a smell of damp. The beam of Falkirk's torch highlighting the dust in the air. Falkirk approached the raised step at the alter. On the old stone steps sat two melted candles, dark and burnt out a long time ago. Falkirk wondered if James and Rupert had marked the place M had fallen. Neither had discussed what had happened the day they came to the chapel. Moving on and out Falkirk decided to take the longer way back to the house, via the main drive way.

Using his touch in a sweeping motion, as much to attract attention as to light his way Falkirk crested a hillock. From his position the chapel was nothing more than a darker patch against the all consuming darkness behind him. The house was marked by the light glowing from the windows, several hundred yards ahead and to Falkirk's left.

Joining the compacted earth driveway Falkirk thought he could see something moving up ahead. Shouting and flashing the torch, something blocking the beam. There was an answer of “Papa?” from the instinct blob.
Quickening his step Falkirk came on the pair. Rupert had Andrew tucked under his arm and inside his jacket. The only thing Falkirk could make out of his youngest son was the whites of his eyes, everything else caked in black mud. Rupert was in a bit better shape, his face lightly smeared but clothes just as dark as Andrew's.

"I fell," Andrew lamented in his misery. A sniffle of his nose was wiped with the back of his hand and made no dent in the layer of mud covering his face.

"Home," Falkirk ordered and as they walked back to the house he sent a text message to James.

On the way back Rupert told the story of Andrew wanting to explore a little further. Rupert informed, "He slipped down the hill and into a stream."

"Got stuck. Rupert rescued me," Andrew added.

Getting back to the house Falkirk directed the boys to the kitchen door. "You're not going through the house like that," Falkirk said. So in the boot room Falkirk got Rupert and Andrew to strip out of the mud caked outer clothing before sending them to go wash up.

When James and Kincade returned Falkirk had just finished hanging up the cloths to dry. He was going to let the mud dry then beat it off before washing them.

The back door banged open. Falkirk took one look and James with much caking his boots and had the Alpha take them off there and then. Falkirk reassured James both boys were fine he then repeated Rupert's story.

A sudden burst of laughter came from Kincade, who was folding his sock and tucking it between his toes to hide the hole at the big toe.

"Like father, like son," Kincade muttered with good humour. "I lost a bloody good boot pulling you from that burn" Kincade wiping a tear of mirth from his eye and continued to chuckle. Walking through to the kitchen in his stocking soles.

"Do tell," Falkirk said as he started to grill fish Kincade had brought.

"Well, Little Lord Fontelroy and his dad had an argument. So the Pup took himself off over the moors in the dead of night. We found him squealing like a pig, thigh deep in mud," Kincade chuckled as James complained in the background.

When Rupert arrived James checked him over for injury before asking for a full report. James was torn he wanted to tell Rupert off for not coming to get help but couldn't admonish him for something James himself wouldn't do. In the end he let the matter drop and pulled the young Alpha into a hug.

Andrew for his part was in a bit more trouble. He was more like his father. Always needing to push, go that one step further. After James had checked over the few scraps and bruises Andrew had. He examined and got Andrew to examine every decision taken that led to falling in a stream. The most important one, not returning with Rupert when the light began to fade and forcing Rupert to follow or abandon him. Luck, or good judgement had Rupert follow and being there when Andrew got himself into trouble.
It wasn't lost on Falkirk the Alpha sounded much like himself or M before him. When James intentions got a bit clouded by his anger Falkirk announced the similarity. James didn't quite like the interruption but it did the job of braking his train of thought, and when he turned back he noticed Andrew's dejected and submissive pose, Andrew almost in tears.

"I think you get my point," James said then pulled Andrew against him and hugged him tight.

After the meal, which Andrew just picked at and Kincade had left for home, Falkirk gathered everyone in the lounge. As James tended the fire Falkirk brought down blankets, furs, cushions and pillows. In the corner Falkirk built a nest with Andrew's help. With Andrew and Rupert in the centre Falkirk slipped in behind Rupert as James slipped in behind Andrew.

It took time before Andrew final succumbed to James' gentle caresses. The back of the neck a very sensitive spot for an omega, and to a lesser extent Alphas. James' scent mellowed, going deep and a bit musty like a good oaky wine, clearly the most dominant of the group. Soon all four fell to the pheromone cocktail produced.

"I'm Sorry daddy," Andrew mumbled.

"Don't apologise. Just learn," James instructed softly before giving a nuzzle.
Seeing an oil-slick blue Bentley coming down the drive Andrew shouted the arrival to the house. Running out he was swept up, high into the air by Daniel before being handed on to Alec. When Andrew was placed on the ground again, he grabbed Yulian's hand. Very excited he was chattering about anything and everything as he pulled the younger boy onwards.

"Go with them," James said to Rupert. The older boy trotted after the younger two who had already vanished down a slope.

James walked up to Alec. Even though it had been just over a week since they had seen each other, James greeted his old friend like it had been ages, with a hug and pats to the back. Taking one of the bags James indicated the house and mountains around them. "Home," he informed.

"Aye, so the English is just a veneer?" Daniel said emphasising his own Scottish accent. James growled and walked off. Alec followed him after telling his mate to behave. The two blonds entered the house together.

"Be nice," Falkirk added coming up to the big Scotsman.

"James and I know our relationship, I don't ever asked if he is alright," Daniel responded absently looking from one end of the valley to the other. "I do like this place!"

"You can put that in the gun room," Falkirk said indicating the case Daniel was removing from the car.

Following Falkirk into the house, Daniel was led into the gun room. Kincade was already there cleaning a rifle for the up coming hunt. Falkirk introduced the two.

"Very nice," Kincade said seeing Daniel unpacked an old hunting rifle, with a scrolled silver inlay. Clearly craftsmanship from a bygone era.

"Daniel is the man who taught me everything I know about firearms." Falkirk informed as he inspected one of the more modern and slightly smaller rifles for the kids to use.

--

The next to arrive was Shane and David. I was Christmas the last time Falkirk had seen his eldest brother and nephew. It would be the first time Rupert would meet the pair. Unfortunately, his adopted son was still chaperoning Andrew and Yulian in their explorations.

In typical family fashion Falkirk came up to his nephew. "ooh, You have grown." Falkirk said giving his nephew a nuzzle and a hug. Moving onto Shane Falkirk took his arm and escorted him
into the house. Leaving James to get the bags.

"I'm not Hudson you know," James shouted after them.

Over the following few hours, the Pack gathered, well most of it. Mallory and Darren were doing something for the looming election. G, unfortunately had formal duties that kept him away. And the ones at the periphery of the pack, like Eve, Lestrade and Hudson were taking their own time.

Selene and Keading were next to arrive. Followed by Mycroft and Tanner. Falkirk and Mycroft were still talking out the front of the house when a racing green Jaguar came down the drive.

Falkirk looked to Mycroft, "Where did Sherlock get a Jag?"

"That one is beyond me," Mycroft drawled in his typical snide voice.

"I hope he didn't steal it," Falkirk mused.

When John pulled to a stop both Falkirk and Mycroft inspected the car. "It's not stolen" Sherlock snapped and got Rosie out her special car seat. Sherlock flounced passed his two critical brothers, Rosie giving a deep laugh loving Sherlock's theatrics.

"I'll get the bags will I," John shot after the Alpha's retreating back.

"Yes, you do that," Sherlock called with a dismissive flourish of a hand, making Rosie giggle. Mycroft followed his brother, when a safe distance had elapsed between himself and the child.

Falkirk helped the Beta with his baggage. Stepping through the front door of the house, the pair were met with bedlam. James, Daniel and Kincade's voice floated from the kitchen door. Alec, Sherlock, Selene were in an argument, their voices coming from the lounge to the left. With Mycroft and Shane's voice coming from the study. Everything was interspersed with shrieks from various children and an occasional a child themself running from one room to another.

Taking John up stairs Falkirk led him to the last remaining room. Going in, Falkirk put down the bag he carried on the double bed. John looked around, taking in the one bed and travel cot in the corner.

“One Room? One bed? We're not gay!”

Falkirk looked at the man, a bit more grey then blond in his hair and a dopey please smile graced the beta's face. “Now, don't start that again. Please.”

John just smiled, before his face went neutral again. He looked down at the empty cot, and played with the edge. “I've been thinking about something... Don't know if it's a good idea or not. Sherlock still has his daemons.”

Falkirk reached out and laid his hand over John's. Looking into the slight sagging blue eyes, “Important decisions shouldn't be made lightly. Why not wait until the summer, and see if you still feel the same.”

John's expression shifted, a frown and then anger. “I don't bloody believe it! All of you are the exact same! What is it? A bet!”
Falkirk nodded, “Mycroft said you would 'formalise' your relationship before Christmas. Me, I said some time after. Shane said later next year.”

“Sherlock?”

Falkirk scoffed. “Sherlock's like everyone else. When he's in the centre of events, he can't see them.”

“You're all a bunch of Twats! Really!” John said and stormed off. Still grumbling as he went.

--

The dining room was used and full for the first time since the Bond family had arrived. Daniel tried to get more stories out of Kincade of James' youth. After James had plied Mary with sherry and shortbread to get similar stories out of her, Daniel was taking his opportunity for revenge.

After dinner Falkirk ordered Mycroft, Sherlock and Shane to wash up as the only ones who hadn't helped during the cooking of the meal.

In the lounge everyone was winding down. Falkirk claimed the far corner of the room and instructed Rupert and Andrew to bring down the nesting supplies. The press of Alphas in such a confined area was grating on Falkirk's nerves. Michelle, the youngest omega was getting quite distressed, and so was her father, Keading. Even though he wouldn't admit it Andrew was getting over stressed as well.

Placing the toddler in the middle of the blanket Falkirk, Keading and Andrew built up the nest. In the end Cody took up the middle, young alphas not so much of a problem because their pheromone production hadn't developed yet. Michelle climbing over Falkirk to lie on top of Rupert who had become her favourite Alpha beyond her mother and brother.

"Do you two want to join us?" Falkirk asked looking to Yulian and David.

Yulian didn't need any further encouragement and came to nuzzle on Keading's far side. David not used to the nesting or piling shook his head. He continued to watch the interaction within the open nest curiously though.

Later in the evening. Daniel did an old fashioned Supper, making a big pot tea, and bread toasted by the log fire which was served with real butter. Then came bed time, the kids being sent off first.

Rupert and Andrew washed and changed in their parents room. "Why can't I sleep here?" Andrew demanded of his papa.

"Because Daddy and I need alone time," Falkirk responded as he dried Andrew's hair.

"But..."

"But nothing. When you have an Alpha you will understand," Falkirk responded. Andrew grumbled his annoyance. Calling his Papa, "Mean!" as he stomped out.

When the Adults started to head upstairs themselves, the whispering Falkirk thought he herd ended as soon as he opened the door to the room the kids were in. It was too dark to see, but Cody, David and Rupert were about the floor in sleeping bags. Yulian and Andrew shared the bed.
"Good night boys!" Falkirk said in severe tones to warn them on the noise they were making.

"Mother knows best," James purred coming up behind his mate startling him. Taking Falkirk's hand James pulled him to their room and closing the door behind them.

A satisfactory mounting and in the post orgasmic knotting Falkirk listened to the rising noise. His temper rising in line with the noise from the room next to them. "I'm going to kill them. I really am!"

"Not for another ten minutes," James laughed and kissed his omega's neck. Really amused watching the omega fighting with himself to stay mad and not get lost in the sensations James was invoking.

When he was able to pull away from the Alpha Falkirk put on his pyjamas and went to the room the kids were sharing. He found Keading was already there, with Alec. Between the three of them, they got the rabble calmed. The three waited for some time on the landing, to make sure everyone was asleep.

Returning to his room Falkirk climbed in beside his Alpha nuzzling him. Letting the calm pheromones of the Alpha relax him. They got about half an hour before the noise from the kids room started to build again.

"Stay!" James instructed, getting out of bed himself this time. The Alpha returned, prodding Rupert ahead of him while James had Andrew thrown over his shoulder.

"Alec took Yulian, and David has taken his sleeping bag down stairs," James informed. With Rupert and Andrew between James and Falkirk, David down stairs leaving only and Cody in the room, there was peace.

"Papa?" Andrew called through the darkness. Getting a moan of acknowledgement in return Andrew continued. "Are you going to give me in to trouble if I say uncle Keading smells funny?"

Pulling himself back to awareness. Falkirk focused his sleepy brain to ask, "Funny?"

"Like, like... like you when you and daddy have your special time!"

Falkirk could hear the deep rumble of James' chuckle. The bastard teased, "Well Papa, What dose it mean when an Omega can scent a lingering heat?"

Ignoring his mate Falkirk told his son, "Let me speak with Uncle Keading tomorrow and if I say so take him aside and tell him."

"Why?" Andrew demanded.

"Yes Papa, Why?" James said stirring the matter.

"Daddy will tell you," Falkirk shot and put his head back down.

Falkirk could hear the question and responses from the far side of the bed. Pulling Rupert close Falkirk inhaled the different but familiar scent of the young Alpha. Rupert's body had gone lax almost immediately and not even the conversation had woken him.
Taking Keading's arm Falkirk guided him out of the house. Walking along the drive Falkirk felt the tension in the other Omega. Michelle had followed and now toddled several paces in front. Free of the oppressive scents of the multiple Alphas, Falkirk could finally smell the more subtle omega that was Keading. Taking a subtle scenting Falkirk still couldn't make out the fertile scent indicating pregnancy.

"Is this about what Hudson saw?" Keading asked, head down and submissive.

"No, I just wanted some time away from the mad house," Falkirk informed. Taking in Keading's submissive pose and the slight scent of fear Falkirk asked, "Is something wrong?"

Shaking his head. "I promised I wouldn't speak to you about it," Keading mumbled.

"Selene asked you?" Falkirk asked getting concerned and thinking only the omega's alpha could exert the pressure.

Shaking his head again, Keading's soft straight hair fanned a bit. "It's the refuge. Please don't,"

Falkirk interrupted Keading, "You don't have to face things alone. You have an entire pack behind you. One that will always be here for you." Falkirk waved at the house behind them, and the myriad of people it currently contained.

By now they had come to the end of the drive and sat on the low dry stone wall. Falkirk looked from the Bond Family crest on the gate post to the house in the distance. Keading still had his head down with his neck bared to Falkirk in submission.

"What if I did something wrong?" Keading said very quietly.

"Like being a sleeper agent, or belonging to an organisation that tried to kidnap my son?" Falkirk returned softly. Just a few of the points, to the people in this pack.

Putting an arm round Keading and resting his head on the other Omega's shoulder. "Are you in trouble?" Falkirk asked and again got a shake of the head and an adamant 'No' in response.

"You are part of one of the strongest packs in the country. You literally mingle with Kings and terrorist, lords and nobles, Police and thieves, assassins and doctors...." Falkirk stopped when he noticed Keading wasn't being reassured.

Changing tact, to something more personal, Falkirk said, "You have Selene. An Alpha, that my Alpha trusted with my care. A bodyguard, unparalleled. A Double, that got the job done no matter what."

A slight shrug from the other omega jarred Falkirk. Lifting his head off Keading's shoulder so he could look into the eye of the other Omega. Keading kept his head down avoiding Falkirk's gaze.

"You doubt Selene?" Falkirk asked.

"No, I know who she would choose," came the barely audible response.
"So do I. She would put a bullet in my brain without a second thought if I threatened you," Falkirk stated. Keading looked at him so quickly the black hair whipped like a shampoo advert. Deep in the soft brown eyes there was a light of hope.

Falkirk said, "In my Permanent Record there is a line, 'Loyal only to his Alpha'. There is a line in Selene's, less succinct, but it warns that for her Omega she would burn everything. As a young girl a man saved her, adopted her, became a father to her. For his part in the murder of Michael, she slit his throat."

There was a tear in Keading's eye which he wiped away. Falkirk's statement must have been enough. Keading took a deep breath and looking into the distance as he said, "Your files, the ones above the garage. I looked through them for, something. Took some, I thought Hudson saw me."

"Those files were from Urquhart. Most of the people in them have retire, died or moved on. As for Hudson I trust his discretion, it saved me from my Father's wrath many times" Falkirk said neutrally.

"You're not angry?"

Shaking his head and resting it back on Keading's shoulder. "No, not angry. As your friend, I would like to know what you were looking for and why but I will trust in your judgement. Can you tell me if you found what you were looking for?"

"Yes and No, I didn't find anything," Keading responded. Falkirk would bet he had just been lied to, the other omega wasn't good at it.

"Why do you keep scenting me?" Keading asked, his fear lessening after telling Falkirk what he had done. Falkirk was saved from answering by Michelle.

"Look!" The girl held out her little hand and what was on it. Falkirk felt the shudder go right through the other omega's body before Keading gave the typical parental response, "Oh look it's a..." Keading gulped with his eyes locked on his daughter's hand, "A, slug."

"fo' 'upert!" came the young omega's deceleration. His little face had a wide smile and her dark blue eyes so big and wondrous.

Coming away from Keading, the omega willing to let Falkirk deal with the situation. Crouching down in front of her Falkirk said, "Rupert isn't like Cody. I don't think he likes bugs." getting welling eyes and a petted lip in response.

"Perhaps something prettier," Falkirk said and pointed to a bunch of purple heather growing not far off. He went over to the clump, hearing a squeal behind him and catching a glimpse of Keading jumping out the way of the slug his daughter had casually tossed over her shoulder.

Arriving back at the house and just before they entered. Falkirk said to Keading, "I think Andrew wants to speak with you."

Keading headed for the noise up stairs while Falkirk followed Michelle to the study. Inside was Mycroft reading, with John and Shane talking, also looking for calm in the storm was Rupert. Michelle trotted up to him and presented the heather.

Falkirk and the other Adults watched as Rupert accepted the gift. Thanking her Rupert leaned
down to give a nuzzle. Rupert pulled back turning bright red with the scrutiny of the adults.

"I can show you how to press those," Mycroft offered.

"I always knew you were a romantic, Mycie," Shane teased.

"Please don't call me that."

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In the lounge Alec and Selene were sitting quietly. Michelle went up to her mum while Falkirk flopped down on the remnants of the nest and began shoring it up, arranging cushions and blankets to make it comfortable. Selene looked over to him and asked, "Could you have a word with Keading? I think something's up. He's been quiet for the passed week or so."

"We had a talk," Falkirk informed. Adding, "I can't do the whole Sherlock thing but I'm guessing he heard something at the refuge about a politician. He was looking up Urquhart's old files and Hudson saw him."

"Oh," the woman said. "Is he in danger."

"From a politician, no," Falkirk said making himself comfortable and curling round a pillow that smelled of Rupert. "They get me now... although... they are pretty stupid.... it's the ego." Falkirk squirming and relaxed into the soft blanket at his back.

"Keading?" Selene called as the Omega in question appeared at the door, looking ashen white.

"Am I?" Keading hissed while looking to Falkirk wedged into the corner and surrounded by cushions.

"It's faint and it was Andrew who noticed," Falkirk muttered.

Looking to his Alpha who was waiting with baited breath, while Alec looking confused. Keading said, "I might be pregnant."

The Omega was swept into a hug by his Alpha. Falkirk could see the protective streak in her already rearing its head when Alec stood to offer his congratulations. She nearly snarled at him. For the rest of the night Keading could barely move for the possessive arm around his waist.

Sherlock deduced the reason for the change in behaviour almost instantly and announced it to the entire table at dinner. Cody, not one for change especially when said so bluntly, reacted badly to the sudden revelation and ran right out of the house.

In moments like this, Falkirk stepped up to be the Pack Alpha. With little more than a glare, Falkirk had Sherlock trudging out into the dark after their little bother.

Andrew and Rupert had been sent to Falkirk and James' room. Michelle had been placed in the travel crib in Keading and Selene's. Most of the adults had gone to bed too, David having taken his sleeping bag and slept in the room with Shane. Only the core pack remained up. Falkirk and Keading in the nest while Selene and James sat in the closest chairs. Daniel slouched in the big chair, gazing into the flame of the wood fire, entranced. An almost forgotten glass of whiskey sitting on his chest, raising and lowering with each chest. Alec and John were playing a game of
chess.

The front door burst open and a short figure streaked past the lounge and up the stairs. Telling Keading to wait, Selene went up to talk to Cody herself. Falkirk pressed himself to the omega, offering physical comfort.

A disgruntled but more sedately paced Sherlock arrived not long after Cody. Looking like he had been dragged through a hedge backwards, Sherlock's hair was matted and with twigs in it, his trousers up to his knees were dark with damp, and sticky willies covered his dark clothing like green glitter.

"You are not dragging that muck through the house!" Falkirk ordered his brother. Alec added something about a prepubescent Alpha running rings round the great detective. Sherlock issued a vicious growl in response and grumbled something about a shower.

Cody and Selene returned not long after and as soon as they appeared at the door Cody ran to his 'Mom'. Squeezing between Falkirk and Keading Cody lay a hand on his Mom's flat stomach.

"We're not sure but you could have another Sister or Brother," Keading said softly hugging his son and stroking his long dark hair.

Through the gentle coaxing of the two Omegas. The first thing Cody admitted to was not liking the change. The young Alpha's stance was well known and expected. When Cody mentioned Rupert a new concern was raised. Selene came over to the nest and slipped in behind her mate. Reaching across she started to stroke Cody's hair.

"I love you," Selene said to her step son. "Even though you challenge me at every opportunity and remind me too much of your brother, the insufferable know it all one."

"That hasn't narrowed the list down, it's still 5," Cody shot with a weak smile.

Falkirk frowned and counted off, Shane, Mycroft, Sherlock, Himself, and Cody. Realising he was being insulted, he looked to Cody, "Hay!"

"You do have the best sense of humour though," Selene added, leaning over her omega to kiss the boy's forehead. "I'm your mum, no changing that ever."
The sound of gun fire coming from outside had destroyed Falkirk and Mycroft's concentration. Coming out of the study they heard a brewing argument coming from the kitchen. Shane was attempting to shut Sherlock up as a grizzled growl emanating from the old game keeper.

Inside the kitchen Shane was physically restraining Kincade while Sherlock did his typical rush of words proving a deduction.

"You quite clearly have first hand experience of Austria. Your ability to hide the fact is rather pathetic," Sherlock continued in his condescending tone.

Kincade issued another furious growl as Shane growled, "Sherlock! Stop it!

"Always blundering about in ignorance," Falkirk said in a tone so cold and hard it still took all his brothers by surprise when he used it. "You have not unmasked some great mystery, Sherlock. You are digging up matters that were buried an age ago and making a fool of yourself in doing so. I really don't know why you can't see it, Sherlock. Are you so stupid that you must always point out when someone's hiding something, that everyone knows about anyway!"

Sherlock scoffed, “He's clearly scared of the secret...”

“Oh, dear Sherlock, how silly,” Falkirk said in contempt, “Let me talk about the murder of a murderer at a college, hospital, I can't quiet remember now. A murder that happened right in front of you, Sherlock. Now you weren't in danger were you? So there is no defence of preservation of life. And the perpetrator used a semi-automatic pistol, an illegal weapon in the UK. Which he brought with him, now that indicates premeditation Sherlock. Do you want me to continue talking Sherlock?”

Falkirk wanted Sherlock to drop the matter and the only way was to make him think he was humiliating himself rather than being smart. It worked, Sherlock stormed off shouldering Mycroft as he passed.

"Could you get John, quietly," Falkirk asked Mycroft.

"I think that would be for the best," Mycroft responded and went to get the doctor. Calling over his shoulder, “So good, to not to be in the firing line myself for once.”

Coming up to Kincade Falkirk took his arm as Shane let him go. He said to the old alpha, "Please... actually I'm not going to apologise for him. Sherlock is a twat who likes to push people's buttons."
Falkirk walked them out of the house. In the far distance the large group were clay pigeon shooting.

"You know?" Kincade asked. Seeing James in the distance, wearing a dark green jacket and flat cap.

Falkirk shook his head "I suspect. Everyone who has read James' history, including M," Falkirk indicated the chapel in the distance for emphasis before continuing. "They all believe James killed Hannes Oberhauser. I was the one who told James and saw the look he had when he found out. James did not know Oberhauser had disappeared. I checked the dates, a week after James left Skyfall Oberhauser disappeared."

"Okay I get it," Kincade said gruffly in a quiet bark.

"Did he ever tell you what happened?" Kincade asked losing the harshness in his voice. Shaking his head Falkirk asked the same question of Kincade who shook his head in answer as well. "Whatever the bastard did, he deserved to die for the state James came back in."

Even after all the years the hatred and anger still tainted the old man.

"All I know is the same as M and the rest. All the rumour and covered up accusations surrounding Oberhauser." Falkirk said then leaned across to give a lick to the old Alpha's neck.

"Gerr' off ya soppy sod," Kincade grumbled, batting Falkirk away from the old gesture of gratitude or remorse.

Pulling back from the older man's neck, Falkirk said, "If Sherlock is still causing trouble feel free to punch him. Most people have at some point." The old Alpha chuckled as they walked off

"You really are the Pack Alpha?" Kincade asked changing the topic. James' history being left in the past.

"Beneath this frail whip like exterior, beats a will forged by some of the most formidable Alphas the country has to offer." Falkirk said holding a fist in the air for emphasis.

"I believe it," Kincade responded with a chuckle.

Seeing Selene's black Jaguar returning Falkirk headed back towards the house while Kincade headed for the clay pigeon shoot. Keading ran into the house ahead of Selene. Suddenly a young alpha ran right passed Falkirk, Cody having broken from the shooting group to join his Mom. Inside Falkirk found Cody fidgeting in the hall outside the bathroom with Selene in little better state. Their nervousness tainting the air of the upper landing.

Leaning on the wall beside Selene an arm came round Falkirk and he opened his own arms for Cody. With his calm presence the two Alphas were better able control themselves. Three minutes became six, then nine, and on the tenth the door burst open.

"Yes, No, Yes" came Keading's exasperated voice as he held up three sticks.

Falkirk thought it wise not to mention, perhaps Keading should have waited between tests. Stepping forward Falkirk took a scenting, thinking the fertile scent was a still lingering.
"I think yes," Falkirk responded.

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The lingering doubt over Keading's pregnancy was starting to grate on him. The children with the exception of toddlers were going hunting. Mycroft, Tanner, Sherlock and Shane were staying with Falkirk and Keading.

The three Omegas had congregated on the nest in the lounge. Michelle happily squirming between her daddy and uncle, bathing in the scent of the two other Omegas. Mycroft and Tanner were in the room. Falkirk's subordinate still looked a bit uncomfortable in the pack setting.

Falkirk said to the beta, "I bet you didn't think you would be standing guard over my nest when I first Joined MI6?"

"No, M. Never."

Hours passed and with Omegas in the majority for the first time the air began to change. As Falkirk and Keading sank deeper into the mutual reassuring gestures they began to produce pheromones. Mycroft was becoming quite relaxed with them and when he spoke it was with a sleepy slur. Tanner as a beta, for his part was far less affected by the pheromones and was enjoying seeing his usually highly self controlled partner getting high.

"They're back," Tanner informed as he gazed out of the window. Sitting up Falkirk could just see the party coming down the grass path.

Getting up Falkirk had to dislodge Michelle who moaned her annoyance. Grabbing his phone Falkirk came out the front door. Kincade sped passed on a quad bike with a dear and few other things in the bouncing trailer. Approaching the hunting party Falkirk could see a sudden spate of conversation passing between the members of the group. Daniel shrugged at whatever was being said while James squared his shoulders and gathered his courage.

As Falkirk got closer one of his suspicions had been confirmed. The dark patches on the face of each child, wasn't dirt, it was blood. By now Shane and Keading had caught up to him. Selene looked even more sheepish in the presence of her own mate.

Falkirk looked to Andrew and the smear of blood on his right cheek then to the smear on Rupert's jaw. Taking in the rest. James looked a little concerned with the old tradition now with Falkirk standing in front of them all. Each had made a kill and were now marked as such. David, Yulian, Andrew and Cody wore expressions of open pride while Rupert looked uncertain.

"Barbarians the lot of you," Falkirk said letting a smile spread over his face. James and Rupert relaxed at the lack of hostility. "Well I suppose we shout record this moment for posterity."

Falkirk pulled out his phone and arranged the group. James stood behind Rupert and Andrew, a hand on each of their shoulders as they held a rifle. Daniel crouched down beside Yulian with Alec behind. Selene stood behind Cody, while John and David stood shoulder to shoulder. With the group to his liking Falkirk took the picture.

"Well what have the hunters brought back to their pack?" Falkirk asked.

"I got a stag!" Andrew declared first.
"The biggest prize, I'm not surprised," Falkirk said patting Andrew on the head. As they walked back Falkirk put an arm around Rupert.

"I got a rabbit," the quiet little alpha informed.

"Rabbit's lovely done with white wine, carrots and cream," Falkirk mused remembering the only time he had tried it.

"No. Nothing better than 'granny's' rabbit broth," Daniel spoke up.

"I got a Pheasant!" Yulian declared.

"No you didn't! Remember!" Daniel said to his son.

"Oh yes, I didn't get a Pheasant and neither did David," Yulian said shaking his head adamantly. All the adults looked overly innocent in the face of their poaching.

There were protests as instructions were given to go wash up. At length the events were repeated until bed time. In bed Andrew in particular went on about the hunt. When Andrew took a breath, it gave Falkirk time to say to James, "Well you finally got an Omega to go traipsing round the country side shooting things."

"Yes, I did," James said, also remembering a conversation they had a long time ago. As Andrew was about to say something James nuzzled the little omega to quieten him down.

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The next day wasn't quite as enjoyable for the kids but was needed just as much. They all entered the kitchen, slightly ashen faced and queasy. James, Daniel and Kincade followed.

"You wanted the livers," Daniel said placing the organs in front of Mycroft.

"Wonderful!" Mycroft said looking at the meat.

Daniel placing a rich and dark loin of venison on the chopping block, "A thing of beauty."

Daniel and Mycroft had come together. They planed a feast for the pack. Pheasant, roosted and poached. Rabbit stewed the way Falkirk liked with wine, cream and carrots. The planned centrepiece would be a Venison Wellington. It had all been planed by the two Alphas and would be made from scratch.

It would be the final meal in the house, so there were a few days to go. Daniel moved to the kitchen table as they discussed what was needed with Mycroft. They were planning on a shopping trip for the supplies they would need. Given Skyfall's location it would be several hours for the round trip.

Out the window Falkirk saw Sherlock wandering about. Deciding to go speak with his brother Falkirk excused himself from the table. Since the the argument with Kincade, the detective had been more quiet then usual.

As Falkirk approached his brother there was a wisp of smoke coming from him. Even more telling was the apple of Sherlock's eye, Rosie was not to be seen. Coming up and taking the Alpha's arm
Falkirk rested his head on his brother's shoulder.

"If you hate it here so much. I won't force you to stay," Falkirk said.

"I don't hate it. I, I'm not the smartest, the cleverest, the most observant. I, I..." Sherlock trailed off as he broke away from his brother to pace in circles.

Falkirk's words haunted him. He needed Sherlock to drop the subject with Kincade and he had done more damage to his brother's ego than intended. 'My Double Os must have thicker hides,' Falkirk thought.

"Sometimes you are just too smart," Falkirk admitted.

"Too smart!" Sherlock sneered and Falkirk nodded.

"I know John shot that taxi driver," Falkirk said and Sherlock turned to his brother so sharply. It was a secret the detective maintained at all costs. "Kincade killed someone without James knowing. I wanted you to drop the matter."

"I deduced that." Sherlock interrupted, confusing Falkirk. "I, I'm not unique here! With, them," Sherlock indicating the house. "I look around at who is the normal and I'm normal here. I'm normal!"

The Alpha's shoulders slumped, and he looked down. He whispered, "I am normal."

Falkirk suppressed his chuckle at his brother's exasperation with his problem.

"I can assure you Sherlock, even in this group you are not normal. Your differences are just a little less obvious within the pack but you can still ferret the most inconvenient of facts," Falkirk said. The slight ego stroking did the job in lifting Sherlock's mood.

Coming up to his brother and nuzzling under his chin. "It can be a right pain in the arse how you spot things," Falkirk grumbled.

"It was simple," Sherlock said with pride then launched into a litany of observations to support his deductions of a few days ago in which he and Shane were talking about Austria and from simple observation saw Kincade was hiding something. Falkirk listened, playing audience for his brother.

When Sherlock was back to his old self. Slightly hyper and a bit annoying they headed back to the house. Falkirk asked, "James, John and a few of the others are going to the pub are you going?"

Falkirk got a shrug, and noticed Daniel's car had gone taking himself and Mycroft on the shopping trip. Reaching the door, a big group spilled out. John catching Sherlock's arm and pulling him on. James called a bye as they started traipsing across the country side towards the nearest village.

Falkirk and Keading cooked that evening while Selene and Shane watched the children. The old landline phone started ringing from the foyer. Going through Falkirk lifted the receiver.

Boisterous music and a barely understandable conversation later Falkirk picked up the keys and went through to the lounge. the others in a game of cards. "They're six sheets to the wind and in need of a lift." Falkirk said to Selene.
"Can I go?" Andrew asked lifting his head from the study of his cards. Nodding Falkirk headed out to the car.

"Isn't Aunt Selene coming?" Andrew asked, following his papa and a bit confused.

"No," Falkirk responded opening the Grey Landrover.

Andrew looked unsure of the prospect and said, "Can you drive?"

"Yes I can drive," Falkirk responded getting in and adjusting the seat. Andrew piled in, fastening his seatbelt and watching intently from the back as his Papa drove for the fist time.

Arriving in the village Falkirk pulled to a stop outside Kincade's cottage where the group had congregated after putting the old Alpha to bed. Andrew was bouncing with the adrenalin of the journey and James wilted at the sight of who was driving.

"Oh bugger, I meant Selene," James groaned and got in the front fastening his belt as well.

"Are you insulting my brother'sh driving?" Sherlock slurred as he got in the back.

"Let's see what the great Double O Seven fears," Alec added.

With great speed Falkirk swung the car around. "Christ!" James swore clinging to the handle.

"Whee" came Andrews voice from the back seat throwing his hands up on the air.

"Bend, BEND, BRAKE!" James called and winced in anticipation.

As the 4x4 took the corner, "It's fine!" Falkirk insisted. The road dipped and the car became lighter then bounced, Sherlock and Alec swore as they bounced off the roof. Andrew issued another "Whee!"

Arriving back, Tanner and John tumbled out of the back door falling to the ground. Alec and Sherlock weren't in better shape coming out of the rear seats. Only Andrew seemed to have enjoyed the ride. Taking the key from Falkirk James ordered, "You are banned from driving!"

"I am..." James cut of his mate by wrapping Falkirk in his arms.

"There are a great many things you are great at, driving is not one of them," James mumbled into the silver highlighted hair. Falkirk swaying slightly with the inebriated man.

"My doctor recommends a drink to steady our nerves," Tanner announced. The Doctor called, "Yes I do!"

"I bruni panni ond'era involta. All'opra! all'opra! Dagli, martella!"

Drawn by Daniel's singing, Falkirk entered the kitchen in time to see Mycroft tense. In time to the words 'Danno di piglio ai ferri del mestiere. Chi del gitano i giorni abbella? La zingarella!' Daniel started hammering something. With two final whacks Daniel fell almost silent, continuing to hum the tune of the Anvil chorus.
"Need a hand?" Falkirk asked.

"No!" both Alphas barked.

Falkirk continued to watch the two Alphas cook. Daniel looked like an old fashioned butcher. An apron tied high on his torso and sleeves rolled as high as they would go. Mycroft looked as pristine as ever. A full apron going over his neck and cuffs folded neatly to his elbows.

"Perhaps something more sedate," Mycroft requested as he worked at the stove.

"Lardon'e Mobile," Daniel started to sing before Mycroft interrupted "Even more sedate and, it's la donna e mobile."

"Any suggestions?" Daniel shot coming to the stove with the loin of Venison. As Daniel sealed the meat Mycroft sneered, "Queen of the night Aria?"

"Bugger off! Ah Bugger off," Daniel said and started singing the folk pub song.

Falkirk deciding he wasn't needed and went to find Keading. The other Omega had become broody and liked the nest in the lounge. Climbing in Falkirk settled beside Keading and Michelle. Any doubt over his pregnancy was fading for Falkirk, it was a permanent que for the other omega's scent.

"It's quiet with everyone nursing their hang overs," Falkirk mused. The only thing that broke the atmosphere was the occasional shout from Daniel or Mycroft as someone tried to enter the kitchen.

Slowly over the course of the day the rest of the pack appeared. At the appropriate time food was placed in the dining room, still with no one allowed in the kitchen. After Lunch Falkirk bundled some food together. Dressing warmly, he and a still suffering James trekked over the moors to Kincade's cottage.

Despite the age of the Alpha he seemed in a better shape than James. Kincade thanked Falkirk for the food and offered James 'The hair of the dog'. Accepting to dram James did seem to perk up afterwards.

"We're being treated to a feast tomorrow, will you join us?" Falkirk asked the old Alpha.

"Aye, that'll be mighty welcome," Kincade responded.

Only paying a short visit James and Falkirk soon started the return journey to Skyfall. Taking James' arm Falkirk leaned against the Alpha as they walked back. With the disaster of the children sharing a room ending up with Rupert and Andrew sharing their bed it was chance for the two to be alone. The feeling was obviously mutual as James took them on a scenic route back.

"You've been quiet," Falkirk said now the two could talk.

James somehow became even more quiet. Falkirk asked, “Was I wrong to invite everyone?”

James shook his head. “I kind of like it actually,” James admitted, while hugging his mate tight. “Skyfall was always cold, and quiet. Like a tomb. Not now. It's warm, and loud... it feels like a home.”
“Because it is,” Falkirk kissed his mate's cheek. He saw how James just gazed at the distant house, with a wishful smile tugging the alpha's lips. He just leaned into the alpha and they held each other, there on on the long grassy hill.

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The next day Falkirk found Rupert and Mycroft in the study. The array of laptops had been pushed to the side so both could lean over the desk. Mycroft was again in his apron as he showed something to Rupert.

"What are you doing?" Falkirk asked. Mycroft looked a little uncomfortable and Rupert spoke.

"Mycroft is showing me how to press the heather Michelle gave me," Rupert informed. A vague memory rose in Falkirk, involving his Father and Mycroft's artistic endeavours. Looking to Mycroft who still held himself stiffly with an unusual scent, verging on distress.

"Very good," Falkirk said and walked off to find the nest. As usual Keading was already there with Michelle, and joined by Andrew and Cody. Slipping in beside Andrew Falkirk continued to think over Mycroft's behaviour.

Falkirk hated remembering his time in his Father's house. There were bright points but there had been a constant aura of oppression and subjugation. Even as he hacked impenetrable systems for his father there was never approval or pride from the little round man.

At the time he couldn't see the strain Mycroft or Sherlock were under but now, looking back Falkirk could recognise it. How Mycroft could never live up to his expectations and how Sherlock refused to.

It dawned on Falkirk, Mycroft had entered into his relationship with Tanner only after the death of their parents. While not as taboo as two male Alphas there was still a stigma to an Alpha and Beta male entering a relationship even today. A memory surfaced of Mycroft being rebuked, for him perusing 'effeminate' pass times.

"Is something wrong?" James asked and Falkirk noticed the alpha wasn't the only person looking at him.

"Fine just remembering my parents," Falkirk answered. A soft growl came from the corner where Sherrinford was sitting and Sherlock let out a snort.

"What were they like?" Andrew asked with Cody and even David supporting him. After snide descriptions of, 'Napoleon', 'Harpy', 'witch', 'bastard' and a few more including Keading muttering 'Small' under his breath, and Falkirk not thinking he was talking about Siger Holmes' height. Holding his laughter at Keading's Double entendre Falkirk called an end to the name calling.

"They weren't that nice. They had great ambitions for themselves and their children, and weren't too concerned about happiness," Falkirk said softly, to his confused son. There was a few under the breath comments from Shane, Sherlock and James.

James said to his son, "The first time I met grandmother, she tried to separate me from your Papa."

"They never loved each other. Remember the gardener who killed the roses his first day and
Hudson tried to fire him," Shane added with Sherlock responding "Daddy found out him and
Mummy, so he was fired anyway."

Shane mused, "I remember when Sherlock found the credit card statement Mummy was hiding,
with the hotel charges. You stole the card and when she found out you had been spending on it,
you blackmailed her."

Sherlock had a really confused look on his face. John asked, "Something missing from your mind
palace?"

"No!" Sherlock snapped petulantly. Still thinking.

Shane said to Sherlock, “What happened to that friend, I'm sure the credit card was her idea?”

Sherlock shrugged.

They continued to swap anecdotes of there past, for the sake of the children as anything else.
Keading like everyone else didn't have a good past but found a few bits to talk about, mainly
involving himself and his sister. Selene pulled up a memory of a farm with her parents and sisters.
Even James said something of his parents from when they lived in Germany, of a party he looked
down on. His mother, elegant as she and his father greeted their guests in their native German. He
also told of how Kincade had taught him to shoot.

"Bloody awful shot," a grizzled voice said, preceded the man.

Kincade sat by the fire joined in on the reminiscing. Despite Andrew's defence on his father's
prowess Kincade soon gave a few stories of James first learning to shot and hunt.

Mycroft appeared at the door to announce dinner was served. Everyone got up and moved to the
adjoining room.

"Bloody hell!" Alec said as he came through the door of the dinning room. Falkirk had to agree
with him as did everyone else.

Seeing Andrew with eyes bigger than his stomach, and getting vision of a sick boy. Falkirk
warned, "Eat what you want, not everything."

There were no courses just an array of food. Sweet puddings mingled with stews on the table. At
each end there was a Wellington of venison, the pastry of which was a deep golden colour. Soon
everyone was helping themselves to food and drink.

Daniel moved round filling the kids glasses. "Granny's recipe," he said as he filled glasses with a
dark thick liquid. All coughed on the first sip before declaring they liked the spicy sweet Ginger
Wine.

"Before we start I think we should salute the hunters," James said indicating Andrew and Rupert.

"The hunters!" everyone followed in raising their glass.

Falkirk like James looked to Rupert and Andrew, while Selene and Keading looked to Cody.
Shane Sherlock and Mycroft looked to David as did John who had chaperoned him on his fist hunt.
And of course Daniel and Alec looked to Yulian.
"Don't forget the cooks," Falkirk added looking to his brother then friend. As everyone saluted 'the cooks' James grumble "Him!" at Daniel.

From then they started. Much of what had been prepared had a strong flavour which the kids weren't used to. The Rabbit stew disappeared quickly as it was more mellow in flavour.

Keading tasted Venison for the first time, avoiding the pate. He then devoured every piece on the table he could get he hands on. "Cravings?" Shane teased and got a shrug in response.

It was a good meal with family and pack. Stories shared, good drink, good food and a warm atmosphere. Andrew held his own in the crowd where Falkirk and Keading became subdued against the boisterous Alphas. Falkirk had learned to suppress the instinct but in the safe environment he didn't feel he needed to assert himself when not needed to.

When the stories ended, games started. Just simple riddles and questions. Even Mycroft was able to unwind and gave an impression of some butcher from a weird comedy he liked. Shane did a good impression of The Doctor, and playing on his appearance Daniel did James Robertson-Justice with puffed out his cheeks to give some line, “I do not growl like bear, I roar like a LION!”

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Mycroft and Tanner were the first to leave the next day, then Shane and David. Falkirk saw them all off. Falkirk quietly thanked Mycroft for showing Rupert how to keep his heather. Mycroft giving a soft smile and insisting it was nothing. Before leaving Mycroft ensured Rupert knew what to do with the flowers.

With the time over Keading was anxious to get home. He wanted to confirm his pregnancy but there was no doubt in Falkirk or Andrew. Over the week the scent of a successful heat was persistent.

Daniel had a quiet word with James out of hearing distance from Falkirk. Not too concerned as these days their feud was more for show than actual disagreement. Falkirk stood with James and the boys watching Daniel's Bentley go down the drive and turn at the road.

Returning to the house for their last night it suddenly felt to empty. James must have felt the same as the shadow that had initially plagued him returned. Taking his Alpha's hand Falkirk guided him to the lounge and sat with him on the couch. Snuggling under the Alpha's chin Falkirk relaxed against him as an arm wrapped around him. Nuzzling James Falkirk gave a contented sigh until a loud thump and an argument started upstairs.

"Knew it was to quiet" Falkirk mused. Not bothering to get up he shouted, “YOU TWO KEEP IT DOWN! DON'T MAKE ME COME UP THERE!”

That night Falkirk and James had the bed to themselves and the Alpha loosed his pent up passion. Much to the Omega's delight.

When morning came the Aston Martin was packed up. Rupert taking special care of the phone book he was using to press the flowers. Both Falkirk and James did a final check around the house for anything left behind. Saying their farewells to Kincade who was going to oversee the clean up crew they got into the car.
At the end of the drive James pulled to a stop to look over the house and chapel. Falkirk placed his hand over the Alphas on the gear stick and gave him a smile.

"Can we come back?" Andrew asked from the back.

"Yes," James responded with certainty.
Back to Work

Chapter Notes

thanks to all readers.

Falkirk entered E branch to find Butler waiting in his office. The sombre mood of the staff a clear warning. As Falkirk took the seat behind his desk, Butler remained standing.

“There was nothing that could be done so I decided not to interrupt your holiday, M.” Butler stated.”Double O Three, William Fairbanks, was killed in the line of duty seven days ago.”

Falkirk accepting the report the alpha handed him. Nodding in acknowledgement, Falkirk dismissed the Deputy Director and started reading.

A knock sounded which Falkirk didn't notice and a girl came in without summons. A young and short Alpha, black, with a red highlight in her hair. She placed a cup of tea on an empty space and withdrew. Falkirk thanked her absently just before she closed the door.

The lingering scent of slightly nervous young alpha female, caught him and Falkirk looked through the glass wall of his office. The girl seemed familiar but he couldn't quite place her. Looking back to the mission report Falkirk continued reading.

There were things Falkirk needed to catch up on and prepare for but he felt he needed to know what happened to the Double O. The Alpha had not quite been the Double O he had been before. Not since Falkirk had to go to Hong Kong and drag Fairbanks back after his disastrous bonding to the omega who had been killed in front of him.

'DNA Identification: Confirmed as Fairbanks, William.'

Falkirk read, then read why only DNA was used. Rereading what had happened Falkirk became suspicious. Only the top knuckle of the middle finger had been recovered. '...severed as blast door closed.' Falkirk read. The tip of 003's finger had been cut off by a blast door as it closed, while the rest of him was supposedly obliterated by a blast. The coroner confirmed the fingertip was severed by crushing rather than cutting. Something just did not sit right with Falkirk.

Putting the file to the side Falkirk got down to his work. When Darren entered Falkirk asked, “Who's the new girl?”

“Viva, she and this right prat started a few days ago. He's worse than Mycroft, I'll tell you.” Darren informed then indicating someone, a young alpha who walked with his snooty nose in the air, “Brucey-boy Field. He really flips out when you call him that,” Darren added with malevolent glee.

“Thank you,” Falkirk responded.

When James entered his office, Falkirk realised most of his day had been spent of the file. He had returned to 003 when he thought of something.
“I heard about Double O Three,” James said taking a seat opposite Falkirk.

“I think he just handed in his resignation,” Falkirk informed.

“If you're sure,” James said carefully, getting a glare from M. “Okay, have you found him?”

“No yet!” Falkirk said.

“I'll leave you to your investigation, then,” James deciding it best to leave his mate when in his current mood.

It was an old technique but a very good one. Any enemies you had made wouldn't bother looking for a dead man. Falkirk found it, the proof he was looking for. An escape passport Falkirk himself had issued back when Quartermaster, and supposedly lost by the Double O had been used for the first time. It was recoded going through immigration in Miami then onto Jamaica.

Falkirk called for Tanner and he signing off on the memorial and did all the things he should do when an Operative dies.

“Tanner,” Falkirk called just at the beta stood. “Please liquidate all of Fairbanks' assets. Convert it to Diamonds, gold, high value denominations, in Euros, Sterling and Dollars.”

“M,” Tanner acknowledged and headed out.

Standing, Falkirk headed deep under ground. Q branch was a hive of activity like always. Direct command of Double O Seven still threw up some problems so James was the only Double O that didn't answer to him directly. So it was no surprise he found James and Daniel in the office of Q, going over the Double O's up coming mission.

The two men stood from the small conference table as Falkirk entered. The two alphas exchanging concerned glances. Falkirk said, wagging a finger between both alphas, “You're lucky I like you two or I would be offended. Double O Seven! You're playing delivery boy. Q, Double O Seven needs to go via Kingston Jamaica.”

They both acknowledged with Falkirk's title. Leaving the office Falkirk called over his shoulder, “Don't doubt 'Mother' he knows best!”

The two alphas chuckled at the old nickname for Falkirk, from when the Double Os ran to him when M said no.

Reaching the transition level, between the main building and bunker below. Falkirk headed for the lobby instead of returning to his office.

He was conflicted about putting a living person's name on a memorial wall, again. In a way he could also think of it as Bill Fairbanks was dead now, and a new and different person was walking around. One who hadn't attacked North Korea, or sabotaged Russian's cyber warfare efforts, and many others that might like to make Bill Fairbanks dead for real.

Emerging from the corridor, Falkirk saw a short girl standing at the wall at the rear of the lobby. Viva was using her finger, scanning up and down the wall. Looking at the names. 'Looking for a
name,' Falkirk deduced from her actions.

“Robinson, your name is Robinson,” Falkirk said coming up to her. Startled, Viva stood straight and spun to look at Falkirk. “I thought you were familiar.”

“Yes, my Dad....” Viva trailed off looking at the wall. She was dressed for home, a heavy jacket to confront the autumn rain of London in.

“Robinson, before my time but a good man. A Credit to MI6,” Falkirk said as he moved along the wall.

“You said that before, when....” Viva trailed off.

Falkirk gave a sad smile and nod, also remembering the day he and Mycroft had told Viva, her Step Mother, brother and sister of Charles Robinson's death at the hands of Moran.

“You're too early, that's the seventies. Here!” Falkirk said touching 'Charles Robinson'.

“You didn't even look, how did you know?”

“Oh, I always know the ones I lose,” Falkirk informed.

Seeing Viva wanted more Falkirk placed his fingers over a name. “Bill, he hated 'William', Bill Timothy was the first person I knew, who was killed. Tigress was the first person under my command, she was investigating a hacker. She was shipped back in pieces along with, Ian Ryder,” Falkirk touched each name as he said it. “Hunter, Helmsley, Dark, Papava. This is far from a safe place to work.”

“Although,” Falkirk mused before clamping down on what he was about to say. The acrid fear of the young Alpha calling for him to give some sort of comfort, but he couldn't mention Fairbanks.

“Heading home?” Falkirk asked changing the subject.

“My boyfriend is coming to meet me,” Viva answered with a bit of embarrassment.

It was Falkirk's little exercised mischievous side that made him take the young Alpha's arm. “Allow me to walk you out.”

“Is this, should you be going out alone?” Viva stuttered with concern and stress in her scent.

“I doubt someone will assassinate me on the steps of MI6. Besides I have a big brave Alpha to protect me,” Falkirk said in that proud maternal voice he had learned from his predecessor.

Viva gave a shaky nod at the prospect of going outside with the head of MI6. She said, “You should know, Rocky he's lovely but....” Viva trailed off seeing the Omega in question approaching.

Falkirk looked in the direction to see a rather attractive male approaching. Blond, with a hint of red in his hair and broad grin was all Falkirk could make out from the distance. Viva admitted, “He said, he's allergic to ink because he got a headache in class.”

“Ay'a Veev!” the Omega cried cheerfully, coming up to them and presenting his potential Alpha with a bunch of flowers.
“Thanks,” Viva said taking the supermarket roses. “Rocky this is my Boss, M. M, my boyfriend Rocky.”

“Ay'a Em! That's a strange name?” Rocky said with a broad grin and extended his hand to Falkirk, eyes full of excitement.

“Hello,” Falkirk said returning the hand shake before continuing, “M is a title. My Name is Sir Thomas McLair.”

“Cool! Like a real knight? Do you live in a castle?” Rocky asked and Falkirk could feel Viva cringe in embarrassment. Falkirk answered, “Sort of. My Alpha has a very small one in Scotland. But my friend Daniel has one of those castles from the movies, big high walls, the sea around it and everything!”

“Wicked!”

“It has been nice meeting you, Rocky.” Falkirk said sincerely.

“You to, your Sirship,” Rocky responded and Viva took the omega's arm and walked off as quickly as possible.

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The next day Viva raised the subject of Rocky as she brought a cup of tea. Heading off anything she was going to say, Falkirk said, “Rocky's absolutely charming. He seems to balance your intelligent, pro active extreme.”

“He does,” Viva agreed. “He's lovely but... he's, well he's Rocky.”

“The first time I met Darren he punched me. He thought I was after his mate,” Falkirk informed as he indicated his PA. “You're starting off on a new path, Viva. You may not think someone like Rocky belongs as part of this new world but you may, no you will need someone like him to keep you sane among the army of pretentious tawts you'll meet along the way.”

Falkirk could see the suppressed guilt Viva tried to hide. Confirming his suspicion that Viva was concerned about her relationship with someone that did not fit in the world of the elite. But to Falkirk, Darren was a breath of fresh air and his history made even the most twatish of twats pause.

“He's, He's” Viva couldn't bring herself to say the word.

“Stupid?” Falkirk supplied for her and she issued a soft growl despite herself thinking it. “The question you should be asking is not on his intelligence but his integrity. Will he believe you when all others doubt, Will he be on your side when not even you are, will he stand with you when no one else will.”

“Yes!” Viva responded with certainty.

“Then that is all that matters,” Falkirk insisted. “Oh, I heard a quote the other day that fits!”

Viva's eyes widened a fraction, the scary boss actually acting like an excited omega for just a brief second. She nodded.
“Everybody is a smart. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.” Falkirk said with a happy smile.

“Good one, M. I’ll remember it.”

Tanner coming in interrupted the moment and Viva saw the cool and controlled boss replace the excited omega of a moment ago.

When it was just the Beta and omega. Tanner placed down several files, “I've compiled the Double O candidates, M.”

Leafing through the personnel files. Falkirk said, “Yes, I have a candidate in mind too.” Falkirk smiled and Tanner looked up praying for strength.
Politics

Chapter Notes

Thanks to the readers and commentators.

Falkirk looked over the file of John Dawes, his preferred candidate for Double O status. The fact John Dawes didn't exist a week ago, the reason Falkirk was double checking everything himself and not looking where he was walking.

Colliding with a young alpha, before Falkirk could say anything the Alpha spoke.

“Out of my way, Boi!”

Falkirk whipped his head round, to the young man walking away from him.

“EXCUSE ME? WHAT DID YOU SAY!”

The young alpha froze and slowly turned, closing his eyes when the hard voice matched the equally hard stare of the head of MI6.

“M, one does apologise,”

“Bull-shit!” Falkirk snapped walking up to the arrogant little toff, with his little round glasses, weak chin and hooked nose pointed down for once. “Did you walk in to me deliberately?”

“No, M.”

Falkirk hummed. Given one of them was looking where they were going and one used the term ‘boi’, something didn't quite add up. Could the arrogant little toff be trying to get Falkirk's measure? No, the young man was arrogant for sure, but not brave. Then it clicked, with Falkirk's nose buried in a file, the arrogant little bastard didn't know what omega was coming towards him.

“I shall be seeing you in my office later, Brucey-boy,” Falkirk turned on his heels and headed for E-Branch. He needed to calm, to really come up with Bruce's punishment and it didn't hurt that it meant the arrogant twat would stew for a couple hours.

Perching on Darren's desk, Falkirk told him of his first encounter with the toff. Darren said, “A shame, for his aunt that is. I gave him the job because of her. You know her, Betty down in Analyses, the one that brings in fairy cakes for the bulking omegas, and knows who’s sleeping with who.”

“I think that is 'who is sleeping with whom'.”

“No one fecking knows how that word is meant to work!” Darren teased, then nodded to some guys entering E-Branch lead by the disgraced young alpha, “John Hodder and Tom Dawkins. Shadow Foreign Secretary and Deputy leader of the Labour Party, respectively.”
“Can't I brush them off?”

Darren shook his head, “You're to prepare them to take over, in case they win.”

“Will they?”

Darren shrugged, “Latest polls say, Gareth is considered the more trusted leader, Labour is considered the more trusted party. So who knows.”

Falkirk stood and looked to the two approaching men. Both were alpha, the taller had fair hair and long face, while the shorter was more stocky with a sagging thick face and black hair.

“Gentlemen, I'm M, and I welcome you to MI6,” Falkirk said. It was the taller of the two that answered, in soft, precise and intimidating voice, the likes Falkirk hadn't heard since the days of Francis Urquhart. He introduced himself as Hodder, and his shorter companion as Dawkins.

Moving into Falkirk's office, Dawkins spoke for the first time. A Low, and rough voice with an Irish accents, “We've not met before now, so I'd like to thank you for what you did for David Laws.”

Falkirk nodded and took his seat. “There are so few honourable politicians, It's sad to see the loss of one of them. Finding his killers was the least I could do.”

“Not to mention making this election fair,” Hodder said in an accusing purr.

“I wouldn't know about that. Politics is not my thing, I don't even vote,” Falkirk said taking his seat. “Ah good, here comes Tanner. I get a daily briefing on MI6 operations, which I then forward to the Foreign Secretary, who pretends to read it before putting it in the bin. At which point I lodge a complaint that Top Secret Information is being put into the general waist. Nothing happens and the cycle repeats tomorrow, because I can't rule my boss is the country's biggest security risk, nor can I keep Top Secret information from him. So I end up having have an agent on Westminster Palace's cleaning crew, The Foreign Secretary's personal staff, basically anywhere he could bin something he shouldn't. I then get asked why I deploy agents on home soil.”

Tanner knocked and entered, he seemed to know about the two guests and started his briefing. Falkirk studied the John Dawes file, while listening to Tanner. They had done this so often Tanner knew he was being listened to even if Falkirk's attention was split on something else.

About half way through the briefing, Dawkins pointed to the wall with images displayed on it “You're going to murder that man?”

Falkirk looked to the man sitting across from him. “Not personally, Double O Nine was assigned the operation. He investigated and we and Double O Nine agree, Mr Hassan, is a nasty piece of work with no greater motivation than money. He can't lead us to other terrorists or criminal groups other than his own. So we murder him, before he hits the Fiji Resort, takes hostages, kills them even when the ransom is being paid. His M.O. is known and established. This will protect more lives in the long run.”

“Such a neat equation,” Dawkins accused and looked away.

Falkirk was a bit more sympathetic as he said, “Mr Dawkins, if you want honourable a spy agency
is not the place to find it. We're the ones who descend to the level of the bad guys to face them on their own terms. If you believe in justice and law, you have my genuine respect. But I am the one who steps in when Justice and the Law fail. Mr Hassan will never be arrested, let alone extradited. It will be difficult enough for a lone, dogged, Double O to track him down wherever he is and put a bullet in him."

The shorter man stood and walked out. Hodder looked to Falkirk. Far more pragmatic he said, “It's so refreshing that idealists still exist. Between you and I, Tom Dawkins is the reason we're going to win.”

“If you say so,” Falkirk said and let Tanner continue the briefing.

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A buzz from the intercom drew Falkirk's attention from the document on his desk. Double O Nine's Black Visa bill was sitting, making a big dent in MI6's budget to say the least. It must be so much fun to have Singapore Slings on the beach, at a five star resort for the super rich, just waiting for Mr Baddy to show up.

Darren's face told him all he needed to know. It was so smug. Darren said over the intercom while meeting eyes through the glass wall, “Andrew's school, line one.”

Picking up the receiver and connecting the line Falkirk was immediately on the line with the irate head mistress.

“Mr Bo... I mean Sir Thomas?” She growled. “We need to discuss Andrew and his science project. Immediately! According to Andrew his father is present and I would like him to attend as well!”

Not liking the tone but knowing how exasperating his son could, he said he was on his way and hung up. Falkirk called James up from wherever he was and together they headed for the school.

Instead of the office Falkirk and James were led to the School's gym. A bald old man, dressed in grey overalls glared at them as he screwed a board over a window. Tables had been set up with exhibits. Sprouting potatoes. Brown balls with cress growing out of them. Every science class from each year was represented.

“Oh bugger!” James said under his breath. The stern head master was standing at Andrew's class table, in front one particular exhibit.

It didn't take a genius to figure out James was involved. Falkirk whispered to his mate, “What the hell did you do?”

“I drilled, hammered, and did the heavy lifting. It was all Andrew's idea,” James whispered back.

Approaching the table with the science projects on it, with the banner ‘Magnetic Acceleration’ above one. The gaps started to be filled in Falkirk's mind. Andrew stood beside the Head Mistress glaring petulantly at her.

“Mr Bond, Sir Thomas,” The Head Mistress greeted in curt tones. Falkirk and no doubt Andrew could pick up on her fury tainting the air. Falkirk looked at his son with envy, even now the scent of a furious Alpha made him want to submit. Only his will stopped him ducking his head to her and baring his neck.
Crushing down on his instincts, Falkirk squared up to the woman. He listened to the woman rant at James, accusing Falkirk allowing Andrew to run wild. With a side glare to the boy at her side she said, “Have you ever pinned him? Dose them the world of good!”

“I am not brave enough to commit such an act,” James stated, barely holding on to his growl. Catching a glimpse of Falkirk's expression that verged on super villain.

“Ms Crocker may I see the risk assessment for Andrew's project!” Falkirk stated, walking up to the table. Inspecting the board of wood, with the thing that looked like a long piece of straight roller coaster track, and some wires connected to a battery.

“It's just magnetism,” Ms Crocker stated. “It didn't need to a Risk Assessment!”

“It's a rail-gun!” Falkirk challenged pointing to one of the boards that even had the word on it. “Andrew's science teacher approved this exhibit, did he not?”

“Now you listen here!”

“I am the Director of MI6! You know this and brought me in because you let a child do as they pleased, without oversight, without forethought, without consideration... what would have happened if that ball baring shot my son, or someone else's? HE IS A CHILD!” Falkirk challenged. “I will be bringing this grave dereliction of care up with the governors, Ms Crocker.”

Falkirk whipped his head to his son, who was sticking his tongue out at the Head Master. Andrew let out a yelp and scuttled to hide behind his daddy for safety. Peeking out from the Alpha at his angry Papa.

At home that evening Falkirk did give Andrew into trouble. Just because the school messed up, allowing him to bring the weapon into, then use it at, school didn't mean he was innocent.

Sending Andrew to his room Falkirk then turned his attention on James.

Holding up his hands, James said, “I was only doing as told.”

“And if he told you to jump of a cliff?”

“Depends if he gives me that big eyed look,” James returned.

“You are soft, Mr Bond!” Falkirk shot, coming to sit on the Alpha's lap.

“Yes I am. Give me big eyes and wild hair, and petted lip and I go all gooey inside.” James said starting to nuzzle his mate, laying kisses along the thin column of Falkirk's neck.

“He can stand up to Alphas,” Falkirk said from his position, with his head resting on James' shoulder. Starting to get distracted by the Alpha's attention.

“He takes after his Papa,” James whispered, between kisses.

“--

“If the result had been narrower I would be feeling very guilty for not voting,” Falkirk said coming
into Mallory's lounge. It was the early hours, and the votes had been counted and constituency after constituency turned in and there were more Red than Blue. The now ex-Prime Minister drowned his sorrows in a fine cognac.

“What do you think?” Mallory asked indicating a piece of paper on the coffee table.

Picking it up Falkirk read, 'I'm sick of the fucking lot of you back stabbing, self seeking, cretonnes, mongrels. I hope you wallow and drown in your own bile...'

“I like it, it has a certain unsophisticated charm,” Falkirk said placing the resignation down.

“Darren helped,” Mallory informed. “I go see G in the morning and recommend he invite Charles Flyte to form a government. Hodder, he should make and okay Foreign Secretary, so your should be alright.”

Sitting, Falkirk poured himself a measure. He didn't care for cognac but could stomach it at least. Falkirk asked, “Have you considered your next move?”

“No, I have not,” Maloney insisted, already not liking where this conversation was going.

“Have you considered MI5?” Falkirk asked and got a curious look from Mallory. At one time the Alpha had tried to get the position as M and had been out manoeuvred by Falkirk. The prospect of being Control obviously had an appeal to Mallory.

“But Smiley?” Mallory said perking up at the idea.

“It is not known beyond a few and I expect this to go no further,” Falkirk stated and only continued when Mallory agreed. “Smiley is dying, at this point a little less than a year. He did not tell me the why and what for, just the timing. Control, while having faith in Guillam doesn’t see him as a successor.”

“The new Government, even my own party will object.” Mallory reminded.

“I am sure between You, Mycroft, Smiley and I we can come up with something,” Falkirk added.

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The first meeting with the new Prime minister went better than Falkirk expected. He was a Beta with a pleasant demeanour at least outwardly. Unlike the Alphas Falkirk met he was more open to the presence of an Omega. However, Falkirk didn't trust the smile the new Prime Minister wore.

Falkirk had to admit to himself, he was a bit sexist too in his own way. He preferred Alphas. As an omega he could pick up so much form their ques, the little fluctuations in scent that betrayed their emotions and even thoughts. Betas like Charles Flyte gave no ques, beyond being a beta so was a closed book to an omega.

The dark haired and eyed man, with a rectangular face stood and offered Falkirk his hand. There was no doubt in Falkirk's mind that the Prime Minister had plans. So far what Falkirk had dug up on Flyte not bad enough if they came to blows.

The Mutually Assured Destruction that saw Falkirk through Urquhart's time and the pack association of Mallory would no longer be of use.
When Falkirk returned to MI6, James and a few others were around Darren's desk. Darren was packing up, in the middle of the day. He turned to Falkirk and said, “Gareth and me are going on holiday. Pick up Column from school. We'll be back in a month.”

The other omega breezed passed, having his hand and calling to a young man in orange jump suite, “Brucey-boy, you mist a bit!”

The young alpha scowled and picked up the balled up piece of paper and put it in the rubbish bin on his cleaning cart. Bruce then continued on, on his duties as a janitor.

Falkirk looked to James, “Darren could have asked.”

“I offered,” James said and followed Falkirk into M's office, with Tanner, Selene and Daniel. James was the one to ask, “So what's the new PM like?”

Falkirk told everyone about the rather boring meeting with the Prime Minister. Tanner said, “Mycroft's not too worried. Despite being Labour and... well a Beta. Flyte has been to all the right schools and universities.”

“You mean he's a bloody Mason?” James demanded. Tanner cleared his throat and nodded.

“I don't know what to do about him though,” Falkirk said. “A suspicion of cheating on an English paper is not even news worthy now a days. It isn't a crippling strike.”

James advised, “If he hasn't done anything, make something up.”

“No. If worst comes to the worst I can attack those around him, plenty of them have done enough to be in prison,” Falkirk argued, not liking the idea. “I much preferred a precision strike to a sweeping cull though. This is just speculation, who knows he might be a nice guy.”

Everyone burst out laughing.
The more he wanted to keep something a secret, the more people who knew. So Falkirk found himself standing on the tarmac of London city airport watching a private jet to come in to land.

The new Director of Mossad, the one being brought by that little plane. Greene had the support of the likes of MI6 and CIA, but her domestic support had vanished after deciding David was a price worth paying to keep the status quo. Yet finding someone with Israeli domestic support and the support of the international community had been difficult, but it had been done.

The sleek Learjet taxied to a stop and an old alpha stepped down with the assistance of another man. In his prime he would have been impressive, he still towered over his assistant even in his stooped posture.

Walking up to them Falkirk extended his hand to the old Alpha, “Mr Lieberman?”

“M?” the old man returned, shaking Falkirk's hands. Unlike his physique, Lieberman's voice was strong and powerful and his eyes were sharp and intelligent.

A sharp ping of stiletto heels brought Falkirk's attention to a very slim woman, an Alpha with leathery skin and cold calculating eyes. The hair was dyed black and the talon like nails a scarlet red.

“Ms Greene, welcome back to the UK,” Falkirk said to the approaching woman.

“Yes,” Lieberman mused. “My attaché, mentioned you had both met. I believe you left quite an impression on her.”

“I do believe a crater is a type of impression,” Falkirk said. For the sake of politeness he shook the Alpha woman's hand, not completely sure he would be getting his it back.

Falkirk made the introductions to his own staff, represented by Tanner and Butler. Mycroft was also present along with a few others, including Falkirk's new boss, Hodder.

Security didn't like Falkirk and Lieberman in the same car. Falkirk had to pull some very subtle strings to arrange the time alone with his counterpart. Sitting side by side on the way back to MI6, Falkirk looked over to the Alpha.

Falkirk decided to set the tone for their relationship. From a position of superiority beat your opponent into submission, well in a figurative sense. So Falkirk accused, “Is it true, did you find a clone?”

“I have no idea to what you you refer,” Lieberman dismissed but his scent changed indicating
stress.

“What about... Bobby Wheelock?” Falkirk asked and received a sharp look.

Very controlled in voice, the bitterness in the scent speaking of worry or concern, “You have me at a disadvantage, M. I'm unfamiliar with that name.”

“Those who can see passed my sex can't usually see past my age. I am more experienced than most people realise or account for. Information is and always has been my dominion,” Falkirk said, full of self assured authority that even the old Nazi Hunter was wary of.

“If we could move onto topics, that are of the now, M. My government is concerned with whom you will appoint as Double O Three.”

“As am I. He did try to kill my family and myself,” Falkirk returned.

“Then do not take the chance,” Lieberman argued.

“But he's no longer the man who attacked me, he's not the man from the life before that even. You created him, I earned his trust and honed him. The resource now known as John Dawes has my confidence and will receive his Double O assignation as planned,” Falkirk said.

It was a play, straight from Mansfield's book and Falkirk didn't even think Daniel would support him on it. However, it was a statement to serve as a reminder to friends and enemies of what would happen if they challenged the UK, MI6 or M himself. That M was such a force, good enough, skilled enough, insane enough, to turn their own weapons against them.

“This will end badly,” Lieberman insisted.

“I can't see how it could end worse than how it started,” Falkirk responded.

Arriving at MI6, Falkirk led the man into the building, “Would you like to meet him, John Dawes?”

“I suppose I should,” Lieberman responded.

Falkirk led the old Alpha, arm in arm. Lieberman leaned heavily on Falkirk as they walked.

Into the understructure of the building they went. Stepping out of the lift Falkirk led Lieberman along the PT&A section, passing Alec into to a training room.

Inside the room they stepped, a man Falkirk had come to know since he assaulted Daniel's villa was giving a lecture. Beard and hair now neatly groomed, and dressed in casual clothes. He was barking in Arabic as he instructed, not only the new intakes but the seasoned Operatives. The lecture was a mix of terrorist tactics, bomb making and middle eastern languages.

This was fortuitous Falkirk needed a test for Dawes. He needed to know Dawes could put personal grievances to the side. Giving him this opportunity would be something Dawes couldn't pass up.

Falkirk called the tall man over. Then indicating the man he was escorting, Falkirk said, “Mr Dawes, Director Ezra Lieberman of Mossad and his Aide-de-camp Ms Greene. They would like a word with you. Join us.”
As they were closer to his secure office Falkirk moved the meeting there. Mostly because Lieberman looked like he would collapse at any minute and Falkirk was having a time supporting his weight. In the old fashioned, subterranean office with fake view of the Thames, tea and snacks were laid on and covered the conference table.

Greene was fuming having to sit at a table with Dawes. Lieberman was a more civil asking safe questions. He obviously knew Dawes' history. Greene interrupted, accusing, “When should we expect an attack?”

Dawes looked to Falkirk unsure how to answer. He had long ago identified the meeting as a test and had been on his best behaviour. Dawes looked at the woman who asked the question, dead in her eyes, “When M orders it... or he's not here to stop me.”

“Is that good enough for you, Ms Greene, it is for me,” Falkirk said. “I for one feel warm, safe, and all fuzzy inside.”

Falkirk loved it. Greene like most froze in the face of a dominant Omega, just for a moment but she did freeze. She was not used to being challenged and there was no other way to describe Falkirk's conduct. He challenged her as a representative of her country, organisation and as an Alpha.

“Enough, Ms Greene, we are guests and there has been enough anger,” Lieberman ordered. To Falkirk the old man looked exhausted, it seemed to be an argument he had been dealing with for some time with the alpha woman.

“My apologies to both of you,” Lieberman said looking to Falkirk then Dawes. “Especially to you Mr Dawes, if our situations were reversed I cannot say I would have done anything different to you.”

Dawes frowned in confusion and looked to Falkirk. Falkirk for his part started to see the integrity of the new Director of Mossad and was beginning to respect the choice of Lieberman's appointment.

Falkirk looked to Dawes, who only had a text book knowledge of his history. “Your Grand mother and little sister,” he reminded, of the incident where a block of flats was targeted by Israeli missiles because there was a Hamas rocket site on the roof of the civilian dwelling, resulting in may civilian deaths.

In the sober moment, Lieberman looked at his watch and said, “Our schedule is strict. We have to meet the ambassador at the embassy, before the banquet tonight.”

Instructing Dawes to stay where he was Falkirk showed the guests out. There was a meal planned for the night with the full three ring circus. Business, diplomats and security would all be in attendance, all doing the mutual back scratching and knob polishing that these events basked in. Falkirk hated them and was dreading it.

Returning to his secure office Falkirk sat behind the big oak desk with Dawes across from him.

“It has been a while since I was involved with this conversation,” Falkirk said. “The last time my position was reversed, I was the one sitting where you are as M told me what I'm telling you. In my case, it was my father she was talking about, in your case it was Mossad and Mr Lieberman. When you can sit at a table and be civil to the person you hate the most you are ready.”
The man frowned and looked away, concentrating hard. Returning his gaze to Falkirk, Dawes said, “I do not remember hating them. Still it's just flashes, and hating and being told it was you I hated.”

“Are you able work for the benefit of this country?” Falkirk asked.

“No. You woke me from my dream I will work for you,” Dawes stated.

Accepting his reason Falkirk nodded.

“Cross me and you will not see me coming,” Falkirk warned and handed over a folder. “Report to Q branch for your equipment, Mr Dawes.”

“M,” the alpha acknowledged and stood to leave the room.

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White tie, Falkirk hated it. Worst of all, James Bloody Double O Seven Bond, had managed to keep himself on assignment leaving Falkirk alone tonight. Fumbling with his outfit, Falkirk gave up with an annoyed hiss. Ringing for Hudson Falkirk moved to the spare room next door to his own. Meeting the butler as he moved across the landing Falkirk asked, “Would you kindly act as valet?”

“Of course, Sir,” Hudson responded taking the reaming items from Falkirk.

With calm professionalism Hudson fixed Falkirk's shirt, made sure the folds were in the correct place and the cuff links were secure. When Falkirk put on the waist coat Hudson adjusted the strap pulling it in at the waist then placed the jacket on. With a final straightening of Falkirk's tie and a brush down of his jacket Hudson nodded his approval.

“All done sir,” Hudson said and headed for the door.

Falkirk turned back to the full length mirror. His hair was still dark with the odd fleck of grey, as usual it had settled into a halo like main. He inspected a few wrinkles which were mostly masked by his glasses when he slipped them on. Turning from his reflection Falkirk headed down stairs where Hudson was waiting with Andrew and Rupert to see him off.

“You look pretty,” Rupert declared and Andrew made a face at the comment.

“Thank you,” Falkirk said to Rupert, before warning mainly Andrew, “Mr Hudson will be giving me a full report on your behaviour. Be good!”

“We will,” Andrew said with a sweet smile.

“If I believe that, I was born yesterday,” Falkirk muttered to himself as he headed out. Calling a bye over his shoulder to the three waiting at the open door behind him.

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At the meal Falkirk was sat beside his counterpart from Mossad. The pompous setting seemed to fit the old Alpha as comfortably as it did Falkirk. Neither he or Lieberman mingled much, it was mostly people coming up to them. If it wasn't for Falkirk's smart glasses, with Heads Up Display,
he wouldn't know half the people who wanted to talk to him.

“My attaché believes I have been captivated by your charm. She thinks you propositioned me in the car,” Lieberman whispered at one point.

Falkirk chuckled, “Not well informed, is she. I am loyal only to my Alpha.”

“I reminded her of that, Ms Greene didn't believe it,” Lieberman responded. “I was however, captivated by another line: ‘A unique talent for honing unstable alphas'. Mr Bond, Mr Trevelyan, Ms Corvin, His Grace, Dame Olivia even. All loners in their way, yet you tamed them all. Now Mr Dawes.”

“Is there a point?” Falkirk asked.

“No point, just something interesting I noticed in your psyche profile,” Lieberman said.

The meal fell into silence and Falkirk spoke to a Junior Minister to his other side for a bit before Lieberman drew his attention again. First asking permission for a personal question, Lieberman asked,“Is it true you are the Alpha of your pack?”

“I do not advertise as such but I see no point in denying it,” Falkirk answered. Lieberman fell silent as he gave Falkirk a weighing look.

Through the evening dozens more approached either Falkirk or Lieberman. Falkirk watched his brother, this was Mycroft's area of expertise and was a master. He upset no one unlike Falkirk who had no problem upsetting anyone who got too close, or didn't pay attention to the polite 'Get lost' Falkirk gave.

A rather snide arms manufacturer from America was the latest to ingratiate himself, when he could talk to Falkirk and Lieberman both at the same time. He perched on the table, between the two of them. Lieberman was polite enough to listen to the slime ball who ran Hammer Industries. Falkirk on the other hand, aided by the scrolling text his glasses brought up, started mentioning all the security breaches Hammer's company had, then subtly accused Hammer himself of personally profiting from those breaches. When he was well and truly ridiculed Justin Hammer went to hawk his snake oil to someone else.

“Full of surprises,” Lieberman commented. “Mr Hammer has been bribing a lot of politicians back home.”

Falkirk chuckled darkly. “Anyone who suggests Hammer here, will get a hammer taken to their knee caps. Damn! We've just changed government, I'm going to have to warn this new lot before kneecapping them. This democracy thing is a bit of a nuisance,” Lieberman chuckled politely. Falkirk was more serious as he said, “I know you have a history with the Carrington institute, but we find them quite agreeable.”

“Doesn't hurt that it is almost family to you,” Lieberman said. “You are godfather to the Chairman's son, are you not?”

“I'm not sure of Daniel's exact position in the Institute. But Douglas never fights too hard when his brother wants something.”

Nearer the end of the evening, when all seating order had broken down. Groups clustered and
talked. A few danced in the empty space the long U shape of tables curved round. Snifters of brandy were swirled. Falkirk had a bourbon, and Lieberman took a port. In defiance of the smoking ban, cigars were being puffed on by the men mostly. Falkirk joining Lieberman in a cigarette, something rough the older man smoked with ease and like the the ones James stole off Alec.

“I am not looking forward to America. My predecessor made quite a mess, I do not expect a warm welcome,” Lieberman confessed.

“Agent Gibbs did not look pleased when he left and I gather he is not one to let thing lie,” Falkirk said. Falkirk lifted his arm and waved over a man from across the room. “I believe, I could have a word with Jack Wade and Director Ryan. In the mean time I'll introduce you to Agent DiNozzo.”

“A most kind offer,” Lieberman said. “I have a request to make of you...”

DiNozzo came up, so Lieberman trailed off. Falkirk introduced the two.

“Sir,” DiNozzo said when he thought he could push his luck. “Could I get your help with Ziva David?”

Lieberman glanced at Falkirk, and back to DiNozzo, “I am truly sorry young man. I have a big request I wish to make of M, and I do not wish to ask for too much by bringing up someone who threatened our relationship with the United States of America and the United Kingdom.”

DiNozzo looked to Falkirk, with big puppy dog eyes. Falkirk nodded and said, “Director, why don't you join me for afternoon tea in my office tomorrow. I can call Wade, you can discuss this request and if Agent DiNozzo wishes to show you MI6 you can decide if you wish to go.”

DiNozzo sent Falkirk a brilliant smile. Falkirk jerked his head, and DiNozzo took his leave before outstaying his welcome.

Lieberman studied Falkirk for a bit. “You do not wish the child to grow up without a mother.”

Falkirk only shrugged, neither confirming or denying. Lieberman laughed, “That's how you hone those people. I've got it, I know how you do it. They are your big brothers, little brothers, sons, daughters, parents, you are the family they do not have.”

“I'm not sure I understand,” Falkirk said. Really, apart from a few he didn't think he viewed anyone outside his pack as family.

Lieberman sat back and looked contemplative, “Yes, M. That's why you're so dangerous, I understand. To you, they are every bit the family that you are to them. There is no greater bond than family.”

Falkirk listened to the old man, and realised yes, to some he was more then a commander. He said, “They called me Mother, the Double Os I mean. I thought it was just a joke.”

“There are many truths in humour, M.”

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“He's a bit of an idealist but a good man. Barry Kohler is his name and I worked with him... you should know when,” Lieberman said, sipping his tea. He and Falkirk at a small seating area of M's
office where the curved windows looked over the Thames.

“My memory for names, I’m afraid to say is poor,” Falkirk said. “I will allow the appointment of this Mr Kohler to MI6 though.”

The old man nodded and thanked Falkirk while cutting the finely layered cake with the blade of the pastry fork. He then asked, “Any news on America?”

“I phoned Jack Wade and Jack Ryan. They will give you the benefit of the doubt,” Falkirk said, pouring more tea from the silver pot into his bone china cup.

“That seems fair,” Lieberman said, then glancing through the internal window, “Ah, I believe that is Agent DiNozzo.”

Falkirk turned and waved the man in. Lieberman stood and said, “I shall attend to my, ‘tour’.”

Falkirk gave a jerking head gesture towards the old man, DiNozzo jumped to, offering a supporting arm to the old alpha. Lieberman took the arm of the younger Alpha, meaning he truly needed the support and Alpha bravado was now less important to him.

Falkirk moved to his desk after the two men left. He brought up the Brig’s security feeds. It was several moments for the two men to reach the brig.

“Ms David,” Lieberman's voice was clear and strong through the speakers. “I am the Director of Mossad.”

“Then get me out of here!” the woman pacing in her cell demanded. Rubbing her rounded stomach.

Lieberman shook his head. “Your father did something very foolish and he dragged you into a plan that threatened us all. I will not lift one finger to help you, when M has been gracious enough to give you a way out.”

“Ah, shit!” Falkirk said. Ziva started crying bloody murder, DiNozzo trying to calm the pregnant woman down. Lieberman went to the brig guard and asked to be escorted to his car.

Falkirk disconnected the feeds.

“Shit, shit, shit! Doesn't look my dungeon will be cleared any time soon.”
Thanks to all the readers.

Warning: Sex scene in the middle scene.(okay to skip. It really feels like ages since I wrote one for this fic.)

Slightly 'cooked lobster' in appearance, having started out as pale Irish, Darren was not designed for the Caribbean sun.

The snick of a door made him look up to the thin alpha coming out of M's office.

“Double O Three,” Darren said pleasantly, getting a nod from the man who'd completed his assignment to receive double O status.

Going into his desk drawer and pulling out the brochures, a time scribbled at the top corner of each. Holding the bundle towards John Dawes, “The second house doesn't have the garden you wanted. But the current owner had the rooftop terrace enclosed and uses it as a glass house for his orchid collection.”

“It looks quite suitable, thank you,” Dawes said formally. While he flicked through the brochures for possible places to stay.

“DOUBLE O NINE!”

Everyone in the office jumped and looked to the glaring M, standing at his doorway.

“GET YOUR ARSE IN HERE! WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU THINKING, A ONE-POINT-TWO MILLION POUND YACHT, SUNK!”

The blond omega sent an unrepentant smirk to Darren in passing. In response Darren waged his finger at the macho omega. M still spitting fire, right up until the office door slammed with the two omegas inside and cutting off the noise.

“What's going to happen to him?” Dawes asked, while looking through the glass wall. Where M was clearly shouting and waving his arms, and the Double O was lounging with a smirk on his face.

“Eh, nothing probably. Nathan got a terrorist-slash-pirate cell. No collateral lives lost. Just with some rich guy pissed off, who in turn was able to get a hold of M and is now suing us for saving his life at the coast of his boat.”

“This is a very strange place,” Dawes mused.

“Welcome to MI6. Ya don't have ta be mad ta work here but it helps.”
Leaning forward, James spat out the toothpaste then rinsed out his mouth. Padding naked out of the bathroom and into the bedroom, where Falkirk was already under the covers of the bed. The omega's thin arms, bare and sticking out so he could read something.

“I met the new Double O Three,” James said. Just leaning against the doorway while watching his mate.

“I think he will work out,” Falkirk answered absently. “James, I lost one of my diamond cuff links. I looked in your drawer, and found the magazine.”

James stood straight and fidgeted. “What's wrong with that?”

“Playboy, Playboi even, I expected. Exotic pets?” Falkirk asked lifting the magazine he found with the picture of frill-necked lizard on the cover.

“It's Cody's birthday soon.”

“HELL NO!” Falkirk said pointing at the alpha. “Keading hates bugs and things.”

James jumped onto the bed and took the magazine. “Keading was the one to give me the idea. I was thinking a tarantula, but they're a bit common. There's some interesting snakes and scorpions.”

Falkirk turned into the alpha's body. Sliding a hand over the warm flat stomach, James was always lean and muscular when he just came back from missions. “So long as it was Keading's idea,” he said going in for a kiss. While lips pressed to lips, he rolling them so James was under him.

James pulled the glasses from his omega with one hand and let them drop to the soft carpet by the bed. His other hand running up the prominent rib cage. Moving his hand back he cupped Falkirk's skull to pull his omega down so their lips could meet again. Not much made in through the strong mint of the toothpaste and mouthwash.

Bracing his hands on the alpha's strong shoulders, Falkirk rolled his hips to rub their erections together. His alpha pulled him down again and this time tilting Falkirk's head to the side went for the permanent bruise of a bond mark. The alpha wouldn't bite until they climaxed so lavished the yellow mottled skin and mirrored crescent scars with his tongue.

Sweaty, their flushed bodies slid against each other. James grabbed the omega by his hips, to lift him up. The foreplay was nice, but his alpha instincts wanted something else, the long come down when he and his omega couldn't separate.

Falkirk took hold of the thick cock of the alpha, while they looked intently at each other. With his Alpha's hands on his hips, Falkirk eased himself down, slowly impaling himself. The stretch, the feel of the firm flesh inside him, Falkirk had to throw his head back and groan. The groan turned to a scream of ecstasy and surprise when the alpha's control broke and James trust up hard.

They set a hard pace, their bodies writhing together. James bucking his body, with eyes fixed on the beautiful sight of his omega's long and lean body above him. Falkirk had his eyes closed and head thrown back, lost in the physical sensation of bouncing on the alpha and feeling his mate within him.
Their bodies became frantic, just needing something more to find the edge and tip them over. Instinctively both knew what was needed, the mark of possession and possessed. James reached up and pulled his mate back down. Falkirk tipped his head to the side and felt the warm breath against it, and then the blunt teeth.

The moment the alpha bit, the small gland beneath the skin released a tsunami of pheromones into the air and chemicals though the omega's body. That little thing in Falkirk's brain getting the massive rush that only happened in the presence of his alpha, claiming him. He cried out, feeling his orgasm pulsing through him.

Coming too, Falkirk felt his alpha still inside him. His own lingering orgasm squeezing the alpha's knot, milk it. During a heat it was to ensure a conception. The broad chest he rested his head on was damp with sweat and smelled of the deep musk of the alpha. He raised and lowered with every deep breath of his mate. Strong fingers snagged a tangle in his hair.

“My omega,” James whispered.

“Your omega,” Falkirk confirmed. His wandering fingers touched a patch of pockmarked rough skin on James's abdomen.

“Don't try to kill Moneypenny again.”

“No promises.”

James chuckled and hugged Falkirk tight. Kissing the sweat dampened curls of dark hair, “That's my omega.”

“Yours James, always yours,” Falkirk mumbled, his eyes getting heavy. Comforted by them still being tied he fell asleep.

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Falkirk's car pulled to a stop outside a town house. A little run down and smaller than his own. He knocked the door and it was several long moment before the door was opened a crack. He was shocked by the sight of the alpha. The alpha's hair was thin, his flesh hung from his skeleton and was a sickly grey in colour. If Falkirk didn't know this was George Smiley's house, he could have walked passed the man and not known it to be him.

“Come...” a wet, rattling hacking cough interrupted Smiley. He just opened the door and waved Falkirk in.

The smell hit Falkirk. It was nothing like Smiley's, it carried a note of turned meat to it and little identification markers like a Beta's.

In the front living room, Falkirk sat on the couch. The straight backed chair, looked it was made to be easy to get in and out of. With an oxygen tank beside it, and some inhalers on a table the other side along with a notebook and a pencil laying on the open pages.

Falkirk saw it was memories preserved in those pages. He didn't try to read but saw it was something about Bill Hayden, the mole who seduced Smiley's wife.
The ill man got into the chair and lifted the mask from the tank and started breathing with it. Able to catch his breath for a moment, the old alpha asked, “Mallory?”

“Just his final interview to go,” Falkirk said. “It's going quite well. Mycroft got the Prime Minister to see the benefit of putting a popular Prime Minister from an unpopular party into a job where he's not allowed to talk about politics.”

“Good,” Smiley started coughing. He took one of his inhalers and the rattling breath eased a bit, but not for long. “Peter, he was hurt I didn't think he was ready to be Control. Still to much of a romantic.”

“I'll make sure Mallory takes care of him.” Falkirk assured.

“I can trust you on that,” the old man said. “You want to take care of everyone.”

The front door rattled and banged open, a cheerful woman called out it was her. Smiley said to Falkirk, “My nurse.”

A short round beta with a shock of bright red curly hair, stuck her head in, “Oh guests, that's good. Tea?”

Smiley nodded. Falkirk shook his head, “I have an operative who has to say sorry for sinking some rich idiot's boat. If I don't keep Maloney under close watch he will just vanish for a few weeks until it all blows over.”

Smiley chuckled a bit and nodded in understanding.

Falkirk assured, “I'll come visit when Mallory gets Control.”

“Don't have to,” Smiley said.

Falkirk pinned to old alpha with a hard look.

“Are you just being prideful?” Smiley just nodded. Falkirk insisted, “Well I don't listen to any of the macho alphas when they say they want to be alone. I'll come for a visit and I'll be able to have a cup of tea.”

The nurse called from out of sight, “You tell him son.”

“Stay, I'll show myself out,” Falkirk said and the alpha just nodded and leaned back in his arm chair.

Falkirk stopped off at the kitchen, where the nurse was putting away the shopping while the kettle boiled. He told her to call if needed. She assured him all was in hand.

“May I ask,” Falkirk said making sure his voice was low. “How long?”

“I can't discuss that son,” she said soberly, keeping her voice low too. “But if you're wanting to be here for him, I wouldn't plan any holidays for this year.”

Falkirk nodded. This year had a little under two months left at this point. Heading for the door he looked in, unnoticed, to the living room where Smiley had his oxygen mask on and was scribbling
away. He made sure he opened and closed the front door quietly.

On the door step he looked back. Remembering the day he met the alpha in the office of M. She even let him sit behind her desk that day, with Smiley and M herself across from him. He would be the only one alive from that meeting, soon.

Falkirk returned to his car while thinking deeply. Most death he dealt with was premature and sudden. This time it was a fairly old man, coming to the end of his life at the time it should end. It unnerved him that no matter what, death came.

His mind filled with scenarios all day. Who would go first? Daniel was the oldest of their immediate pack. James was addicted to riskiest of life style, with no appetite to change it. Alec, smoked the most, drank a lot and ate the worst. The moment Alec stopped training so hard he'd probably put on weight. Keading was the youngest, but so devoted to Selene Falkirk couldn't see one surviving without the other. He was so preoccupied he didn't notice the rich twat questioning Maloney's expertise and the omega decking the bastard.

Looking down finding a rich twat in expensive suite and Falkirk's feet. The millionaire that ran a social media app held his bloody and broken nose. Falkirk said, “We done here?”

“No! I'll sue you, the bitch, the UK, EVERYONE!”

“That is your right,” Falkirk said, headed for the door of some fancy office done in glass. “As it's my right to call the IRS and show them how you're evading tax. I really do like the Americas, when it comes to tax the are willing to send anyone to jail.”

Maloney chuckled and followed M out. Blowing the twat on the floor a kiss as he left.

Chapter End Notes

Hi all. Just a FYI. The editing of this is eating up a lot of time just now and is cutting into my writing of other stories and I'm giving neither the attention they deserve. So I'm going to skip next Sunday' posting and try to get ahead in my editing so I have more time to write.
Chapter Notes

I'm back. Just a day over schedule. Well I've got about eight weeks of chapters done, edited for the second time. Some story lines have been dropped because I laid them down and went no where with them. Others I'm making more prominent and clarify. Hope you enjoy.

Eagle eyed readers might observe a continuity error. Cody's birthday isn't in December so James surprise has been moved to Christmas.

Thanks to all the readers. Enjoy.

- {20th December} -

Falkirk stepped out of his car at the hospital. Despite it being early evening it was quite dark and the rain was verging on sleet. Within a private room, the previous Director of MI5 was not in a good way. Taking Smiley's hand, it looked so small in Falkirk's grasp and the skin was tissue paper thin. He watched the alpha sleep, every breath shallow rasp. It had been two days since Smiley had been awake and three since he spoke.

"Brayan is getting out just after Christmas," Falkirk said, thinking he was speaking to himself. Hoping the suffering in the man's body wasn't reaching Smiley's mind. "Selene and I went with Brayan and his social worker to open up his flat, just for a visit though. Everything has to be done carefully. He's quite good though, considering. He's got his health, his mind is still a... He can't really remember things in the short term. Words and names are missing when he talks..."

Falkirk swallowed the lump in his throat. "I won't bore you with that. Mallory! It's official now, he's Control. I didn't even need to threaten or blackmail anyone. It was Mycroft, he pointed out making Mallory Control would be a good place to put a popular Prime Minster from an unpopular party. The Prime Minister came round to the idea of putting Mallory into a job where he can't talk about politics."

Less than five minutes had passed since he entered. It felt like he was running away and left him guilty, but he couldn't stay.

"I'll come by tomorrow," Falkirk said and headed for the door.

Falkirk breathed the London night air deeply trying to rid himself of the Alpha's sick, deathly scent. It had shrouded the Alpha and Falkirk knew his time was short. Falkirk had scented an Alpha's death before, that final release of pheromones. Never before had it been accompanied by the scent of a sickness.

- {24th December} -

With Andrew dressed in Batman pyjamas, and Rupert in shorts and T-shirt. James and Falkirk, watched their sons rip the colourful paper from the boxes. The colourful lights on the tree behind,
twinkling away. The clock in the hall gave the longer three-quarters chime.

Andrew picked up an L shaped rattle. Before his parents could stop him he spun the weighted rattle and it gave a deafening click-click-click-click. Rupert, the closest pushed his brother, and brought silence. Andrew just bouncing back up and went onto his next present.

A new mobile for Rupert, Andrew seeing it was a smartphone turned to his parents. Falkirk headed his son off, “You're still to young!”

“Bu...” Andrew turned back, his Papa's look told him everything. With a pout on his face he called his papa mean under his breath.

The house phone started ringing, so James said, “Falkirk, could you get that?”

“So bloody brave James,” Falkirk replied and went to answer the phone. Suspecting it to be someone complaining about a present. Keading had psyched himself up for a spider, and then James went and got something more 'interesting' for Cody. So the poor omega would have to face two, foot long, things, with hundreds of rippling legs. One good thing for Cody he was sure of absolute privacy, his Mom would go nowhere near the Giant African Millipedes or the room they were in.

Noticing a strange number on the screen, Falkirk answered.

“Hello, is that M?” said the voice of a woman. When Falkirk confirmed it was, the woman said, “I'm Anne, George Smiley's ex-wife.”

“Yes,” Falkirk said. Knowing of her. And suspecting the reason for the call at the inhospitable hour of Christmas day, when only the parents with young children would be up

“George died a few hours ago.”

He was correct.

As if sensing something or not hearing his name being cursed, James had come into the library. Realising it wasn't the expected call and something serious was going on he slipped his arms around Falkirk's waist.

“Do you wish me to tell anyone,” Falkirk offered Anne.

“Yes. I, I don't have the number for Peter. And there's a Mic- Michael? I'm not sure of the name.”

“Mycroft,” Falkirk said. “I'll phone him.”

“I'll phone again with the arrangements,” Anne said.

“My Condolences,” Falkirk said, not sure if it was right to say so. Smiley had cut the woman out of his life more or less, after her affair with a Russian spy. She had been the weak point Smiley had been attacked in. And Anne had been an all to willing participant with what was meant to be a friend of her husband's.

Falkirk hung up and turned into James. A sudden squawk, like a duck call interrupted them. Followed by the thumping of wrestling children.
“As Mary says. There has to be something that makes a noise,” Falkirk said. “Or what is four a.m. for.”

Fixing a smile on his face, Falkirk didn't want the sombre mood to spoil the day. He went to the corner of the library where a blanket covered box with a handle sticking out of the top sat. Lifting the crate, there was a shift inside and a noise.

Going back through to the lounge together. James called, “No more noise, we don't want to frighten her.”

Both boys looked to their parents. Falkirk knelt, and with the two boys coming closer he lifted the grey blanket from around the plastic crate. “Stay back, she'll be frightened at first.”

With the two boys still kneeling in front of them, Falkirk opened the latch to the door of the crate. Like lightning a fluffy ball of white fur shot out. Andrew screamed and fell back, while Rupert jumped out the way. James laughed his ass off. The streak of white darting out the door to return to the library.

“A cat?” Rupert said.

Falkirk nodded, “You two have to feed it, and clean its tray and take care of it.”

Both boys nodded. Pointing to a Christmas present without a name, Falkirk said there were some toys and things inside it.

“Wish I got Andrew's scream in camera,” James chuckled as they watched the boys open up the wrapping around a cushion and release some toys. Both boys taking a toy to help make friends with the new member of the household.

Taking his Alpha's arm, Falkirk whispered, “I thought we were getting the blue British Shorthair?”

James smirked, “Supervillains sit in a big chair, stroking a white long haired cat.”

Falkirk thumped his mate in the chest. Pouting he defended, “I'm not a supervillain.”

“Then,” James purred and went into the adjoining dining room and came back with another crate.

Falkirk said, “I didn't think Persians liked other animals.”

“Please! I know how to do research,” James defended himself and put down the crate he held and opened the door to release the blue cat with short hair Falkirk had known about. The cat came over to Falkirk so he picked it up and rubbed it between its ear, getting a deep purr in response.

“Cool! It's like a lion.” they heard Andrew's voice coming from the library. Rupert came back holding the white cat with long hair. Andrew running his fingers through a thick mane around the long haired cat's neck.

“It's a Norwegian Forest Cat,” James said, while petting the one Falkirk held. “Both breeds are sociable and are good with other pets.”

“I bow to your research skill,” Falkirk said and kissed his Alpha's cheek. Hearing the phone ring he
added, “That'll be Keading, go face the music like a man.”

“It's not Keading I’m frightened of,” James muttered heading out of the room, “It's the sub-psychotic bitch he'd bound to.”

“Daddy, that's a bad word!” Andrew said.

“Naughty me.” James smiled and headed for the ringing phone.

-{2nd January} -

With Falkirk and Selene off over the Christmas period, Bryan, Falkirk's ex-bodyguard was discharged between Christmas and the new year. It was so both had the time to give the injured man extra support.

Falkirk subtly looked around the living room of the flat. The once stylish room had clothes laying about, and dishes lay forgotten under the couch, some going mouldy. Brayan came back for the third time having forgotten why he went through to the kitchen again.

“Are you alright?” Brayan asked, his nose twitching to pick up on Falkirk's changing que.

Despite the reports from Brayan's social-worker Falkirk was a bit concerned the blonde alpha wasn't coping with living on his own. For the first time since knowing him Falkirk could scent a lingering fear clinging to him. Brayan faced the world with a bravado but he was afraid, easily confused and absent minded. He also forgot words and names often.

Falkirk said, “Hudson is getting older, I think he would appreciate help in some of his duties.”

“Hudson,” Brayan repeated with a knowing nod.

'Bugger!' Falkirk swore at himself internally, he avoided using names or he would get the act. The act being Brayan pretending to know who was being talked about without actually knowing. The Alpha was at a point Bryan couldn't differentiate between someone he didn't know from someone he couldn't remember.

Falkirk pulled out a photograph of Hudson, across the front he wrote 'Mr Hudson 10:00' then handed it to Brayan.

“Mr Hudson will pick you up tomorrow,” Falkirk said.

Nodding, Brayan took the photograph to a cork-board by the door. On it was pinned everyone who was allowed in the flat. Falkirk's picture was in the centre and the largest. The social-worker, Selene and a few others were there as well.

Before leaving Falkirk helped clear up the dishes. Bryan washing them in the sink, so Falkirk had to dry and put them away. He noticed Brayan's furtive hazel eyes darting to him, trying to memorise where everything went and would likely forget right away.

Falkirk also cleared out the fridge. Brayan adding milk to his shopping list, while Falkirk dropped the carton of lumpy liquid into the bin.

-{3rd January} -
James opened the umbrella as he got out of the car, holding it for Falkirk who followed. Sleet fell from the grey skies. It hadn't snowed properly this year, at least not in the south east. The afternoon in the graveyard was dark and damp. There hadn't been a church service, there was just to be a short one by the gave side.

Noticing the new Home Secretary, he stood with Mallory, Mycroft and Peter Guillam. A woman by the graveside, Falkirk assumed to be Smiley's ex-wife.

“Hi,” said a pleasant voice of a round woman. Falkirk recognised Smiley's nurse from the times Smiley was still living in his home.

Giving the nurse a greeting, she gave Falkirk her condolences. She then looked around, “I don't recognise anyone.”

“They were probably too busy to visit,” Falkirk defended and was given a look by the woman.

“Just because I talk common, doesn't mean I'm stupid,” she said. “Isn't M as busy as anyone else here and he came to visit every day.”

“I'm not sure Smiley wouldn't wanted them to see him when sick.” Falkirk said. The beta woman took Falkirk's arm and they continued to the rest of the guest here to pay their respects.

As they stood, the nurse holding one arm and James the other. Falkirk recognised a few more. There was a broad and tall Alpha, Mendel who acted as a heavy for Smiley. Another Falkirk couldn't remember the name of who walked with a slight hunch and limp, while supporting one arm in the other.

Guillam gave the eulogy, the only reading of the brief service. After attending so many of these, Falkirk had become practised at controlling his emotions at times like this. Outwardly he remained stoic throughout. Only his alpha who knew him, had an idea of what was going through Falkirk's head. Subtly James took his arm from Falkirk's to lay it on his far shoulder, so the Alpha's thumb could brush at Falkirk's neck.

Foregoing the reception after the service, Falkirk and James headed home. On the car journey back, Falkirk leaned against his Alpha.

“You... you're not okay I know,” James whispered while holding him.

Interlacing his fingers with James’. Falkirk said, “No, but there's nothing I can do.”

In response James pulled the arm around him tighter and kissed the top of his head.

At home, Falkirk tried to put on a good face for Andrew and Rupert. He decided to do some work from home seeing as he wasn't going into the office.

Sitting at his desk, a meow drew his attention. The moment he sat back the white cat jumped up into his lap and sat down. Leo, curled up and started to purr gently. Getting back to work, he kept one hand on the less outgoing of the two cats and scratched its neck.

Finding the small creature did help to ease the knot in his chest. Falkirk ended up pulling an album from the shelf behind him to looking at the photos he'd collected. Brushing an early one, not one
Falkirk took, he was in the image along with a sexy bunny-boi serving him a cocktail. The Double O who took the photo was killed not long after. There was one of a goth, she was dead too, along with the blond man whose photo was beside hers. All the time there was a little bundle of purring warmth in his lap.

That evening, Falkirk went down to the kitchen. He cleared his throat in warning but suspected the butler heard him. The sitting/dining room just off the kitchen for staff use is where Falkirk found Hudson. The Alpha automatically stood, turning his attention from the documentary and his night cap to Falkirk.

Explaining he was going to bed before Falkirk asked, “How was Brayan?”

“Very good, Sir. He seemed to prefer simple repetitive tasks,” Hudson informed before telling him of the duties Brayan fulfilled. Then praised, “Not even I have gotten the silver to shine like Brayan managed.”

“Did he have lunch?” Falkirk asked.

“Yes, and dinner. Mrs Bridges and he then shared a taxi home. She will also pick him up on her way back tomorrow.” Hudson informed.

“Eh...”

“Brayan was given a photograph of Mrs Bridges, and she will make sure he puts it on the board.”

“Thank you. I will thank Mrs Bridges tomorrow.”

“Very good, sir. Goodnight.”

“Goodnight, Mr Hudson.”
Like a the tide Mary returned. She had been down for Christmas, with Daniel, Alec and Yulian taking her back north for the new year. With a permanent invitation to the first Royal Garden Party of the year she took full advantage of it. She would always ask her old friend the Countess of Grantham as her companion, who never refused to attend the palace.

Much to Falkirk's reluctance he had received an invitation as well. Along with the invitation came a hand written note from G almost begging his attendance. Falkirk sent back the RSVP immediately wondering what the Alpha was up to.

When the day of the garden party came. Falkirk wore pastels, cream trousers, and violet cardigan to go with the nice weather. Arriving at the palace Falkirk joined the guests going to the large gardens around the back. A rather pleasant place, like a private park with established trees. And in the distance the tall skyscrapers, reminding them they were still in the heart of London.

Noticing Mary was already here, engaging with old friends and associates. The Dowager Duchess in her element. Her friend, Lady Grantham, equally in her element, drifting from guest to guest until she 'accidently' cornered the king.

Chuckling to himself Falkirk was about to go rescue G when Mycroft came up beside him. While both looked to the trapped king with a buffet table at his back and the lean alpha woman right in front of him, Mycroft mused, “He has grown well into his mantel.”

After expressing his surprise then withdrawing it, Falkirk said, “I should have known you would enjoy such an occasion.”

Mycroft had a pinched look, Falkirk didn't like. His brother said, “There is a bit of a... quandary between our Sovereign and his Advisors.”

Interrupting “You, you mean,” Falkirk clarified.

Mycroft giving a half smile and slight nod. Continuing, “He wishes our mutual Alpha to swoop in to exercise judgement in His Majesty's favour.”

First subtly scanning the garden Mycroft found his target and indicated him to Falkirk. At first Falkirk thought it was a girl before realising despite the shoulder length hair it was male, and very likely an Omega. Blond and slender was all Falkirk could make out from the distance.

Mycroft said, “Arthur Pendragon, and he in himself is not the problem. The Cardinal Merlin, is.”

Falkirk switched his view to the man in red cassock not far off from the Omega.

“Catholic?” Falkirk asked sceptically.

Shaking his head, Mycroft answered, “No, the cardinal is not stupid. He knows no child of a catholic will never sit on the throne of England. Nor is he so devout, the Vatican has allowed him
to rise as high as he will ever go.”

“And?” Falkirk prompted.

“All unconfirmed,” Mycroft warned, meaning it was true but unprovable. “Arthur's father, Uther was infatuated with Arthur's Mother, Igrine the then Duchess of Cornwall. It's believed Merlin dealt with the Duke who had a 'heart attack'. After Arthur was born and Cardinal Merlin was named guardian, Igrain jumped from a bridge. Uthur 'Stricken by Grief' followed a few weeks later. Leaving Arthur in the sole custody of the Cardinal Merlin.”

“Can anyone spell Mummy,” Falkirk shot and started towards Arthur. As they approached the Omega Falkirk could make out the elfin features and sparkling blue eyes.

“Distract the Cardinal,” Falkirk whispered before they were in range of their target. The Cardinal possessively placed a hand on the Omega's shoulder pulling him close.

Extending his hand to the Omega. Falkirk was smiling and very unthreatening as he said, “Arthur is it? Sir Thomas, I have heard a lot about you.”

Falkirk barely paid attention to Mycroft and the cardinal while he asked a few simple questions to Arthur. The hesitant Omega answering with well rehearsed and acceptable lines. Deciding to try and separate the two, Falkirk said, “Why don't we get some drinks for the Alphas?”

Getting a hesitant nod Falkirk took Arthur's arm and started to lead them off. Arthur came to a halt. Looking over, there was a hand on Arthur's shoulder and a glare on the Cardinal's face.

“A smile, a head tilted to the side... how very, adorable! I am not so naïve, Mr Falkirk Holmes Bond,” The Cardinal said with a malice in his voice and aggression tainting his scent.

For the first time, Arthur cringed from Falkirk as he let his features cool and harden. The poor omega almost a rope in a tug of war, with Falkirk's arm still entwined with one of Arthur's. And The Cardinal not letting go of the young omega's shoulder.

“Hello Arthur,” the voice of G cut through the growing tension.

Falkirk could see Arthur was expected to do something and was confused by the hand still holding him still. Falkirk's face returned to a pleasant expression, “Your Majesty! Arthur and I were going to get some drinks. Would you like anything?”

“Yes, Champagne if you please,” G responded unsure of the situation.

Falkirk flicked his eye to Mycroft hoping G would understand he was to stay close to the Alpha. Reluctantly Merlin released Arthur and the Omega's scent improved. As silently directed G stayed with Mycroft and the Cardinal.

Heading towards the refreshment table Falkirk noticed Arthur wanted to drop his head. Only some form of training prevented it.

“I am told you and the King are growing close?” Falkirk stated.

“We met at a New Year Eve's Ball, My god Father approves,” Arthur informed mechanically.
“And you, do you approve?” Falkirk asked, the question seeming to confuse the other Omega.

Eventually Arthur said, “Yes, the King would be a good mate.”

That didn't sound at all convincing to Falkirk. Not a mention about how handsome the blonde Alpha was. Or confidant. Or even how G could be sweet or charming. Nothing that indicated attraction from the Omega.

“Wonderful party,” the Countess of Grantham said coming up to them with Mary beside her.

“Quite,” Falkirk agreed politely before making the introductions.

The Countess seemed enthralled by the potential gossip of a mate for the king. Not so subtly reminding, “Of course, should you bond your children will only be in line if the king doesn’t marry.”

“Not as long as I'm around,” Falkirk said, confusing Arthur and the Countess. Mary staying quiet on how Falkirk got Daniel the hereditary title ahead of his legitimate sister.

Returning to the Alpha males, The cardinal soured seeing Arthur in the centre of the group. Falkirk one side Mary the other and the Countess of Grantham on Mary's far side. All four in whispered conversation. Arthur only exiting the group far enough to hand G a tall champagne flute. Falkirk making sure he handed the two he held to the cardinal and the other to Mycroft.

The Cardinal definitely didn't like what Falkirk said next.

“This public setting, so hard to get to know each other. I was thinking Skyfall but it's a bit small so Lady Mary kindly offered the use of Seagate. Just an intimate get to know you,” Falkirk said to G and the Cardinal.

“Oh, yes that sounds wonderful!” G said not taking his eyes off Arthur.

“How generous,” The Cardinal said, almost growling.

Falkirk turned to Arthur. “You must come for tea. Claridge's, with Lady Mary, Myself and a few others. Omegas only.”

The Cardinal answered for the omega, “Please send the invite, I will try to ensure Arthur is free.”

“Please try,” G asked the cardinal. “It is important any Mate is able to meet with my... M's approval.”

“Of course, Your Majesty,” The Cardinal answered before leading Arthur away. He was clearly annoyed, having lost this round. Falkirk pulled out his phone making a note to fully investigate the Cardinal.

Separating from the others, Falkirk and G started walking around the party.

“I can read Cardinal Merlin like a book. He has ambition for himself and Arthur,” Falkirk said, and warned, “If this is just an infatuation,”

“Away from his God Father Arthur is sharp and and funny, and reminds me of someone. Perhaps a
“bit more light hearted,” G said giving Falkirk a cheeky smile.

“Very well I will deal with the Cardinal and you tell Andrew his crush is taken,” Falkirk shot back.

“I knew I could count on you,” G said bumping his shoulder to Falkirk.

“Who knew that frightened, arrogant boy would grow up into you,” Falkirk said with pride. G blushing and ducking his head in response.

--

On the Sunday, the day after the garden party. Daniel arrived and instructed the children with Selene and Alec. James was dealing with an arms market in Africa. Mary and Darren were cooing over Keading and his round belly. Falkirk only waited until G arrived. Wishing him luck Falkirk directed him to the back garden with a final teasing warning, “Don't break my son's heart!”

Falkirk took Keading's arm as they descended the steps to the car, Darren escorted Mary. They were in Claridge's when Arthur arrived. Falkirk introduced the younger blonde to both Keading and Darren as they sat.

Polite conversation, perfect and expected behaviour. Keading was the first to notice Arthur was acting as if being watched. When Keading looked about the dining room Falkirk followed where his dark eyes led. As Keading looked at a table Falkirk noticed Arthur stiffen.

“Friends of yours, dear?” Mary asked the suddenly nervous omega.

“Just my God Father's chaperones,” Arthur informed.

“Well never mind them dear,” Mary insisted poring some more tea.

Falkirk had hoped to get a better read on the new Omega but he was playing a part. A part his god father had trained him for. What Falkirk really wanted to know was the extent to the Cardinal's plans.

Arriving home there was a distressed G with Alec and Selene barely concealing their amusement. Alec indicated upstairs where Falkirk found Andrew and Daniel, talking in his son's bedroom. The big Alpha had his arms around his god son who was sitting in his lap. Giving all the typical placations.

“You'll find someone when it's your time,” Daniel muttered. Falkirk wondered if he'd used the 'plenty of fish in the sea' yet.

Falkirk came to sit beside the Alpha who wrapped an arm around him as well to pull him into the group hug. Stroking Andrew's hair Falkirk received a watery eyed glare in response. The young Omega confronting the loss of his first crush.

“Uncle Daniel is right, When it's time you'll find someone,” Falkirk said.

For the rest of the afternoon and evening, Andrew was made a fuss of. Andrew's melancholy had trouble surviving a brainless action movie and gooey chocolate cake that Mrs Bridges made especially for him. Lying on his stomach with a fork full of cake Andrew stared at the TV as Arnold Schwarzenegger jumped onto a hovering fighter jet. Rupert showed as much interest in the
movie as Falkirk but they endured it for him.

Chapter End Notes

In case of confusion. I've stolen the characters from 'Chamalot' not 'Merlin'. So Jamie Campbell Bower as Arthur and Joseph Fiennes as Merlin.
Brayan

Chapter Notes

Thanks for reading comments and kudos.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

In his library, Falkirk sat at his desk to fill in each of the heavy stock ivory cards. Hudson had been persuaded to take a chair in Falkirk's presence, a break from tradition not normally done by the stringent alpha. Together they were organising the dates and agenda for the trip up north. Mary didn't maintain a full staff at Seagate Castle, so the butler would be joining them and taking temporary control of the domestic staff.

“There,” Falkirk said, sliding the half dozen invitations into envelopes and handing them over to the older blond alpha.

“Very good sir,” Hudson said scanning each envelope, double checking they were ready to be posted.

“If Sir has time, there's another matter,” Hudson hesitated. Only when Falkirk nodded did the Scotsman continue, “Brayan, he is easily confused and distracted. Mrs Bridges tends to escort him to and from his house. She is thrilled to have an Alpha and companion on her journey. However, sometimes, she notices he forgets why they are on a bus or where they are going. He trusts Mrs Bridges but I, well Mrs Bridges more accurately, get the impression Brayan doesn't give himself a choice in the matter.”

“Yes,” Falkirk mused, having his own concerns. Leaning back in his stiff wooden chair he said, “Brayan's social worker says it's a matter of developing a coping strategy that Brayan can work with.”

Falkirk thought about it. Despite Brayan's injuries he was still and alpha in his physical prime. James might not react well to that sort of Alpha so close, he'd admitted to having some territorial anxiety with Hudson and the butler was now into his sixties.

Coming to a decision, Falkirk said, “The garage flat, could you... No! Keading was so interested, send the boxes round to him, he can deal with them. Then have the maid freshen up the flat.”

“Very good, sir,” Hudson said with a smile and stood. “Good evening, sir.”

“Night Mr Hudson.”

--

Having returned home after a mission, just one of those silly missions that weren't noteworthy to James. Not everything he did was of world domination levels of threat. Sometimes it was simple, even if it was bloody and gruesome as he crashed an arms deal in fancy hotel and killed everyone. Daniel, his handler had been his usual bastard self, demanding to know why he vanished again,
this time between all hell breaking loose in Dubai and James pitching up at MI6 that morning. It wasn't even like James was the only Double O that dropped off the face of the earth after a mission. They needed that time to lick their wounds or work something out after a mission. He was willing to bet Falkirk didn't give the other Double Os grief for pitching up a few days late. But for the sake of their relationship Falkirk couldn't be James' direct commanding officer, they had tried that and failed.

James opened the door of the library quietly, while Falkirk worked on his laptop. He went to the drinks cabinet and lowered the door, so he could pour out two glasses, one his preferred scotch and the other his mate's bourbon.

“Andrew told me about G. I missed his first break up?”

Falkirk scoffed a bit, “Hardly! When Andrew has his first real breakup, I doubt chocolate cake and 'True Lies' will see him through it.”

“Heartless bastard,” James teased putting down Falkirk's glass while he took a seat. Having noticed the screen with a picture of a man, who had tanned skin and squarish face. The cardinal wore a traditional long red cassock and skull cap. “So who's the guy in the dress? And is your interest in him business or personal?”

“Personal at the moment.”

James chuckled, “So when do I go blow his brains out?”

Falkirk just shook his head.

“Ah, kneecapping job then?” James teased. Watching Falkirk close the laptop clearly dropping that subject.

“James,” Falkirk said, the alpha braced because that tone meant a talk. “How would you feel if Brayan moved into the flat above the garage?”

“Oh, is that it?” James relaxing and shrugging. “Don't think I'd mind.”

Falkirk smiled, that was easier then he expected. He thought it would have at least taken a couple of days for James to process his own emotions and come round to the idea.

“How was Turkey?”

James swore internally. That was the conversation he'd been expecting. “Fine,” he said and stood, going to the door. Before he could leave, his mate called to him.

“I don't mind...” Falkirk trailed off, his mate was gone. The Alpha reverting to shutting down and ignoring his emotions.

--

A few days later Falkirk walked to the end of the garden. Opening to door at the side of the garage he climbed the stairs up to the small apartment above it. Nodding his approval after it had been emptied and cleaned. It was a fair size living area with a galley kitchen. Through the only door was a double bedroom, with attached bathroom.
With James on board and the flat ready, it was time to give Brayan the choice.

Calling Brayan and Hudson into the library Falkirk sat them both down. Falkirk started asking Brayan how he liked working in the house. Brayan was able to give a few accounts of his duties, polishing silver and shoes were amongst his preferred tasks.

Falkirk gave the handsome man a smile and moved onto the pressing matter, “How’s your commute?”

“Good, not too long,” Brayan replied and both Falkirk and Hudson could see a rehearsed response.

“Do you go by train or bus?” Falkirk asked casually.

“Tr, bus. Mrs, Mrs..” Brayan trailed off, his memory failing him.

“Mrs Bridges is getting on and her hours will begin to be reduced soon. She will not be able to accompany you,” Falkirk said softly and could see the embarrassed hurt on the Alpha’s face. Falkirk knew that Brayan realised his limitations even if he refused to admit them.

“Would you like to move in? The garage’s apartment is small but serviceable,” Falkirk offered. Brayan looked between Hudson and Falkirk for guidance. Then Falkirk saw an uncertainty creep into the Alpha. Falkirk reminded, “Would you like to move in?”

There was relief in his old bodyguard and he nodded. “Yes please,” Brayan said before the thought could slip from his conscious mind again.

--

After dropping off the kids at school, Falkirk suddenly found himself in the sights of his Security chief. Selene crossed her arms.

Falkirk asked, “Something wrong?”

“Oh, no,” Selene said, glaring a bit. “Why would I be annoyed by five hundred dusty boxes taking up every inch of space. Or that Keading wants to go over every scrap of paper in them. Or that he won't tell me what he's looking for.”

“Trust him, he deserves some excitement.”

“Excitement! He's seven months pregnant!”

Falkirk chuckled, “And getting all the excitement he can, while tucked up at home, on a couch, going through boxes and boxes of files.”

“Eh...” Selene hesitated, “I suppose that's not too bad. What's in them?”

Falkirk shrugged. “They were Urquhart's files from the Whip's office. Every naughty thing a politician did, used to blackmail them into submission... I wonder if Mycroft's nudie photos are still in there? I really should have got rid of them... but I was in a state of shock when I found one! Keading had to get me a sweet tea and everything!”
Selene was laughing softly now.

"When I close my eyes, in the dead of night I still see... that... pasty, flat, backside..."

--

At the weekend, Falkirk and the boys helped Brayan lay out the apartment.

“Hammering!” Falkirk warned and made sure Brayan heard him before he drove the tacks of the picture hook into the wall. The Alpha didn't like sudden and unexpected noises. Falkirk wasn't sure if it was because of Brayan's injury or the military and MI6 training before it. Brayan would treat any sudden sound like most Operative treated a gun shot. When the hook was ready, Falkirk hung up the white board and wrote in the daily scheduled for Brayan.

“Something's missing,” Brayan said looking at the bullet point list on the right hand side of the whiteboard.

“Why do you think something's missing?” Falkirk asked, because Brayan was adapt at noticing changes even when he didn't know what they were.

Pointing to a knot on the wooden frame. “The list should reach there,” Brayan informed.

“You have a new routine,” Falkirk reminded softly. Brayan frowned as he looked between the board and Falkirk. Nodding in acceptance, Brayan went to familiarises himself with the apartment.

Then came the cork-board beside the white board, which Falkirk put up. It had not changed from Bryan's old flat. Containing photos of Falkirk with his name 'M' and 'boss' written on the white bottom border of the polyploid. There were other pictures of Hudson, Mrs Bridges, and pictures of the others who Brayan interacted with.

Sending Rupert and Andrew out Falkirk sat with Brayan for a while. Looking round the fairly large lounge with small attached kitchenette. Falkirk could see Brayan looking with a frown on his face, at his stuff, which he could remember, and the strange apartment he couldn't.

Holding out the whiteboard marker. “Do you want to make a note?” Falkirk said and indicated the whiteboard.

“My new home,” Falkirk reminded.

Brayan went up wrote the line along the top of the whiteboard. He then brushed the knot on the frame, then looked back to Falkirk, “Is something missing?”

Patiently Falkirk said, “You have a new schedule. It's shorter. Do you want to make a note?”

Brayan nodded and turned back to the board, underscoring the list and making a note at the top of the list. Falkirk stayed for a few hours, mostly just watching Brayan explore and every time he got bit confused by his surroundings there was a handy note there to reassure him.

Chapter End Notes
I'm no expert on brain injuries. Most of what I've gleaned is from some very basic research, so Brayan isn't meant to be an accurate portrayal of people suffering from such injuries. No offence is meant.
“There ya are, Sir,” drawled the American sitting across from Falkirk. In the man's hand was a small rectangular document adorned with a menorah crest on the front.

Taking the passport, Falkirk said, “Thank you. And please extend my thanks to the embassy staff who helped.”

“Sure thing, sir,” the alpha said and gave a tipping hat gesture even when he wore none.

Falkirk smiled as the attaché from the embassy left. A charming man, who had an older style of speaking even when quite young.

Slipping the document into his inside pocket, Falkirk stood. He met the Embassy Attaché at the lift again. Falkirk and Tanner were told a story of the American's grandmother on the way down, he truly had the gift of the gab. While Tanner escorted their guest down Falkirk got off only after two floors.

In a large room where the liaison from all the other institutions from around the world had a representative. Falkirk found DiNozzo showing off a small baby he held in his arms. Currently the NCIS Liaison was showing his daughter to Barry Kohler from Mossad. Falkirk had only met the beta with curly black hair once, on the day Kohler started.

“M?” DiNozzo said, seeing him and breaking away from the others. “Please, can I let Tali meet her mom, once?”

“That's why I'm here,” Falkirk said. Turning away, he beckoned the other man to follow.

The three went down to the brig. Falkirk asking DiNozzo to wait while he went into the row of cells alone. Coming to the only one with a prisoner. The woman sat huddled into the far corner. With a wave to the guard the glass door was opened for Falkirk.

“I'll kill you,” the angry woman said. Falkirk would expect nothing else from a mother who had never seen her child, and didn't even know if it was a boy or a girl let alone what DiNozzo had decided to name her.

“Agent DiNozzo's tenure at MI6 is over. He will be taking Tali David-DiNozzo back to the States tonight.”

The woman's dark, red rimmed eyes looked up. “Tali?”

Falkirk nodded, “Apparently, named after your sister.... Anyway. I arranged this, and a visa.”
Falkirk pulled out the passport and ticket, and dropped them on the floor by the seated woman.

With cautious fingers, Ziva reached out to check the documents.

“You may go, Ms David.”

“Why!” demanded Ziva looking up from her passport.

“That question does not have a good answer, Ms David. Let us end our relationship on as civil a note as possible.”

Falkirk left, passing the waiting DiNozzo at the desk of the Brig's custody officer. Falkirk walked right past the desk, he didn't look back when he heard the gasp and even tears as the family met again.

--

Falkirk watched the feed from London Heathrow on his computer. He watched what looked like any other family moving through security. Ziva hardly letting her daughter out of her arms, after losing her once.

His office door clicked open and James stuck his head in, “You better come. We've had our fun, this is now cruel.”

“What's cruel?” Falkirk asked, standing to follow his mate through E-Branch. James just waved him towards the room that looked like a small cinema theatre.

The Situation Room was full, and everyone started fidgeting when they noticed M. Tanner was the only one not here, which was why James was the one to come get him. On the big screen, from the point of view of a laptop's web-cam it showed a hotel room with two Double Os squaring up.

Double O Six waved his arms and shouted, “....Oh back off, Bull Dyke! It's my mission you're stomping all over with you size fourteen Doc Martins!”

“Oh fuck off! Ya mincing fairy!” Double O Nine said with a deep rasp in his voice.

“Oh! And how hard did you try practising that growl! It doesn't work, you're a bitch! Remember!”

Maloney pulled back his fist, Thomas stepped right into the other Double O's face. Falkirk said, “Am I interrupting?”

The two on camera Double Os froze. Both slowly turned to the camera and jumped apart like the naughty boys, caught red handed, that they were.

Falkirk ordered, “Anyone still in this room in three seconds gets fired!”

Falkirk catching Darren trying to sneak out amongst the mass, “I thought better of you.”

“How?” the unrepentant omega said, “If they want to make areses of themselves, I'm gonna laugh at them along with everyone else.”

Letting Darren go, Falkirk looked back at the screen with the two skulking Omega operatives.
M's voice rather soft and angry, “I don't care what's going on! If one or either of you balls up the mission don't bloody well come back, either one of you!”

Falkirk tapped the disconnect button on the computer. The operator having run off with the rest of the audience.

Coming out of the situation room, it allowed the operators back in. Falkirk crossed the room, to his own office at the front. James was inside, having helping himself to a bourbon from the decanter Falkirk kept in there.

“You could have stepped in,” Falkirk complained, taking his scramble 'M' decanter and pouring a glass for himself.

James just shrugged, “I have to work with them. Better you're the bad guy.”

“Thank you James. Really.”

“Hay! M's meant to be the hard-assed bitch, I'm sure it says so in the by-laws or something.”

Falkirk closed down his computer. He would enjoy the drink with his mate before going home with him. He pressed the intercom and told Darren, “I'm finished for the day, If you want to head off early.”

Darren gave him a thumbs up and started to gather his coat and things.

For conversation James asked about 006 and 009, especially here where they could talk openly without young ears overhearing. Falkirk answered, “Thomas was looking into the high end people smuggling of Europeans into the the middle east. Maloney was investigating an arms route from Europe into the middle east. I suppose what we thought to be independent operations had a common link, if Thomas and Maloney are falling over each other. Makes sense in bad way, if you've gone to the effort of setting up a secure trade route, why limit yourself to just one illegal cargo.”

“Wherever there is a want there's a market,” James observed. “Well we're here to deal with it.”

“Some of it,” Falkirk clarified. “We're only involved because of chance. Kidnappers took the wrong boy from British streets, one who still had concerned and loving parents despite him living rough. We don't know how many girls, boys and bois have already been taken and smuggled out, without someone to notice they just vanished. And we don't know about similar kidnappings in other countries.”

Falkirk took a sip of the smokey whisky before he added, “Then there's the arms, again by chance we're investigating. For terrorists in the middle east, Kalashnikovs are a dime a dozen and expected. But during an attack on a British base in Jordan an insurgent dropped a suspiciously unusual, Steyr AUG. No, vigilance, chance and luck gives us more leads than all that 'intelligence' we gather.”

“Something up?” James asked.

Falkirk shook his head, “Just some new whiz kid, at Kings College who's gaining notice. Theoretically what he proposes is possible, and a lot of old men who don't understand the practical
implications think his idea is wonderful. This Turner is far too academic for my liking. ”

“How old is he?”

“Eh, early teens I think.”

“Sound's like jealousy to me,” James teased. “You're not the young star you used to be.”

“Bugger off!”

“Damn it!” Falkirk hoped they could have saved the one that put MI6 onto this investigation. But as he he looked over what 006 had sent him, that was now a lost hope. Nothing made his blood boil like innocents being caught up in events outside their own control. He closed the image file of the boy's body, and 006's assessment of a violent death with 'ritualistic' hall marks.

The two Double Os were working well together for the most part. Falkirk now had a name, 'Goldeneye' for whoever was in charge of the operation.

Tanner came in, holding his trusty tablet.

“M, we've been tracing the customers of Goldeneye. MI5 flagged someone so Control sent us this,” Tanner said and an image appeared on the glass wall. It showed a private jet with a Rolls Royce and several less impressive cars waiting on the tarmac.

“Prince Razzaz, of Jordan,” Tanner said identified a man in long white robes and headdress. “From Double O Six's intel we've identified this girl and a British citizen. Anna Karen, eighteen years old, disappeared from a group home, three years ago.”

“He's smuggled her back in?” Falkirk demanded. Tanner nodded in answer. “The arrogant...”

“M, the prince has diplomatic immunity.”

Falkirk just smiled.

The grey Aston Martin pulled up at the Victorian era hotel in Westminster. Getting out, James let the valet deal with the car while he entered into the beautifully lit building, highlighting the classic architectural details.

Dressed in a bespoke light grey suite and yellow silk tie no one noticed James cross the foyer and head for the grand stairs.

On the top floor of the five star hotel. James headed down a corridor with a single door at the end, guarded by two men. Pulling out his arm, with silenced Walther ready in hand, he shot both. Each guard jerked with the impact of the bullet, with the white plaster being spattered by stark crimson blood. Reaching the door with a slumped body each side, James, raised his foot and kicked it in. Another guard was in the lounge area, who fell to James' ready gun.

Beginning a search of the rooms. The master bedroom was empty of his target. He found her in a
smaller room, sitting on the bed like a doll. She was very pretty, with milky complexion and honey blond hair. Her glassy green eyes looked up at James without reaction to the strange man now in her room.

“Anna,” James said and the girl flinched and whined, then shook her head.

“No, not her any more.”

Holding out his hand to the beta woman, “I'm here to help,” she cringed away from James.

Going down on one knee, so James wasn't standing over her. James said, “We watched you arrive. We found out who you are. This is your rescue.”

Very slowly James reached out to cup the girl's face, she let him. So as not to startle Anna James was careful as he moved to put his arm around her and bring Anna to her feet.

Anna yelped when she saw the first body in the living area of the suite. James held her close and shield her face as he walked her towards the door. Using a service door he entered the staff corridors and stairs of the hotel. He came out of the building, round back where the cars were parked. His Aston, as had been arranged still had the key in it.

James took Anna to MI6, where a counsellor and Tanner were waiting on them. The girl was still very doll like as James helped her out of the car. The only independent thing she did was cling to his hand when James pulled away. He couldn't stay though.

“I'll see you soon,” James promised and got back in his car. For his operation was just beginning.

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The whole restaurant looked to a table, when one customer snapped his fingers loudly. No longer dressed in traditional attire, Prince Razzaz was like most of the other high class clientele dressed in dark suit.

When the hulking goon that was the prince's bodyguard came over and leaned down, Razzaz whispered, “I don't like the way that one keeps looking at me. Get rid of him.”

The four sharing the table with the prince all turned to look at the darkened and intimate booth. Sitting causally on the end of the bench seating, a tall and lean man played with a cut glass tumbler, with his legs crossed. Every so often the light glinted off his square glasses, but he never looked away from the prince.

Suddenly Razzaz found himself alone as all his dining companions got up. It was confusing as to why all these powerful men were suddenly running away. Grabbing the hand of the last, the prince demanded, “Who is he?”

“M.” the old, grey haired alpha said, like the name should have meaning. The guest pulled his arm free and walked quickly towards the door.

The people around the Prince were all well aware of the power they held, and if they were running the prince decided it was wise to do the same. Getting up, the prince and his bodyguard headed for the entrance.
“Ah, Prince Razzaz?” said Hodder, just entering with his own body guards. “I didn't know...”

The Prince followed his bodyguard who brushed aside the politician trying to greet him.

Already waiting at the curb was the Prince's modern, bright red, Rolls Royce Ghost. Getting in the back, with his bodyguard beside him Razzaz smelled something, acrid and unusual in the cabin.

His bodyguard tried the door handle, even with the car moving but it wouldn't open. Pulling out his gun the bodyguard tried to raise it towards the driver, his arm sluggish and waving wildly. The bodyguard toppled forward onto the floor.

The prince really thought he should be pancaking or something, his brain on the other other hand was getting sluggish and disjointed. The light headed feeling overtook the prince and he slumped in his seat.

From the driver seat, James looked over his shoulder. A rebreather mask covering his nose and mouth, to filter the contents of the small gas tank that sat beside him.

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The Prime Minister sat behind his desk at No.10, his office rather full. There were representatives from the Met, MI5, his own Foreign Secretary and Home Secretary, a few other relevant misters and of course the Ambassador from Jordan and his people.

Charles Flyte was giving Britain's formal apology for the disappearance of the Jordanian Prince to the Ambassador. The Met commissioner then gave a rundown on the investigation.

Mallory as Control adding, “We believe this was a professional kidnapping, your Excellency. Whoever it was that took the prince, was skilled and it looks like this was in the planning for some time.”

From his inside pocket Mallory pulled out a still from a security camera and showed the ambassador the picture of the girl, “Your Excellency, We would like help identifying her. She arrived with the prince, but there was no passport or record of her entry. She was also the first target. The prince's suite was stormed, his security was killed...”

“Irrelevant! The Prince is all that is important,” The ambassador answered then turned back to the Prime Minister to accuse, “Several witnesses saw M at the Restaurant before Prince Razzaz vanished.”

A tall man cleared his throat, to draw attention to him. The Foreign Secretary said, “Prime Minister, when I delayed my meeting with M, he suggested dinner. I recommended the restaurant we met at. It was purely down to coincidence that the prince and M were there at the same time. As has been established, I was the last to see the Prince. He seemed deeply concerned about something as I said.”

“I will admit, M is a little extreme,” The Prime Mister told the Ambassador from Jordan. “But not even he is so brazen as to commit a kidnapping of a guest of this government. I assure you.”

Mallory adding, “Your Excellency, are you sure this woman is unknown. We find it deeply suspicious that she was taken first... perhaps she's a mistress or something... This could be a domestic matter.”
“Jordan is not involved!” the ambassador snapped.

Mallory cleared the lump in his throat, “I was considering something more domestic than that. Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned, and all that.”

“The woman is of no concern, only the prince!” Standing, the ambassador ordered, “I expect cooperation between our countries in this investigation.”

The Prime Minister assured someone from the Jordanian authorities would be welcomed for the instigation.

When the Ambassador was gone, Prime Minister looked to Mallory, “Are we sure M was not involved?”

Mallory nodded, “M, he believes sometimes you need to do a bad thing to achieve a good end. But he is quite open about it. If he was involved, we would have found Prince Razzaq lynched from a lamp post or something.”

“M was a bit annoyed, when we met,” Hodder added. “We couldn't speak but it was to do with conflicting operatives, but we've all had to deal with inter office conflicts. They truly are most trying. Control, you really think this woman is involved.”

“My money's on the wife, she's rich, arrogant and selfish from what I've learned,” Mallory said. “I wouldn't put it passed her to get rid of a philandering husband and mistress in one go... It all seems just too well planed. Are you sure you don't want MI6 involved?”

The Prime Minister said, “No, I think not.”
The wicked flee though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion.  
- 01/03

Chapter Notes

Thanks for the comments, kudos and to everyone who reads

Glaring at two unrepentant Omegas, proving they could be just as arrogant as any Alpha. Having completed a joint mission with the prerequisite destruction, flamboyance and the headaches for M, Maloney(009) and Thomas(006) were now going through the ritual of the symbolic debriefing. Falkirk using the opportunity to rein in the egos of the two Omega Operatives.

“A Ferrari and a Lamborghini?” Falkirk asked.

“Only cars with the keys in them,” Stuart Thomas stated. Completely unrepentant just like every other Operative.

“At least the Ferrari cost ONLY £150,000,” Falkirk said to Thomas then turned to Maloney, “Opposed to the £295,000 of the Lamborghini.”

“Well I am the senior operative,” Maloney dismissed. “Speaking of senior operatives, we noticed James wasn't with Alec tormenting the recruits?”

Falkirk's eyes fluttered, showing his own hesitation. Thomas accused, “Has he taken over our mission.”

“Yes,” Falkirk admitted. Not technically true, but that was just semantics. “The two of you accomplished your mission to shut down the trade route going from Europe to the middle east. James is now investigating the leads into this unknown organisation you mentioned. And this 'Goldeneye'.”

“M,” Maloney said, sharing a glance with the other Double O, “Goldeneye might not be the lead it appears. I came up with the name, when someone described the leader as having a golden coloured glass eye.”

“I am aware of that, Double O Nine,” Falkirk said, “I do actually read the reports you write. Goldeneye will be the codename until we have a positive...”

Falkirk's mobile started ringing, interrupting him. Pulling it out of his pocket he frowned at Keading's name being displayed. Keading had never phoned him directly at work since moving to England. If needed, Keading only ever contacted him via Darren.

Answering there was a far off stressed babbling on the other end, not Keading though. There was also mewling in the background then a thump, as if the phone had been dropped. He could hear Keading trying to calm someone and then another strange voice with authority barking orders and Keading arguing back.
“Keading!” Falkirk demanded and got no response. Switching to speaker Falkirk placed the phone down, so he could pull up Keading's tracker while snapping at Maloney to get Tanner and for Thomas to get Selene. All was done seamlessly.

When Keading's location came up Falkirk recognised it as the Refuge. About to send up an alert Falkirk noticed a Special Branch declaration, they were raiding the premises for 'Persons of Interest'.

Falkirk recognised the MO of the protection branch of the Met. The abstract nature of the notification without an identified target, crime or any useful information what so ever. That bunch of thugs in uniform were up to no good again. Falkirk briefly remembering when his dad sent them to his flat, and they came up a just returned pre-double O Six Alec. His dad never tried that trick again.

“Two Tactical teams, NOW!” Falkirk ordered Tanner, passing the beta as he left his office.

“With me, Selene, Maloney and Thomas!” Falkirk ordered, grateful the two omegas could join him on this. Alphas not welcome at the refuge.

Darren followed the group briefing Falkirk on the orders issued. Detailing how Daniel and Alec would meet them in the garage armed and with equipment for M, 006 and 009. Tanner was also going to contact Mycroft to find out what Special Branch were up to. Lestrade was to meet them at the refuge to make sure the Met knew who they were to listen to, namely the pissed off omega in charge of MI6.

Arriving in MI6's parking garage. The tactical team were split between two vans, Daniel in one, with Alec in the other. The two Double Os joined Falkirk in his car with Selene. All taking their equipment from the trolley that had been brought up from Q Branch. The convoy of two police escort bikes, a large jaguar and two vans pulled out of the building.

With the comms up connecting Falkirk to the teams, Alec and Daniel, he started the briefing. Falkirk gave the scenario as he knew it, and of Keading and his relevance to Selene and condition. He ordered 006 and 009 to enter at the rear of the property. 006 entered a whispered discussion with 009, he had been to the refuge before so could describe the layout.

“Selene,” Falkirk called cutting through the noise of the car and into the Alpha's awareness. Her scent was washing through the enclosed space dominating the Beta driver and three Omegas. It was a dangerous mix of terror and blind fury.

“Trust me,” Falkirk said and got a weak hopeful nod in answer. Falkirk made sure to transmit his plea so Alec and Daniel would hear. A truly rogue Alpha couldn't identify friend from foe, they focused on a single thing and perused it and killed anyone who crossed them. Falkirk wanted everyone warned.

“I do,” Selene said quietly not turning to look at Falkirk. She shot out her arm to press it against the roof of the car while the other pressed to the dashboard, “Barrier, brace!”

The escort police bike dropped back to join the other one behind Falkirk's car. The engine roared and there was a burst of acceleration as driver rammed the cordon.

Coming to a screeching halt, Falkirk had to jump out quickly as he was blocking the way of the two Double Os. 006 and 009 ran round the rear, to enter the building at the back.
Falkirk squared up to the police officers coming towards him. He relied on the old tactic of repeating orders very loudly until he was obeyed. The posturing police officers abruptly went silent, when fifteen heavily armed MI6 personnel piled out of the two vans behind Falkirk.

“Selene?” Falkirk called before she could run into the house. With a monumental force of will she returned to Falkirk's side.

“Alec, you go first!” Falkirk instructed and indicated the front door.

A police officer was marching out a terrified omega by the scruff. The Officer froze seeing Alec blocking his path and no backup to be seen. From inside came an omega screeching hiss and answered by an alpha a growled, “Bitch!”

The hissing Omega inside fell silent as did the growling Alpha. Behind the officer frozen in the doorway, the black clad Omega female who ran the refuge was backed out the way so Maloney could rounded the corner.

Alec stepped to the side allowing the officer in tactical armour and helmet to see Falkirk.

“Release that omega,” Falkirk ordered. Falkirk could scent the Alpha's nervousness with the exchange. Looking passed the the officer, Falkirk ordered, “Double O Nine, on the count of three you will shoot to kill!”

Looking behind himself, the officer came face to muzzle with 009's gun. Before Falkirk could start counting the officer released his grip, and slowly raised his arms. Alec grabbed him, haling the officer out and throwing him into the street.

Margot, the black clad Omega moved to the released Omega. Pulling the girl into a tight hug. Thomas marched out another officer who held his hands up, with the Double O's gun held to the back of his skull.

“Where’s Keading?” Falkirk asked crouching down by the pair of omegas.

“Gone, they took them!” Margot hissed pointing a finger at the police behind Falkirk.

Selene grabbed the nearest officer and growled at him. He soon gave up the station they were working out of. Ordering 006 to secure the premises with one van of men, Falkirk headed for the police station. Selene was not ding well, she bounced and fidgeted constantly. Her dark blue eyes had gone glassy and so dangerous. Worst of all, from Falkirk's point of view her scent ques had gone muted, meaning she was in a full alpha fury.

Bursting through the dors of the station, with Selene on his left and Daniel on his right Falkirk stilled. Stella Gibson, the other Omega who ran the refuge stood with an unknown Beta male. Two Male officers, one Alpha the other Beta stood behind the desk. All seemed to be in a state of stunned silence.

“Who is in charge?” Falkirk asked.

“I, I am” the older, Alpha officer behind the desk responded.

“You are a Sargent this is a major station, I doubt it!” Falkirk returned. “Where is the Super
Intendant?"

“Gone.”

“His subordinate?” Falkirk demanded.

“Gone as well,” Gibson answered.

“Everyone above me left,” The Sargent informed, a waver in his voice.

Gibson said, “Apparently they provoked a powerful official. Officers have been running away for the past five minutes.”

Falkirk noticed paper and a few other bits and pieces that had been dropped on the floor.

“Then you get to deal with me,” Falkirk said looking to the Sargent. Seeing the terror on the two officers behind the desk, Falkirk spoke gently, “You raided my friend's refuge. Amongst those you took was a pregnant Omega male, her Mate...” Falkirk indicating Selene. The Sargent backed up when he looked at Selene. “Take me to them now!”

The two policemen had seen their superiors desert them. With command now in the hands of a Sargent, the Alpha decided to buzzed the security door open. Falkirk and Selene went first with Gibson and the Beta with her following.

They were led to the custody suite where their escort spoke with the Custody Sargent. The Custody Sargent didn't quite believe the story of the officers abandoning their posts. Which was the point Selene couldn't hold back, with a growling roar she jumped the high desk and beat the Custody Sargent to a pulp.

Bloody and calm, Selene stood holding the Custody Sargent's ring of keys. Calmly, now the obstacle was out the way she came round the desk and unlocked the door to the cell block.

“Open this fucking door or I'll scratch your eyes out...” An American voice screamed bloody murder echoing out of the cells. Selene ran to her mate. She fumbled with the lock and growled at it in frustration. Falkirk was cautious of the Alpha as he took the key from her hand and opened the door. He was pushed aside by the alpha intent on getting to her mate.

Keading gave a squeak as he was manhandled and inspected by the Alpha. After Selene calmed some and regained some of her higher functions, Keading started reciprocated. Now Selene could understand he assured his Alpha he'd been treated well despite being arrested.

“Falkirk, the other cells?” Keading said, from within the arms of his Alpha. The woman smelling him and patting him down constantly.

Nodding, Falkirk went to the neighbouring cell. Gibson rushed passed him and to the omega huddled at the back of the cell. She looked up at Falkirk, “Find Max, please?”

There was only one other closed cell on the block, so Falkirk opened it. He gagged a bit at the wash of alpha fear, to an omega it was quite rank. Like an omega though, the boy inside the cell whimpered and cowered into the corner.

From the circle of his mate's arms. Keading said, “His name's Max, he's... He won't hurt you.”
The Alpha inside the cell, cowering in a corner reeking of fear and whimpering. He was a younger than Falkirk perhaps early to mid twenties. Dark hair and not that big for an Alpha, was all Falkirk could tell for the moment. Taking off his suit jacket Falkirk draped it over the Alpha's shoulders. Sitting down beside him Falkirk wrapped an arm about him.

“Max?” Falkirk called softly but got no reply. The familiar voice of Keading standing at the door eventually broke through to the Alpha. Lifting his head Max's dark green eyes, first went Falkirk then Keading. The moment Max's eyes landed on Selene he whimpered and cowered closer to Falkirk. Stroking the Alpha's neck Falkirk tucked him under his chin.

“You need to rest,” Selene insisted, quietly. “Bu..” Keading trailed off and allowing Selene to lead him away.

Maloney replaced Selene at the door. Looking in he wore an open expression of concern. Falkirk was in agreement he had never seen an Alpha in this state. The closest was Rupert, when he had been abandoned. The fact the young Alpha ran away showed he still had the Alpha attitude under the fear though. The Alpha under Falkirk's chin seemed to have shut down, more like an Omega would do.

Although subdued Max was still an Alpha. When he slowly wrapped his arms round Falkirk's waist and tightened his grip it was with the force of an Alpha.

“You're safe, I won't leave, not so tight...” Falkirk whispered to the Alpha. Getting a whimper Max withdrew his arms. With the Alpha beginning to respond. “Are you up to moving?”

After getting a nod, Falkirk started to stand with the young Alpha following his lead. Even standing the Alpha fit comfortably under Falkirk's chin. With 009 at his back Falkirk walked the Alpha out. Gibson was still in the cell with the Omega girl.

“Wait for Gibson,” Falkirk ordered Maloney, indicated the cell with the two Omegas.

Continuing through to the Custody Suite, the Special branch Sargent still waiting, while paramedics wheeling out the one with his face a bloodied mess.

Keading glared daggers at a constable waiting off to the side. Selene also had the terrified constable in her line of sight.

“Max?” Keading said, breaking from his mate's grasp and coming to the Alpha's other side.

“Why don't you help Gibson, then we can get out of here,” Falkirk encouraged. Keading looked torn then went back into the cell block with Selene following close behind her waddling mate.

Indicating the door they had come through, the desk Sargent took the hin and led Falkirk and his charge back. Only half way down the route did Falkirk notice all his personal guards had been left back in the custody suite. He was alone in hostile territory being led by an unknown alpha with a damaged Alpha clinging to him. Something in his calm scent must have changed as his charge mewedled as well as any Omega, high, distressed and frightened. The young Alpha’s arms became a band of steel around Falkirk's waist.

“Safe!” Falkirk stated firm and sure. If push came to shove, Falkirk had a Walther under his waist coat. “You are safe with me!”
The Alpha seemed to react to the authority as Falkirk was squeezed uncomfortably again. Coming to the station's front desk Falkirk escorted them out. Relief came to Falkirk and was reflected in his charge. He was now outside with his car in sight and a group of MI6 squaddies milling about.

Guiding Max to go in first Falkirk followed. The Alpha immediately plastered himself against the Omega again the second Falkirk was in. Falkirk continued to stroke the Alpha's back and neck, amazed a gesture used for an Omega was working so well to calm an Alpha.

Eventually Gibson appeared with Maloney, both either side of a small dark haired Omega. From the distance Falkirk could see a similarity between the Omega under his arm and the one being escorted by the short red haired woman. Falkirk could see the reluctance in Gibson as she was encouraged toward his car.

It was a bit of a squeeze in the car. Gibson and Maloney sat either side of the Omega girl. Keading sat the other side of Max to Falkirk. While a much more controled Selene had taken up her old place beside the driver, she still looked back constantly to make sure her mate was safe though.

006 was still on guard at the door of the refuge when they returned. Through the door the black clad Omega, Margot was bustling about. Fear was the prominent scent in the air from several Omegas, coming from all directions. Falkirk felt himself squeezed again.

Margot looked every bit the evil witch as she pointed to the Alpha under Falkirk's chin. “No, bad enough that they came down on us once. He, they can't be here,” She demanded including Falkirk.

“What about me?” Keading snapped from behind Falkirk with Gibson adding at the same time, “We will not turn someone away just because they're an Alpha, or are part of the establishment.”

Falkirk recognised an old argument when he saw one, overlooking he was 'the establishent' to these people. With an annoyed groan Margot picked up a blanket and with a swish of long black dres stormed off. Some of the more capable of the residents were helping, by ferrying blankets and warm drinks to the rooms of the darkened house.

Gibson led them to a room. Falkirk noticed the recently mangled lock and frame. Inside she encouraged her charge into a nest. Max reluctantly let go, to follow the Omega into the nest. Only when the two were in a large mound of blankets did Falkirk and Gibson pull back.

It seemed a stressful age before they could slump into the chairs, in the kitchen.

Falkirk asked, "So what did I just step in to?"
The wicked flee though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion.
- 02/03

Chapter Notes

thanks for the comments, kudos and for reading.

The chapter title has changed a bit, to the full quote. I forgot, I split the original file into three chapters not two, so splitting the proverb's quote doesn't quite work now. Not a big change, but I thought I'd explain in case anyone was curious.

After one hell of a morning, Falkirk was able to have some tea with Keading and Stella Gibson. Falkirk was still at a loss to what was going on, there hadn't yet been time for answers. The refuge Gibson ran was still in chaos after a raid by the protection branch of the Metropolitan Police. MI6 personnel were still standing guard outside, where Selene waited for her mate. The alpha respecting the sanctum of the refuge, that until today Falkirk had assumed to only cater for omegas until he saw a young Alpha male. Absently, Falkirk noticed the white sleeve of his shirt with the gold, stud cufflinks, he'd lost his suite jacket at some point but couldn't quite remember where.

“Hello?” a voice said, of a man coming in from behind Falkirk. It was the beta who accompanied Gibson to the station. Falkirk had paid him little attention when they first saw each other, in what felt like a week ago and not the hour or so it actually was.

Gibson indicated the beta and introduced him as Lee Foulds, an MP and supporter of the refuge. The beta was constantly looking Falkirk up and down, and before a hello or anything more polite he accused, “You're the one who dealt with Magnussen.”

“I have no idea to what you are referring,” Falkirk answered and got tight smile in return. As with most betas, Foulds made little initial impact on Falkirk's perception. Beyond his neat brown hair, and round glasses making a red mark on the bridge of his nose, he was a little indistinct. Foulds joined them at the kitchen table.

Now he felt it was time for answers, so Falkirk asked to know what was going on. Falkirk watched the exchange of glances as Keading, Gibson and Foulds looked at each other. A silent debate occurred between them, with Keading giving a pleading looking to Gibson and Foulds. Falkirk deducing his pack mate wanted to tell him everything but not without consent of the other two. Gibson twitched when she caught Foulds eye. Apparently she was willing to speak as well.

Before Gibson could speak Foulds interrupted her, he started with the unusual subject of himself. Foulds spoke about being part of a Media Committee. The same one Lady Smallwood had been on. Falkirk decided to cut out the roundabout setting up of a scene, “You were trying to rein in Magnussen and he black mailed you?”

“No, well he tried, but I refused to submit to Magnussen so he released a slew of negative publicity. As a politician I was black listed,” Foulds said. He then looked deeply troubled, “I was then approached by a man, whose son vanished. Magnussen and all his papers destroyed the father's reputation. They did everything short of saying he murdered his own son. Taking a chance on me,
one who Magnussen similarly destroyed the father insisted his son hadn't run away, he insisted his son had been kidnapped and murdered.”

“Son, not...?” Falkirk said indicating the direction of the omega and Alpha, that had been targeted by the recent raid. Gibson shook her head and said “No. Lee's poking about led him to contacting us. We had already heard rumours... disturbing ones.”

Hanging his head Foulds stared at the grain of the table, unblinking. “I started looking into the allegations and came up against, at time it seemed like everyone. Politicians, Police, Military, Secret Service, Royals, media. It was terrifying.”

Betas didn't give scent ques but the distress and fear in Foulds' tone left no doubt in Falkirk's mind about how frightened he was. Gibson on the other hand Falkirk could scent the fear like a pungent fog. Only himself and Keading didn't reek of it.

“The files?” Falkirk asked Keading, remembering the first hint of something wrong. Keading nodded then turned and gave a pointed look to Gibson. The short woman stood and went over to the cooker. On the floor just in front she lifted a floor tile, pulling out a bundle of papers hidden there. Gently she placed them in front of Falkirk.

Giving the documents a quick look through, Falkirk found the run of the mill, seedy clubs, prostitutes, brothels, drugs. All good blackmail material that he and in his time as Chief Whip, Francis Urquhart used against the politicians. There was nothing more then slap on the wrist, in judicial terms though.

“There was one man careless enough to leave a trail,” Foulds started. “There were witnesses, allegations, hard copies of police records. But about twenty years ago every electronic record simply vanished. Keading said he knew him, a client of his from New York.”

Falkirk glanced at Keading, who had a wavering unsure look. Keading said, “I wanted to help them.”

Falkirk cringed, even dead his father was still screwing with their lives.

“Can't blame you for wanting to help,” Falkirk said and reached out to take his pack mate's hand. “In truth, I'm impressed you're stirring up as much trouble as anyone else in the pack.”

Keading ducked his head and blushed. Such a cute gesture. So far he'd been a bit in the shadow of everyone else.

Margot burst in, haggard and frustrated. Her dark hair fell over her face and she was sagging like she had the weight of the world on her. In a sigh she announced, “Victoria tried to run! His goon frightened her back in. She's hiding under the stairs now.”

“They don't feel safe here.” Gibson mused. Getting up to go help the other woman who ran the refuge.

Falkirk, Keading and Foulds sat in silence after the departure of the two female omegas. Double O six came in, dabbing and the scratch marks on his cheek.

“M, Tanner has been trying to get a hold of you. And Ms Corvin in pacing a trench on the the pavement.”
Keading pushed himself up, “I’m surprised she hasn’t barged in.” He passed the omega Double O and went to deal with his overly protective mate.

Falkirk suddenly remembered his jacket was still with the young Alpha and his phone was in it.

“Wait!” Falkirk called, catching up to Keading.

Keading took him to the room they left the young Alpha and Omega. Keading opened the door onto the room with the nest at the back, between the two beds. At some point Falkirk's jacket had been placed outside the cocooning nest, neatly folded.

Stepping forward Falkirk placed his hand on the nest. “Thank you,” he said and picked up the suit jacket.

There were several missed calls from Tanner, probably why the omega and alpha had placed the jacket outside the nest.

Outside the room and heading for the front door of the house. Falkirk asked, “Are they brother and sister?”

“Identical Twins,” Keading informed. “Foulds and Gibson hoped they would be brave enough to testify if we could protect them. They were pretty much slaves for... for, Joss Leyton.”

Falkirk knew that name, he grasped Keading's elbow. He would have looked Keading in the eye if the omega would look at him in turn. Almost begging, “You know who Leyton is, why didn't you tell me.... Gibson and Foulds didn't trust me, did they?”

Keading still looked down as he shook his head. Falkirk pulled the omega in for a hug. Keading whispered, “I tried to stay out of everything.”

“I don't care about the trouble and chaos, I've been dealing with that crap for years. You know I'm here for you, though? You're family! Pack! My friend! If you pick a fight, you've got me, a few assassins, coppers, loads of pains-in-the-asses, even a king as back up?”

Keading gave a strange, sort of bashful nod. Falkirk leaned in, to give a lick to the other omega's neck. Normally an old fashioned gesture of sorrow or gratitude, but Falkirk felt it right to do to seal the closeness of their friendship.

Bashfully, Keading wiped his neck with a blush that even turned his ears pink. “I know you're here. That's kinda why, well I sorta knew... well not knew, thought you would understand me not telling you.”

“So long that's it,” Falkirk said. “And not thinking you're alone... or can't trust me.”

Falkirk's phone ringing for the eighth time in an hour interrupted them. Answering, his Chief of Staff spoke quickly without greeting.

“Mycroft is here, he wants to see you and Keading!” Tanner informed.

A shriek went up from out of sight, and a woman came round the corner of the hall at high speed. Keading had just enough time to stand out of the way as she barrelled into Falkirk. The woman and
Falkirk crashed to the floor. Mewing she frantically tried to escape their tangled limbs. A sudden pain came from Falkirk's neck as he was slashed by the distressed Omega's sharp nails. Gibson arrived to pry the frantic woman off Falkirk, getting a nasty scratch also, along her arm.

Falkirk hated it, he was on the back foot reacting. He didn't know why James loved it so. Falkirk needed order even when in chaos, he needed to be the one putting someone else on the back foot.

Picking up his phone Mycroft had replaced Tanner demanding information.

“Put Tanner back on!” Falkirk snapped. When it was again Tanner he was speaking to, Falkirk started issuing his orders. He had a plan for the moment and it helped centre his focus.

--

Falkirk found himself in an old office building MI6 owned. Four stories tall, with lots of small and medium sized rooms in the rabbit warren of corridors. Margot, the young but witch like omega, who had reluctantly accompanied Falkirk agreed the old office block would be great for a new refuge. The current one, no longer feeling safe for the ones who were staying there or the two who ran it.

“Three times,” Margot mused, “The first was an Omega who needed to talk to his Alpha, just one last time. It was his last time he spoke to anyone, got his brains bashed in on our doorstep. Then an Omega of a police officer, quite similar to what happened today. That cop and her friends broke down the door too. How long before this place is... violated?”

Clearing his throat Falkirk gestured for Margot to come to the window. When he was joined by the other Omega Falkirk pointed to a gated car park they could see.

“When all else fails, that is were we go,” Falkirk said to the other Omega's confusion. Pointing to a tramp sitting on a bench “Colonel Collins, Military Cross, and a lot of other accolades. He couldn't adapt to normal life after Afghanistan. He slept rough all over London, kept getting moved on until he came here. He still sleeps rough, but we feed him, keep him healthy, give him shelter on a cold or rainy night, and in return he watches the streets for us.” Then Falkirk indicated two police officers on patrol, “Despite wearing the uniform of the Met, those two have never attended Hendon, never passed out, never set foot in any police station as officers of the law. They are mine, this building is mine, that car park and all under it, everything you see is mine.”

Margot's confusion grew. Falkirk said, “As long as I am M this street is mine. There is provision in MI6 for certain responsibilities and duties of care. I can ensure this promise. Here, the full force of MI6 will never be more than the width of the street away.”

Handing the omega woman the keys, Falkirk and Margot returned to M's official car. Returning to the refuge Margot and Gibson disappeared for private deliberation. It was now up to them to decide what to do.

Collecting Keading and Selene, they returned to MI6. Mycroft was waiting in Falkirk's office, sticking his pointed nose into the open scrabble 'M' decanter, to judged the quality of Falkirk's Wild Turkey. Noticing Falkirk's arrival, Mycroft put down the decanter, and said, “Demons run when a good man goes to war?”

“Excuse me?” Falkirk responded while inviting Selene and Keading to take a seat, simultaneously shooing Mycroft from out from behind the desk.
Mycroft continued to muse, “Head of Special Branch is on his way to Argentina, five current and ten past MPs are scattering. Generals, an ex-Air Marshal and two Admirals are also gone. Those are just the ones I know about.”

“What do you know?” Falkirk demanded.

“Rather troubling, very little. Loose groups, alliances with no real affiliation. Certain people knew each other when there was no reason for them to. That is why I'm here.” Mycroft challenged.

“Intelligence gathering!”

“Joss Leyton?” Falkirk said.

“Director of GCHQ? What's he got to do with this?”

Keading, safe from beside his alpha and in Falkirk's office said, “He's been keeping twins as his own personal property.”

Mycroft shrugged, “He has always been... traditional.”

“You do realise one of the twins was an Alpha male?” Oh, there was the look Falkirk was waiting for. Deep down, a small part of Mycroft was still as prejudiced and narrow as most alphas when it came to omega. “Do you know where my illustrious GCHQ counterpart is?”

Mycroft gave a condensing look then turned away, very abruptly, so his back was to the others. He worked on his phone for a moment. His solders slumped and most telling his sighed. Turning back he had a pinched look on his face, “Joss Leyton, is on a flight to Miami... with a connection to Argentina. We really need to arrange an extradition treaty with Argentina.”

Darren's voice came from the intercom, “Prime Minister's office, for M.”

Pressing the talk button, Falkirk said, “First! Get Daniel to arrange tickets and equipment. A black bag operation, for Maloney. Joss Leyton has just become an unacceptable risk to national security. I want him back here! Call Jack Wade, see if he can tie up Leyton in Miami.”

“Literally?” Darren asked.

“Why not,” Falkirk said and lifted his finger from the talk button. Darren's voice came back over reminding him of the Prime Minister's meeting.
The wicked flee though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion.  
- 03/03

In the office of the Prime Minister the man was raging.
Lee Foulds sat uncomfortably as he was grilled. The Beta said, “We’ve found institutionalised abuse across all sexes and genders, and... ages, Prime Minister. Boys and girls, men and women, across the alpha, beta and omega sexes…”

“SO!” Raged the Prime Minister looking to Falkirk, “What's this got to do with you?”

“I blundered into a situation and the rats scattered before anyone knew what was happening,” Falkirk stated calmly, unwilling to indulge the panicking politician any more. “Apparently, people were being protected. Allegations suppressed....”

“Accusers were, ignored because they were, 'trouble makers', or 'unreliable' even being told they 'misunderstood' what was happening to them,” Foulds whispered. Swallowing his fear he added, “Some just disappeared.”

“The press are going wild,” the PM said. “I want this, calmed down.”

“Calmed down?” Falkirk asked, Mycroft leaned in to whisper that was a euphemism for swept under the carpet. Falkirk glared at the Prime Minister, “What would have happened if I let the murder of John Laws be 'Calmed down'?”

The Prime Minister's wiped his long face, and his black eyes darted about. He tried to deny that was what he meant. Hodder, Falkirk's boss was the one to admit, while glancing at Mallory, “He would still be Prime Minister. One does notice, M of MI6 is here, C of MI5, The Commissioner of the Met... but not...”

Mycroft informed them the head of GCHQ had been one of the people who scattered. Falkirk added, “Joss Layton has now been classed as an immediate security risk to the nation. Whether innocent or guilty of other crimes, the best he can hope for now is to live under house arrest with twenty four hour surveillance.”

“Other crimes?” the Prime Minister demanded. Foulds answered, “Charges of modern day Slavery, at worst. Domestic abuse at best. He has been keeping twin siblings as pets.”

Falkirk added, “Just for the sake of clarity, one of them is an alpha male. Cue indignation!”

The Prime Minister looked to Falkirk, “You're not going to leave this, are you?”

“An enquiry!” Mallory said, before Falkirk could blow his top. “One coordinated and chaired by M, I would recommend, Prime Minister.”

“Why M?” the PM demanded. “Why not a judge, or someone more appropriate.”

Mycroft gave a whispered translation to Falkirk, 'appropriate' meant someone willing to calm things down. Mycroft then said to the Prime Minister, “M is affiliated with everyone involved. From victim support to the potential perpetrators.”
Mallory added awkwardly, “It also wouldn't look bad if an Omega was investigating the institutions.”

After thinking about it for a moment the Prime Minister smiled and nodded.

“Sir Thomas, I quite agree with Control and Mr Holmes,” the Prime Minister said sweetly. “This situation is so very important. I want your undivided attention on it.”

Mallory ducked his head immediately, and braced. Mycroft decided it was time to check his phone. Falkirk's boss, the Foreign Secretary decided the cornicing was suddenly very unique and deserved his attention. Of the several others in the office in fact, who had seen Falkirk blow his top, all decided to ignore whatever was happening in front of their face.

Stepping forward, Falkirk rested his knuckles on the ornate leather topped desk. Very quietly he said, “I will not stand down from MI6, Prime Minister.”

Cringing away, the Prime Minister said, “No of course not, M. That is not what I meant. I wouldn't dream of interfering with your duties at MI6.”

“No, of course not,” Falkirk turned from the Prime Minister. Walking out he said, “Gareth, do come collect Darren. We can have a drink like we used to.”

In the moments after Falkirk's departure, the Prime Minister slumped in his chair. Whispering as if afraid Falkirk would still hear somehow, “Dear god, that man's a psychopath!”

Mycroft scoffed, “Please, Prime Minister he is a fanatic. M is quite aware he does wrong for a perceived greater good, without caring who knows or how inconvenient it is to others.”

Hodder glanced at the Prime Minister, “And you were worried M could do subtle.”

--

A tapping from the door made Falkirk realise the time. He had a lot to make up, after most of the day was spent running around London. Waving Mallory in Falkirk reached for the Bourbon in the decanter behind his desk and poured two glasses.

“Been a while since we did this,” Mallory said, accepting the glass and sitting.

“Before the meeting, Foulds gave me several names. Two of whom you were with on the day we first met, Guy Haines and Colin Creedy,” Falkirk said.

Mallory reminded of their first meeting, became uncomfortable with the thought of that cub where omegas dressed in almost nothing to serve them, and if so desired stripped or saw to other needs.

Falkirk said, “If I'm going to chair this enquiry thing, Is there anything I should know?”

No matter how delicately he asked the question the blast of anger was expected. Only years of practice prevented the Omega from reacting to the Alpha jumping from his chair, unable to be still.

Calming down, Mallory admitted, “There were strip clubs, Bunny Bars, and a brothel.”
“Ages? Circumstances? Were the, dancers, servers, prostitutes in a position to consent? Even if
consent was based on a financial transaction,” Falkirk asked.

Mallory had been pacing the office and came to a stop. He met eyes with his own mate, who was
looking on in concern from the other side of the glass wall.

“Age, I didn't see anyone who looked under 18. Circumstances...I don't know, I avoided getting
close to anyone. Being in places like that always made my skin crawl.”

Falkirk could see Darren was worried and wanted to barge into the office.

“Gareth, I won't protect you if someone was harmed. If something comes out it comes out. If
charges are brought you will need to fight them.” Falkirk warned. When Mallory nodded, Falkirk
added, “Warn Darren. Give a formal and full account and we'll see what can be done.”

Nodding again Mallory exited the office. Falkirk watched the Alpha envelop his Omega and walk
out the main office together.

“Home,” Falkirk stated and stood, glad the day was over.

--

The bright red Mercedes SLK pulled in. The built omega with close cropped hair, pressed the
button so the hard top unfolded to cover the cabin again. Bringing with him a quilt cover that had
been stuffed full, as he got out of the flash car. Like Santa with a sack, he walked up the road,
passing the trucks, vans and cars.

For London the buildings around him were fairly short. If he carried on in a straight line though,
he'd come to the Thames and across Vauxhall bridge was his place of work, MI6. Turning off the
pavement and up to the open double doors, he could hear people all around from the narrow
corridors and rooms of the building.

Workmen in the fairly large room at the front were making what looked like a bed sit, or tiny
apartment. On the right, a large kitchen and common room was being built. More workmen by the
sounds of it were refurbishing everything, all with a quick, quiet and slightly terrified efficacy that
was the hallmark of M being in one of his moods.

A dark haired woman, who didn't like him came out of a smaller room up on the left. Holding out
the stuffed quilt to her, “I heard you were looking for donations. I've whittled everything down to a
few favourite items, the rest is yours. It's clean and good quality, mostly unused.”

“You nest?” Margot said with a shocked look and downward curve of her mouth. Taking the quilt
case and looking at the nesting supplies inside. Finding some good blankets, cushions, throws and
pillows.

“Yes,” snapped Maloney and marched passed her. Calling over his shoulder to the little omega,
“You have a real attitude problem.”

“It comes with experience,” Margot shouted back. “He's upstairs, by the way.”

Maloney found M, with three boys, all dressed in white overalls. The smallest, dark haired boy
knelling down and working the roller so fast he and everything around him was spotted in white
paint. Of the two older boys, the leaner and taller was half-arsing it, while the shorter and stouter was actually being careful and methodical.

“M?” Maloney called. Falkirk turned, his face and glassed covered in little white spots. His dark hair at the front had gotten a streak of paint on it too at some point. “The package has been delivered. Security is in place. He is not going anywhere, again. So boring, I just picked him up and delivered him here. I might as well have been wearing a Royal Mail uniform.”

“Good, Nathan,” Falkirk said, playing this casual with three sets of young ears around them. “It's now up to the civilian authorities to bring criminal charges.”

“Uncle Greg?” Andrew asked.

“What?” Falkirk said.

Cody answered, “Isn't 'Civilian Authorities' the police? That's Greg Lestrade.”

“Well, yes in a way. But that's not just Lestrade,” Falkirk said. Then looking back to Maloney, “So what are you doing for the rest of the day?”

“Thought I'd help out.”

Cody looked at the other adult omega, “Why! Mom and Falkirk are making us be here.”

“Civic duty!” Falkirk snapped at his little brother. “One lost Saturday won't harm you but will help a lot of others.”

“I want to help,” Maloney said, grabbing the taller of the young alphas in a headlock to deliver a noogie. Getting a paint roller stabbed in his stomach in retaliation. Cody dropped the roller on the plastic floor covering. Putting into practice what he'd learned, Cody wound his legs around the big omega's, and shifted his weight and with a strong push, both crashed to the floor.

“Oh-ooo. Someone's been learning from mummy, and uncles,” Maloney teased as they rolled. The Double O getting the upper hand easily again after the surprise move. Holding the growling little alpha, he put on a goo-goo voice, “But they go easy on ickle little-wittle you.”

Falkirk caught Andrew's collar before he could jump into the fray himself. Falkirk ordering, “Enough you two! Time to act one's age, not their shoe size... not to mention Keading will kill me if I return Cody damaged.”

There came a tapping at the door frame. Foulds was there, unsure of the situation with little alpha and big omega still tussling on the floor and M giving both into trouble.

“M,” he said cautiously. “The Prime Minister has just publicly named you as the chair, for the enquiry into the abuse and cover-up investigation... the buck has been officially passed.”

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Like she did every week day morning Selene arrived. This morning bursting through the front door in a foul mood. Hudson had said there were some reports but as Falkirk looked outside, the dozen people looked like a mob.
“Hudson will you escort Rupert and Andrew to school,” Falkirk said. When the butler agreed, they called for another car that would pull up in the alley behind the houses.

With Hudson ready with the children Falkirk stepped out the front as Hudson went out the back.

Questions were bombarded as lights flashed. Falkirk ignored it, keeping his head high and back straight. The aggressive Alphas of the group demanding his attention. One obnoxious Alpha kept calling out ‘Boi’. Falkirk having the fleeting thought of letting Selene loose her anger on him.

Getting in the car they headed to MI6. Falkirk read the morning papers as he usually did on the journey. Finding a stock photo of himself accompanied the statement from the Prime Minister in most. It was also noticed that people had deserted their posts, most notably Special Branch seemed to be in crisis. In short the press had gotten wind of something and were going nuts.

At the security checkpoint for the underground car park another group of reports were waiting for him. Putting down the papers, Falkirk held himself formally as his car passed the cameras. He knew enough about PR, that if they got one photo of him doing something silly it would become his standard press photo. Just look at that politician who was bullied after getting photographed while eating a bacon butty. Really, who could look good or sophisticated while eating a bacon butty?

By the time Falkirk got to bed that night, his patience was threadbare. The press had caused two separate security breaches. A group had entered the back garden, to knock on the kitchen door. They wouldn't pull that trick again after Brayan pulverise the strangers that startled the old omega cook. Mrs Bridges and Brayan had been in a bit of a state for the rest of the day. Another, a muck raking paparazzi had his foot driven over when trying to get a photo of Falkirk leaving MI6. By the time Falkirk got home it was over the news, that his car didn't stop after running someone over.

Then there was Tanner and Darren, who were beginning to field calls from interested groups, distracting them from their important day job. Rupert and Andrew were so curious too, but Falkirk still wanted to protect them from what he could.

Somehow he fell asleep with thoughts still floating around his mind. Wondering what he would need to do and how to go about it. An Enquiry was quite different from how he would lead an MI6 investigation, mostly because MI6 dealt with immediate threats that wouldn't be resolved in a court room. An Enquiry was more like an academic exercise, there was the remit, a concise question or questions that needed to be answered. There was the evidence which would have to be verified and stand up to an expectation of reasonable doubt, because it might end up in a court room. It was rather scary in its way for Falkirk, so many would be watching him on this and so may would be relying on him to find the truth of the situation.

Falkirk's eyes snapped open. The control panel by the door was bleeping quietly. Getting up he checked his weapon before opening the door. Hudson was already heading down stairs ahead of him. Ever since the press in the back garden, Falkirk had an extended security detail attached to the house. But both were still careful, now was the prime time for an assassination attempt with so much fuss going on around him and the house.

Descending into the kitchen there was the sound of violent struggle. Glass was breaking. There was grunting and thumps. The sound of the table scraping along the floor.

“Cease and desist!” Hudson ordered, punctuating his words by pulling the hammer back on his gun. That little metallic click quite distinctive. All other sounds stopped.
Falkirk flipped on the light.

James had a security guard between his thighs, his knees pinning the guard's arms to the stone floor. A hand was wrapped around the guard's neck, the other raised and ready to deliver another punch to the guard's bloody face.

Heading over to his Alpha, Falkirk held his hand to James. Slowly standing, James kept an eye on the guard in case the younger beta decided to continue the fight.

“Welcome home, James,” Falkirk said with relief. Making room to let Hudson deal with the guard groaning in a fetal position on the floor.

Being led from the kitchen by his omega, James asked, “Who've you pissed off now?”
This was wonderful, Falkirk thought. His eyes were closed so he could bask in his other senses. There was the smell, a fresh scent of the sea, salty, clean and pure. There were the sounds, the constant dull rolling of the ocean with the crash of waves below him. The cry of gulls and other birds mixing with the distant voices of children playing. Touch, he felt the wind whipping his hair, and the warmth of the sun contrasting with the cool stone he sat on. Perfect after the last few days.

Back in London, a new and strange pressure was being put on him. One in Falkirk's opinion was quite different to the pressures he'd grown up learning to deal with. Lee Foulds, he had press-ganged into being a part of the enquiry and felt like Falkirk's only ally. There was a judge to lend his legal expertise to Falkirk, Lord Foster, a gruff old Alpha mostly interested in his expense account. Then there was Sir Humphrey, an annoying alpha from the Civil Serves, there to arrange things.

“Oh, Sir Thomas,” Humphrey had said, wearily during their first meeting. “One does not have an enquiry to actually fix a problem. It's there to distract the public from there being a problem.”

Old Lord Foster had quite agreed and asked if he got a credit card or would he have to put in a claim after. And asked about spending limits and could he somehow claim a trip to the Bahamas on his expenses.

Then, what came after that introduction was the first meeting with the 'Interested Parties' as Sir Humphrey had called them. The four sat at a large table, as a lawyer representing a group of orphans begged them to hear what happened from the 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s and even the 90s when the care home closed. Run by nuns, there was a litany of all types of abuse alleged. Then there were other care homes, run by the state or charities. That first day ended with another MP, a woman who with some mothers begged Falkirk because the police and others had failed to act on girls and bois being groomed by perpetrators in her constituency and no one interested in investigating or reporting what was happening. That one was a problem, because it had race implications that could ignite something, which was why the police and press were desperate to pretend something wasn't happening.

“That's a strange look for relaxed?” James called softly.

Falkirk opened his eyes, and saw his alpha walking along the curtain wall towards him.

“Everything's so much harder when you can't just dispatch a Double O to sort things out.”

The two embraced, the alpha holding his omega close. James said, “I was sent to tell you...”

“Oh... give me strength,” Falkirk sighed.
“All I can give you have,” James said and held his omega just a bit tighter.

Pushing away from his mate, Falkirk headed for the stairs down to the grassy courtyard below the curtain wall. Playing children gravitating toward them, sensing something interesting happened.

Falkirk felt a strong arm come around his waist when they entered the castle's keep. James leaned in, while looking at the very round omega waddling down the grand stairs of Seagate Castle. The Alpha whispered, “Is he safe? Looks like Keading could explode at any second.”

Falkirk elbowed his insensitive alpha. Not willing to admit Selene had mentioned her and Keading skipping the trip and getting a vase thrown at her. Keading wanted to come to Scotland and come he would, even if he was in the last days of his pregnancy.

In the ward of the castle, Daniel was ready and waiting. He was the official host after all. The first of two cars came in. Almost late joining the welcoming party was Mycroft, rushing out of the keep behind them.

The first car arrived, the almost reckless speed and harsh braking a juvenile requirement from the young alpha males who got out. Andrew darted passed Falkirk and up to the blond alpha. G went down and hugged the small omega, then stood and waved to the good looking man with wavy black hair and dark eyes.

“This is Tommy- eh that is Lieutenant Thomas Corbett. We served together on HMS Vanguard.” G said, remembering this was a formal occasion.

The Lieutenant said, “I do prefer Tom, to Tommy or Thomas.” He sent a sideways glance to G, to emphasise not liking one of those names. The rest of the pack members where then introduced to him.

By the time everyone's names had been exchanged the second car was arriving. The group reformed the line of the welcoming party, with Daniel at the head with G beside him. The Rolls Royce pulled to a stop, and a driver got out to open the rear door. First out was a man, just under six foot tall and dressing in, well, a long red dress. James whispered, “You think he's going to curtsey?”

Falkirk glared at the sniggering group, noticing G's baby-blue eyes light up and Andrew scowl. He looked to the car and saw the young omega with long honey blonde hair down to his shoulders, heart shaped face and demure smile in place. Arthur was beautiful, there was no other description.

After the second round of introductions, Daniel lead his guests into the substantial drawing room, where the likes of Keading and the Dowager Duchess Mary Carrington waited. Being Catholic Mary stood to greet the clergyman with reverence, even kissing his ring. Daniel barely holding onto his sneer, himself and the church parting was a long time ago.

Much to the relief of many, Mary brought the Cardinal to sit beside her. The diplomatic Mycroft also staying close to the cardinal. The others could spread out a bit more in the large room, laid out in clustered seating areas, the biggest around the large fireplace but there were small tables with chairs, desks and other seats and settees scattered about. The room's row of rectangular windows looking over the ward and the mountain island across the bridge.

Selene was fretting over her mate. Alec made a joke about him ready to 'pop' with his grandmother
in law admonishing his insensitivity. Cody had become very territorial over his Papa, always at his side. Selene wasn't in any better condition on Keadings other side.

“Shall we have tea?” Mary asked before patting the Cardinal's arm and said, “I know, a whiskey!”

Looking to Hudson, who had come up a few days ahead of everyone else, because there wasn't much of a domestic staff here at the castle. Mary said, “Bring a bottle of- Daniel will show you where his Grandfather hid the store!”

Growling Daniel led the temporary butler out, clearly not wanting to share. Everyone hearing his grumbling even when the door closed behind him.

Andrew took up position beside G with Arthur on the other side of the blonde alpha. They were on a settee, near some book shelves in a corner of the large room. Rupert was showing his territorial instinct, quite cautious of the alpha Andrew liked, so hung about not trusting G and even sending a glance to Tom. Falkirk watched as Arthur spoke pleasantly to the jealous Omega. Whatever Arthur said had Andrew reluctantly bushing and the others chuckling silently. Michelle joined the group, the small girl going up to Rupert, so the young alpha became a bit territorial of his cousin too. To Falkirk it looked like they were getting on, like any strangers getting to know each other.

“He looks too relaxed for someone who has had to share the good stuff,” Alec whispered, indicating the returned Alphas. Daniel coming in first, with Hudson behind carrying a tray.

“Tenner says he switched the whisky,” James whispered, with no one taking the bet. Mary seemed to be able to read her grandson as well by the hidden look she gave.

Hudson placed the tray beside the cardinal. An old, handmade, lopsided bottle had been wiped of dust and opened. A small ice bucket, water jug and a cut crystal glasses also sat on the tray. Picking up the label-less bottle the Cardinal inspected it.

“From my Father in Law's own still,” Mary informed with pride. “Only three bottles left in the world.”

“Two, now,” Daniel said, too calmly for anyone to believe him.

After the Cardinal had taken his measure Hudson brought the tray around the other guests. Falkirk, James and Alec taking their 'dram' last of the adults.

“Very nice,” James observed after taking a sip of his, straight and without ice. Daniel saying nothing.

Falkirk took a smell and sip, “Isn't this the stuff you keep in your office?”

“And the house,” Alec added.

“Shut yr gobs, the lot o' ya!” Daniel hissed quietly. His grand mother still glancing towards him from across the room.

Braking up to go change for dinner Daniel called the conspirators into the study. With Falkirk, James and Alec he waited until Hudson arrived.

The older Alpha stepped into the study, holding a silver tray balanced on one hand. Inside the
shining cut glass decanter was a rich, dark amber liquid.

“So this is the real great grand-daddy's illicit still?” Alec shot while Daniel poured a measure into each of the glasses.

Coming to the final glass Daniel noticed he was one to short. Picking up the small glass water jug he threw the water out the window and used it as make shift glass.

“Here, you earned this,” Daniel said handing the first glass to Hudson, who blustered a bit with embarrassment. Giving everyone else a glass, Daniel took the jug for himself.

“Sláinte mhaith” Daniel said raising his jug. Everyone repeated what he said, apart from Hudson who gave the proper response, “Do dheagh shláinte.”

They all took a sip. Daniel smacked his lips. James giving an appreciative growl, “Smooth as a baby's arse.”

Alec shrugged, “If it doesn't strip the lining of your throat, it's not proper drinking!”

“Philistine!” Daniel snapped, and taking another sip.

“Water of life,” Hudson purred, giving his glass a smell before taking another sip.

Falkirk sipped, he felt the slight tingle of the alcohol but got where James was coming from. This was a nice, slow, sipping whisky not one to dilute or add ice to. “Like woody, toffee apples, with a kick. Nice!”

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Everyone mingled during the pre-dinner drinks and they were duly called to the table. Falkirk sat at the foot of the table while Daniel sat at the head. To Falkirk's right was the Cardinal and to his left was Mycroft. Arthur was at the far end of the table, beside G who was to Daniel's right. The host of children separating the two groups quite effectively. Arthur though would lean forward and talk to Andrew quite often, with the younger omega giving bashful answers with a blush or giggle.

One of the plans of the weekend was to keep the Omega and his guardian as far apart as possible. Both Mycroft and Falkirk were trying to ferret out weaknesses in the Cardinal. But for a man who had a barely contained disdain for religion, to rise so high in the church showed the force of will and ambition the man had.

Everyone was way too pleasant during the meal. There were no openings for Falkirk to work up his anger and release it, promising fire and brimstone if he didn't get his way. Even when the cardinal asked about adoption to Daniel and Alec, it was with open curiosity not the scorn usually reserved from a clergyman talking of a relationship between two of the same sex and gender. Before either Daniel or Alec could answer Yulian did.

“Not adopted. Daddy,” Yulian pointing to Daniel. Then pointed to Alec, “Papa!”

The Cardinal's confusion, well not just his, Arthur and Tom were also a bit confused. Most believed Alec to be an Alpha. The Cardinal kept up his polite curiosity though being told what 'Of indistinct Sex' meant. After half a dozen children asking him over the years, as they learned about differences in people Alec had become accustom to the questions.
After dinner and people were going to bed Falkirk took G to the study. Mycroft, Daniel, Selene, James, Alec and Corbett joining them.

“Oh how pleasant!” Mycroft spat the moment the door was closed.

“What dose that mean?” G asked.

Clapping the shoulder of the king, Alec said, “It means they can't start a fight without looking bad.”

“What do we do?” G asked Falkirk.

Daniel shrugged and said, “Dangle the good Cardinal by his ankles over the ramparts, like I used to do to Douglass.”

“To bad he has reached his own peak. I believe he would overlook his charge if the Cardinal's own ambition could be refocused,” Mycroft mused.

“Why don't you just bond to Arthur and ignore the priest?” Corbett asked.

Before Mycroft could offend G’s friend Falkirk spoke up.

“Cardinal Merlin is the highest ranking member of the Catholic Church in the British Isles, he cannot be just 'ignored'. He must be encouraged to step back.”

“Why dose he need to step back” Corbett asked.

“By proxy he is expressing his own ambition,” Mycroft said, as if Corbett was unreasonably stupid. “If he has Arthur, he will have the king. If he has the king, he will have the government. If he has government he has the country. If he has the country he has anything his heart desires. Money. Power... women. Bois. etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. Like most who seek power, he dose not understand the responsibilities that come with it.”

“Doesn't that remind me of someone” Alec shot and got a glare from Mycroft for the insult.

“One does not seek power,” Mycroft answered back. “One's only thought is for King and Country.”

Everyone burst out laughing. Mycroft sneered and went to stand out of the way, trying to hide his embarrassment.

“So after ten minutes,” Falkirk said. “The only constructive solution is to dangle Merlin from the curtain wall.”

“A show of dominance may not be a bad idea.” James said. “Alec and I could go kneecap him.”

Falkirk thumped his alpha in his washboard stomach, hurting his hand. The smirking alpha not even giving him a token grunt of discomfort.

“How loyal will Arthur be?” Falkirk asked G.

Shrugging, G said, “He submits to Cardinal Merlin. Everyone else he can charm.”
“We saw,” James said. “Even Andrew seemed to like him in the end.”

Drumming his fingers on the desk he perched on. Falkirk said, “I will spend some time with Arthur tomorrow.”

“Falkirk Holmes-Bond,” Mycroft mused and everyone looked to him. Corbett asked who Falkirk was and everyone pointed to the omega standing beside James, they then looked back to Mycroft.

“Oh, don't mind me. Just wondering why the Cardinal used the threat, the name showing he was preprepared for my dear infamous brother. But now, the cardinal is being oh so polite. What could have changed between that meeting and this?”

Everyone continued to look at Mycroft. Daniel barked, “Well out with it! We're not mind readers.”

“One was just speculating,” Mycroft said with an insincere smile and headed for the door. “Goodnight. Pleasant dreams.”

Corbett looked at the closed door Mycroft had left through. “What a wanker!”

“That's my mate's brother!” James growled dangerously, the younger alpha jumping and cowering back from the Double O. “You're right, but still that's pack you're bad mouthing!”

“Sorry,” squeaked Corbett and G ushered him out into the hallway. They heard the laughter through the heavy oak door to second they were in the hallway.

“Still don't see the omega as your Alpha,” Corbett whispered to G.

“Wait until he goes ape-shit!” G whispered back.

Chapter End Notes

I'm not sure about that Gaelic toast. I'm not a speaker and only heard it on a tour of a distillery. Where there were two distinct phrases, the toast and response. The one I used was from the internet.

Sláinte mhaith - good/big health
Do dheagh shláinte - On your very good health
Mary reached for the small pot of lime marmalade. As she spooned some onto her toast she asked everyone at the table, “Any plans for the day?”

The cardinal looked to Daniel, “Well, I for one would very much like to learn more about this castle.” Gesturing to the dinning room round them, decorated with the tapestry of sea creatures encircling the upper portion of the walls, and the heraldry shields used to break the limewash.

Before Daniel could answer his Grandmother volunteered him to give the cardinal a tour. Falkirk then looked to Arthur, “We are gong to have an afternoon tea. Just us omegas, if you wish to join us?”

“Yes, of course,” Arthur said. Then glancing at G said, “I was hoping to go for a walk.”

The Cardinal said, “You will need a chaperon.”

G glared at the Cardinal, then looked to his pack alpha for support. Falkirk took in the young blonde Alpha's begging puppy-dog expression. Falkirk said, “You can take the kids with you. They'll show the two of you all the interesting spots and you can make sure they don't get into trouble.”

G ducked his head and agreed. Arthur looked to his guardian who nodded and smiled, “Yes, I find that suitable.”

A look of relief passed over the pretty omega's face. They then started to make plans, a picnic replacing the idea of a walk.

After breakfast the group returned to their rooms to prepare. Falkirk ushered his brother, two sons and god children down when they were ready. He found Arthur, G and Corbett in the forecourt, holding some towels, picnic hampers and stuff.

“I want them retuned in perfect condition,” Falkirk wagged his finger at the three young adults of the group.

“Sir, yes sir,” Corbett teased, snapping a crisp salute.

“One, does not salute without a hat! Lieutenant!” Falkirk snapped, both Corbett and Arthur jumped out of their skins. G and the kids sniggered. “You are speaking to a Vice Admiral you know?”

“No, sir, Sorry Sir,” the young man was standing rigidly at attention.

“These children, are to be returned in prefect condition, Lieutenant.” Just because he was using his
'M' persona to torment the young man, didn't mean Falkirk was distracted enough to miss Arthur watching him with a strange expression. Just a little confused frown that knitted the skin between the boi's elegant brows. When Corbett acknowledged the order, Falkirk snapped, “Lieutenant, you are diss-MISSED!”

In a perfect parade-ground move, of falling out, Corbett spun on his heels and walked away. Letting his stiff shoulders relax and breathing easy after taking the first step away from Falkirk.

Falkirk watched the group head for the portcullis. Corbett getting ribbed by G. Andrew said something and the young officer growled at him and the young omega just laughed harder. Falkirk again noticing Arthur watching Andrew during the little omega's interaction with the Alpha.

Falkirk waited until the group had reached the far end of the bridge and turned left towards the village or beach, both were in that direction. Turning round, a movement at one of the windows of the rectangular keep drew his attention. Mycroft, the proverbial 'curtain twitchier', turned away and fell from Falkirk's view.

Returning inside, Falkirk heard Daniel's deep voice with a slight echo to it. James and Alec were at a wide double door, giggling to themselves. Getting closer Falkirk could hear his friend more clearly from inside the great hall.

“... here the wall's adorned wa these pointy 'hings. An' o'course these other 'higs wa big balls at the end o' the sticks... an' whopping big round 'hings in the middle...”

Falkirk joined in the silent laughter of James and Alec. It would be nice to see what was going on in the room, as Daniel showed the Cardinal, but that would be too obvious. Suddenly a new and slightly annoyed voice was added to the mix.

“Come now Daniel,” Mary said. “My apologies, your Eminence. We usually liven the tour up for the children you understand.”

“Quite alright, Lady Carrington,” The Cardinal said politely. “I was actually quite enjoying it.”

After that, Daniel started speaking properly. “The weapons on the walls were a design feature from the 1800s. They were all genuine weapons. That sword you see at the 12 o'clock position of the sunburst motif is the oldest of the collection, dating back to the 1200s...

The arched door suddenly opened. The little old omega glared at them. All three fidgeted under her look and backed up so Mary could leave the great hall. Closing the door behind her she said, “I thought better of you, Sir Thomas.”

James gave him a teasing, disappointed shake of the head from the safety behind the short omega's back. With Alec beside him, wagging a disapproving finger towards Falkirk.

“One should treat their enemies like their enemies, and their friends like their friends,” Falkirk said, unrepentant. “Do you not see there is something off about the Cardinal?”

“Of course I do,” Mary said. As she walked away she added, “But I believe in innocent until proven guilty.”

Falkirk stuck out his tongue at her. Alec ducking his head and stifling his laughter. Mary glanced back but saw nothing so continued off.
James came up and put an arm around Falkirk, and gave him a peck on the cheek. The alpha whispered, “Come on. The unrestrained Alpha wants to accost the innocent omega in a dark corner while there isn't a chaperon.”

“I'm still here,” Alec reminded.

“Screw off!” James snapped at his friend and with a squeak from Falkirk started pulling the lithe omega through the castle.

Falkirk, letting himself be pulled through the keep and out the back. They crossed a walled garden and emerged in the ward on the sea side of the castle. Like naughty boys, the two crashed into the old store room built into the side wall. Kissing and touching each other, they fell to the dirty floor of the empty room.

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“How was the tour, Your Eminence?” Mycroft said, without look way from the eyepiece at the side of the reflecting telescope.

“Well,” Cardinal Merlin answered, joining the other alpha on the curtain wall of the ward. They were on the side wall so Mycroft could point the telescope towards the island, to a spot further up the coast. “Ornithology, Mr Holmes?”

Mycroft stepped aside and indicated the stubby device on the tripod. The man dressed in simple black cassock and red zucchetto on his head, stepped up and looked. He was not overly amused. His ward was in slim cut long denim shorts only, and even Andrew was shirtless, while playing a game of football on the beach with the equally shirtless alphas. They all bumped and jostled each other when trying to get the ball. He hummed his disapproval when he saw the king place a hand on Arthur's lean stomach when their legs entwined while trying to tackle the ball away from the omega.

“They should be dressed,” the cardinal said. Standing straight again, he gently pushed the telescope so it was not aimed at the others on the beach. Not liking the idea of Mycroft peeping at them.

“Oh, why? They are men... male after all.” Mycroft said, observing the man from the corner of his eye while it looked like he was gazing out to sea.

“Omegas before male,” The cardinal corrected. “They should have more, modesty. But that's what we're here for, they aren't called bitches for nothing. They need the guidance of an Alpha, or they will throw themselves at the first Alpha that comes along.”

Mycroft gave a single, gentle and polite, huffing laugh. He wondered how to answer to get the reaction he was looking for.

“I'm a little surprised you would say so openly,” Mycroft said, having decided on his tactic. The Cardinal looked him up and down briefly and smiled politely.

“Yes, of course Mycroft,” the Cardinal said. “We have to be so correct in this day and age. Can't let those pesky little facts get in the way of the 'politically correct' views.”

Mycroft sighed and let his shoulders slump, looking world weary. He gave a subtle nod. Portraying
cautious agreement with the Cardinal's views.

“Well, enjoy your ornithology,” the Cardinal said. Turning and heading away, “I wonder if His Grace has any more tales of his ancestral home.”

Mycroft watched the cardinal descend the steps, and cross the grassy yard to the wall of the cloistered garden where the entrance to the keep was. A groaning creak made him look down, to the pair coming out of the door below him.

“Dear brother,” Mycroft called down. Falkirk jumping and clung to James as they both looked up. It took him an embarrassing amount of time, nearly four seconds for Mycroft to deduce why his brother was so out of sorts and dishevelled. “The Cardinal's game plan. His Grace, I'm afraid to say will be a bit perturbed.”

“What did you do?” Falkirk demanded.

“Allowed his Eminence to come to a conclusion.”

“What conclusion?” Falkirk said with a frown. A recent and thoroughly good ravishing and knotting by his alpha leaving him a bit uncomfortable and in need of a bath. He tugged at the collar of his shirt, James tugging it open again to kiss the bruise there.

Mycroft tried to not watch his brother and the alpha's playful antics. “That can wait until a more convenient time if you wish.”

“Yes!” James growled and started guiding the omega away.

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“Go play with Rupert,” Falkirk ordered as Cody tired to follow his mom into the cosy sitting room of Mary's.

“But...”

Keading whipped his head round and with just a look, had his son skulking off and outside to play with his cousins. With a bone aching groan, the pregnant omega settled into a carver chair from the dining room, having decided ease of getting in and out of a chair was more important than comfort when sitting.

With only Omegas the atmosphere was meant to be calmer on the collected group. Andrew and Michelle were their as well as Mary, Keading and Arthur.

Michelle moved about he new room to explore every nook and cranney. The dark haired girl becoming more open without the oppressive scents of the alphas. She called her dad's attention to everything she saw. Keading giving a good humoured nod and excited, 'Yes it's a...' the sentence ending differently depending on what Michelle pointed to.

With Mary being mother, and pouring out the tea. Falkirk handed out the small plates, for the others to help themselves from the tiered stand with the sandwiches on the bottom, the scones on the middle and the dainty cakes on the top tier.

Andrew sat beside Arthur, the two seeming to get on. In the strange company though, the older
Omega latched onto the younger like a life line. Andrew looked perplexed by the behaviour but accepted the cuddle.

The conversation was polite over the sandwiches. Arthur spoke softly and clearly as they discussed topics of little relevance.

“Can we cut to the chase. So what’s G like?” Keading demanded with a deeper note in his voice and an eager look.

Arthur blushed and ducked his head. Insisting, “A gentleman throughout.”

Keading smirked, “You don't blush for gentlemen.”

Falkirk subtly reading the blond Omega's reaction while Keading asked the pre-vetted questions, casually and in a friendly or curious way. Arthur did seem to genuinely have affection for G. Keading then asked, “So how did you meet?”

Arthur looked around, holding Andrew a bit tighter. Everyone was watching him and not in the way he had gotten used to. They weren't looking at his beauty, they were inspecting him like a bug under a microscope. It was clear he fortified himself before speaking.

“My godfather instructed me to speak with a Sir Baraman,” Arthur informed and Falkirk recognised the names as a chairman of a large multinational business group.

“Merlin was, disappointed when I did not approach Sir Baraman,” Arthur continued and Falkirk had no doubt what 'disappointed' meant. “You see, George cornered me while my god father was waiting to introduction me to Sir Baraman. But he was pleased when I told him who I had been speaking with.”

The last story confused Falkirk. If it was true he was annoyed at the Cardinal, even if he wasn't surprised by an alpha arranging a bonding for an omega. If the story was a plant to elicit sympathy Arthur would not be spared his wrath.

Deciding the next part shouldn't be done in front of anyone else. Falkirk smiled at his son, “Take Michelle out to play.”

Andrew pulled himself from Arthur's grip. The blond saying, “I'll be out later, see if I can spot the whales you mentioned.”

“Okay,” the child, oblivious to the undercurrents of the meeting said. He took his little cousin by the hand and escorted her out.

Standing and offering his hand to Arthur, Falkirk said, “Let's have a walk. Give these two some time to rest.”

“Don't need rest!” Keading said, petulantly. Falkirk gave the omega a meaningful look and a conspiring wink. Keading got that Falkirk wanted to be alone with Arthur so calmed down.

Catching Arthur's arm Falkirk walked him out to the ward. On the grass area surrounded by the rampart walls, the others had set up a cricket match. James called Andrew back when he tried to join Falkirk and Arthur. Climbing the stairs at the end they walked along the wall, looking over the sea.
“Is that story, about speaking and disappointment, was it real or were you told to tell me it?” Falkirk asked casually.

“Can't it be both?” Arthur responded hesitantly. His light blue eyes glancing at Falkirk and away constantly.

The fact Arthur admitted he was told to retell the story endeared him to Falkirk.

“I think, now especially, the Cardinal needs the union. However, Cardinal Merlin will not be allowed to gain the influence he desires. I've told a pack mate, if he did something wrong I won't protect him. This puts you in difficult situation. You may need to decide, George or Merlin, one Alpha or the other?”

Arthur ducked his head, baring his neck to Falkirk.

“None of that!” Falkirk encouraged brushing the other omega's chin to tilt his head up. Seeing a fear in the other Omega's eyes Falkirk guided him to sit on the ramparts. Sitting beside Arthur the sea was now behind them as they looked across the grass courtyard to the castle. The crack of leather on willow added to the sounds of nature. As had been arranged, the cardinal was with Daniel and Mycroft, safely out of the way.

“Forget Merlin. Forget George. In this moment you are all that matters. Think of me as a Fairy Godmother. What is the future you want?” Falkirk said.

Arthur hesitantly ducked his head again, showing submission. Gently Falkirk lifted the pointed chin up and turned Arthur's head to look at him again. Falkirk could see the other Omega was at a loss. Memories of himself at a younger age came back. The desire to be mated off so he could escape his father's house. Given what Falkirk now knew of his Father, he was even more grateful for Silver kidnapping him and more so for M and James rescuing him.

“Give me the word, Arthur and I will fight for you tooth and nail. Even if you don't want to be mated to G,” Falkirk implored. The gesture brought a small smile to the other omega's elfin face but Falkirk could see Arthur thought it was just hollow sentiment.

“I saw you in the paper,” Arthur whispered as if afraid of being heard. “I heard Merlin talking to other bishops and priests. He said, he could stop you from causing problems for the church. He'll give me, in exchange for not looking at the catholic church in your committee thing. But...”

“Bollocks to that!” Falkirk spat. “I'll go where the evidence leads.”

Pulling the younger omega close Falkirk tucked the blond head under his chin and stroked along the other Omega's back. After a while of the sun warming them, Arthur asked, “What's it like being bound?”

A memory of an embarrassing conversation with M flashed in Falkirk's mind before he shook it off. That brief talk in an airport lounge about heats and alphas didn't quite fade completely though.

“Heaven and hell,” Falkirk admitted. “With a good, strong Alpha the merest hint of James' scent, conquers all other fears. I wanted an instant change after bonding to James and in a way I did get it. From a cowering wreck who couldn't even tell you the colour of his father's eyes first hand, the day I met him after I was bound, was the fist time I looked my father in the face. He looked so small,
fat and bald. I still feared him but it wasn't really him anymore it was the legend I had built up around him that I still feared.”

Since finishing Arthur had tensed slightly. He didn't scent of fear and Falkirk thought he was debating with himself over something. Falkirk's suspicions were confirmed when Arthur said, “His Eminence, does not believe you to be the pack Alpha. He thinks you are a figurehead to divert attention from someone else.”

Chuckling, Falkirk said, “We figured that. I don't quite believe it myself at times though. In my library there is a snowflake representing the pack, it's quite confusing because it's not a typical pyramid hierarchy. I look at my name in the centre quite often to remind myself I'm the one in charge.”

“You're helping him figure out who is the pack alpha?” Falkirk said. There was a silent nod from the head under his chin. They'd figured out Marlin's motives, so it was time to see how far Arthur was willing to go. Falkirk asked, “Who does the Cardinal think is the real Alpha?”

“Dame Olivia at first. He thinks you were offered to James to seal a pact with Mycroft. The inheritor of the pack he thought to be Mycroft or Gareth Mallory, with you as the public front. Now though, His Eminence is convinced the real Alpha is the Duke of Rothsea,” Arthur said very quietly.

“A very logical deduction. To his existing power base of Development, science and industry Daniel has now added, MI6, MI5, Politicians, Military, royalty, police, etcetera, etcetera. And above all he has regained the family title, ahead of his legitimate sister.”

After a moment's silence Falkirk continued. “You have a problem. I am the Alpha of this pack. If you tell the Cardinal that, he is unlikely to believe you. I suspect he'll be able to tell if you lie though, too. So you can’t say Daniel is the alpha when you know it to be untrue.”

Arthur whimpering in response.

It was still bright but the castle was falling into the mountain's shadow and Hudson appeared. The butler being the signalling dinner would be soon, so the kids and adults started to put away the cricket equipment.

“I think it's time to get dressed,” Falkirk mused not realising how long they had stayed there.

Going down the steps into the wide grass courtyard they returned to the old stone building in the centre of the castle. As Falkirk suspected Hudson gave them a time warning for dinner. Going inside and climbing the stairs still in the embrace it was time to separate. Releasing the younger Omega.

“Just give me the word,” Falkirk said but Arthur kept quiet.
Meeting for drinks in the drawing room before dinner. Everyone was dressed in formal white tie for the evening. Falkirk went over to Keading and Cody to sit with them.

Daniel crossed the room and up to James. The bigger Alpha jerked his head, and went to stand by the window with his back to the room. When he was joined by James, Daniel held out one of the two crystal tumbler he held.

“The last of the bottle. Thought I'd share it with someone who'd appreciate it.”

“Thanks,” James said taking the glass from the taller alpha's grasp. Noticing the other alpha's attention was fixed on something outside the window. Down in the courtyard, he saw the cardinal with his black cassock fluttering he was running so fast. “What the...?”

The cardinal managed to ducked behind his car, when Rupert dressed in his white tie and tailed suite ran into the forecourt with a medieval mace in hand. The young Alpha swung, the Cardinal darting out the way at the last moment. The heavy spiked end of the mace smashing into the Rolls Royce and set of the alarm.

Dropping his glass, James ran from the drawing room. Daniel continued to watch, while the others came up to him. Elbowing Falkirk, “Look, it's the wee-yin's first full blown alpha rage.”

Falkirk only hummed in answer.

They watched the cardinal running for the arched gate to the bridge. Rupert starting to spin round and release the mace like it was a hammer throw.

“Aww,” Daniel said. “He missed!”

“Cut him some slack,” Alec said.

They watched the cardinal run across the bridge with Rupert in hot pursuit.

Falkirk said, “What would set him off?”

James barrelled across the forecourt at top speed. He caught up to Rupert halfway along the stone bridge to the mainland, and went to grab the small alpha. From the drawing room they couldn't quite see what happened next but James ended up rolling on the ground and Rupert was pushing on having evaded the Double O.
“Selene! Go!” Falkirk ordered. She was the fastest of the alphas and was quickly becoming the only hope for reaching Rupert before he reached the Cardinal. Alec going with her, because James was still struggling to get up.

“You must be so proud,” Daniel said, with a note of pride in his voice. “His first full blown Alpha rage and able to make one adult run like his arse is on fire, and flooring the other.”

Falkirk hummed. Deep in thought. Racking his brain to understand.

“Sir Thomas,” a very quiet voice called from the back. Everyone looked to Arthur at the door, wringing his hands and looking down. Daniel grabbed G before he could rush the omega. The nervous omega looked down so his hair hid his face while pointing, and trying to force himself to say something.

Falkirk ran from the room, in the direction Arthur pointed. Daniel corralling the younger alphas, the last thing most situations needed were a bunch of hotheads stomping all over it.

Running up the stairs, Falkirk noticed Arthur was right behind him. In the narrow corridor, he came to the open door of Arthur's room. He saw the quilt had been ripped off the bed and migrated to the far left corner where it was in a mound.

“What happened,” Falkirk said, forcing himself not to rant and rave like he so wanted to.

“He, he, help me, tried to at least,” came the broken statement from the omega behind him.

Turning to Arthur, Falkirk reached out to tuck the honey blond hair behind the other omega's ear. Using the gesture to disguise how he was inspecting the omega's neck. His suspicion confirmed, when he saw a bruise just under the omega's ear. A bruise Falkirk assumed to have been made by an Alpha's thumb.

“You were right. His Eminence didn't believe you're the Alpha, so I lied. He taught me, us, our place, Andrew was here and His Eminence was too strong for us... ” Arthur blinked rapidly and breathed quickly. Gulping he added. “Then...”

“Rupert saw, and went nuts,” Falkirk deduced and guided Arthur towards the nest. Grabbing the rest of the bedding and pillows from the four poster bed as they passed.

“Andrew?” Falkirk called. There was a silence from the small nest around Andrew.

Falkirk pulled the sheet around him and Arthur, as they in turned curled around the nest in the corner. He was concerned for Arthur as much as Andrew. Andrew was reacting to his first pinning, while Arthur was practised at hiding how he felt. Closing the sheet, Falkirk finally noticed something. A cologne used to mask scent ques. While Falkirk hugged the nest with Andrew in, he reached round and touched the other omega, feeling the tremble in Arthur's body.

“Th-anks,” Arthur said from his position on the other side of Andrew's nest. In the dark place, with only the scents of omegas, his mask was beginning to crack. “You, wh-were so brave.”

“Just like his daddy,” Falkirk said.

The sound of the door opening stilled all three Omegas in the nest. When the heavy door snicked closed an American voice called.
“It’s me...well us.”

Falkirk had to exit the nest to help Keading onto the floor. When they were settle again, Michelle snuggled up to her Father nuzzling him.

It took Arthur a while to get over the interruption. Eventually he mused, “His Eminence pinned me to the bed. Andrew had been helping me with my bow-tie and tried to stop him.” Arthur said and squeezed the smaller nest a bit more. “The cardinal was too strong though.”

“I wish I could have stood up to an Alpha at nine, even if I lost. I just never tried,” Falkirk lamented.

“I tried. My dad broke my arm,” Keading added, hugging his daughter a bit tighter. Not sure how much the quiet girl was taking in of this. Seeing Rupert in a rage had upset her a bit.

“I wish I could have been as brave as Andrew,” Arthur said.

“Didn't like it!” Andrew whined, acknowledging the presence of the other Omegas for the first time.

“Pining,” Falkirk said

“You can't move,” Keading interrupted.

“Can't speak,” Arthur added.

“Only submit, alone, vulnerable like your body is no longer yours,” Falkirk said.

The three Omegas continued showing Andrew wasn't alone in his distress. Slowly the young Omega poked his head out of the internal nest.

“Why?” he asked hesitantly.

That was a question none could answer. The only reason for pinning was to control an Omega and Falkirk didn't want Andrew to accept that concept.

“I did something very bad once. I took a gun and tried to kill someone who made a mistake...” Falkirk continue to tell the story of him shooting Moneypenny. Though, truthfully he had never forgiven Moneypenny for 'taking the bloody shot'. He told how Daniel had pinned him to bring him under control, before Brayan and the other E-Branch guards were forced to shoot him. It was the only time Falkirk could look back on being pinned without anger or resentment, at lest not to the one pinning him, there was still lots of anger towards Eve. Then came a question Falkirk had been hoping to avoid.

“Has daddy ever pinned you?”

Falkirk came into conflict. He didn't want to lump James with many other Alphas, he wanted to demonstrate to his Omega son that a relationship could occur without domination but he couldn't lie.

“Yes, once,” Falkirk answered. In a cartful and abstract story which Falkirk whittled down to the
few repeatable facts. “I had started working for uncle Daniel. Daddy did not like the idea of me working alone with a strange Alpha. I was pinned as punishment and told to resign. I told Uncle Daniel I couldn't work with him any more. Knowing why I was doing what I was dong, Uncle Daniel beat Daddy to the floor in response. Then uncle Alec punched Daddy as well. Rupert's mum, she was real mad. She threatened to take me away from daddy.”

Keading move to give a comforting brush under Falkirk neck. Even after so long, that night was still a stain on his and James' relationship that would not go away.

Andrew had gone very quiet. Knowing his Papa was upset but not quite understanding. Andrew hesitantly asked, “What's the difference?”

Before Falkirk could clear the lump in his throat. Keading spoke up. “With your Daddy it was to control your Papa. Uncle Daniel used pinning to stop your papa getting himself hurt.”

Slowly there were more questions. 'Why was Daddy angry you were working with Uncle Daniel?', 'Wasn't Uncle Alec living with you?', 'Is that why Daddy and Uncle Daniel don't like each other?'

Each question was answered carefully and neutrality, without bias or condemnation. Then came a question Falkirk didn't expect.

“Is there a way to not freeze?” Andrew asked. The three adult Omegas were at a blank.

“I don't know,” Falkirk answered.

--

Coming downstairs Falkirk picked up a skull cap from the floor. The Alpha's scent still clinging to it. Entering the drawing room, James was lounging on the large sofa with a sleeping Rupert on top of him. The young alpha wasn't just asleep though, he was completely zonked out in the crash that followed the rage. One of the boy's hands resting on James' shoulder, under an ice wrapped towel.

“The Cardinal?” Falkirk asked. There were a round of shrugs from the assembled pack.

Selene said, “He got the ferry.”

“T ook off with his tail between his legs, the second we pulled Rupert off him,” Alec added. “A few bruises, broken nose maybe... and he had a lurch as he ran.”

There was a note of pride as James spoke, “It took all three of us to hold Rupert back. Everything we taught him, it's instinct. Even in a full blown Rage he knew just where and how to hit us.”

Mary cleared her throat and asked, “How is Andrew? His first time?”

Falkirk nodded and he could see the collected Alphas all looking sheepish. “I'm going back up in a moment. Just came for some food.”

Ringing for Hudson. When the butler arrived, Falkirk gave his order and said he would take the tray up.

As he waited for his order, Falkirk looked to Mary, “Do you know if there is a way to over come the instinct to freeze?”
“Oh, no dear. I have never heard of such a thing,” Mary responded sympathetically.

A throat clearing brought Falkirk's attention to Mycroft.

“I believe Sherlock theorised Exposure Therapy could be utilised. His results were disappointing,” Mycroft informed stiffly.

Falkirk had different opinion of Sherlock's attempts to 'help him'. “And I thought he was just tormenting me?”

G stood and demanded, “What about Arthur?”

Falkirk looked to the anxious G.

“Arthur is my concern now. It would do him good, and in the long term he would appreciate some space,” Falkirk said to the young man. The Alpha thinking he had finally gotten the Omega glared in response. Falkirk met the glare with his own hard stare.

Eventual G bowed his head unable to challenge the older Omega any longer. Once G was in his place again Falkirk turned back to his brother, “Do we have any contacts in the Vatican?”

Nodding, Mycroft said, “Not very high placed though, but I anticipated your request. We're working on getting someone more senior. We might get further, if it was implied we could offer something.”

“You may imply anything you want. I'm not offering though. I'll be stating a fact,” Falkirk said and got a few dark chuckles.

--

James watched Rupert rub his eyes and whine. He sat up, disturbing the young alpha a bit more.

“I want you to go talk to uncle Daniel, then you can go to bed.”

Rupert nodded, and like his body was a lead weight stood and shuffled out of the dark drawing room. Heading for the crack of light coming from the door to the study.

“Uncle Daniel,” Rupert called quietly, seeing the alpha in a chair by the gently crackling fire. Even in summer the old castle was quite cold most of the time. He was met by the brown eyes, from the bearded face. “Sorry for taking the mace.”

“Do I look angry, or upset?” Daniel said softly indicating the neighbouring chair.

Shaking his head, Rupert perched on the big chair.

“We must all be respectful, but always mindful of some facts,” Daniel said, looking at the young alpha. It was rather uncomfortable, but not unexpected that James had asked him to have this talk with the lad. “On average, an alpha of the same size as an omega is about fifty percent stronger. That's just physiology. There's ques, Alphas react to omegas', Omegas react to Alphas'. Then there's bonding, do you know how stressful it is for an omega when they have to confront the alpha they're bound to?”
Rupert gave a mixed, shrugging nod. Like most children, not liking difficult talks and with a spotty knowledge on the subject.

“I'd like to talk about something,” Daniel said gently. “Have you ever heard of a Champion?”

The next day they packed, the weekend ending in bit of a mess. They got an early start when the police arrived before dawn, in response to Merlin's complaint. Dealing with them had been stressful for Arthur, especially when they wanted to talk to him alone. In the end, Arthur was eighteen and pinning wasn't classed as assault. The two officers really didn't want to get in the middle of a domestic situation. So sod all happened except Falkirk had one omega clinging to him one side and an older one sticking to his other side, and a small Alpha trailing them several paces off.

When it came time to leave G went in for a nuzzle, but Arthur cringed away and into Falkirk. Going down on one knee the handsome Alpha offered Andrew a nuzzle too. The little omega shook his head while staying quiet. Given what happened when Cody got too close during breakfast, G didn't push his luck with Andrew.

“Well...Goodbye. See you later,” G said rather stiffly. Falkirk returned the goodbye for Arthur and Andrew.

The three omegas watched quietly as G and his friend drove out of the courtyard. Arthur looked to Falkirk. There was hope in the Omega's eyes as fear tainted his scent. With one hand resting on Andrew's shoulder, Falkirk put his other arm round Arthur's waist and waited until they were ready to go.

Getting in the car Arthur sat in the middle of the back seat, separating Andrew from Rupert. Andrew clung to the other Omega through the journey. Andrew had become subdued in the presence of even a trusted Alpha. He tolerated the touch and presence of his brother with an accepting disinterest. Although even the accepting disinterest was a mark of trust. When Cody tried to approach he nearly lost an eye when Andrew lashed out, which in turn had Rupert pouncing on the alpha. Falkirk could admit to himself that was rather cute in a way. He didn't think Rupert could be territorial.

Falkirk had taken his brother to the side and explained Andrew needed space. While Rupert had become a shadow always in line of sight but a distance off from Andrew. James understood Andrew's behaviour and kept his distance, waiting for the Omega to approach first.

“How far are we from Skyfall?” Rupert asked when they reached the main land.

“Not that far,” James offered. Falkirk explained the relevance of the name to Arthur.

“Last time we went hunting. I got a rabbit” Rupert declared with pride to Arthur. Falkirk chuckled, it was an obvious ploy to get Andrew to engage. One of his favourite stories being how he got the deer. It sort of worked, Andrew did mention his kill but not in the detail he would have once gone into.

Hours passed and Falkirk's phone started ringing. Answering, everyone grew concerned with the urgency and calming words Falkirk was giving.
“We're on our way,” Falkirk said hanging up. To James he ordered, “Glasgow, someone wants to be born in Scotland.”

“Daniel's going to be hell,” James grumbled.

Having to back track a bit, they arrived at the hospital where the group headed to the maternity wing. They heard a screaming American voice echoing down the hall way. Selene was outside a room holding a squirming Michelle in one arm while holding Cody back with the other.

“Thank Christ!” she shouted, seeing Falkirk approaching. Handing Michelle to James and yanking Cody's collar for Falkirk to grasp. The second she was free, she darted into the room where Keadig's voice was coming from.

Falkirk had a time holding the young Alpha back. Crouching down Falkirk wrapped his arms around his bother getting the distraught Alpha's face into the crook of his neck. Stroking his back Falkirk stayed in the position until Cody had calmed in response to his own calm pheromones.

“It's alright. Your Papa, Mother, Me and many others have all given birth,” Falkirk reassured.

“But, Mom's screaming...” Cody whined.

“It's painful. Your Mom needs your mother and your mother needs you to stay with us,” Falkirk insisted. Getting a hesitant nod against his neck Falkirk brought Cody to sit on a chair beside him.

Andrew clearly didn't like the Alpha's distressed pheromones as he was as far away as possible. Arthur was sat beside him with Rupert close by. Michelle trotted up to Rupert, wanting to be by him. The little girl sat in his lap, and he started to play a clapping game with her.

“So where's the wee yin,” Daniel called as he entering the waiting area. A massive teddy bear wearing a tartan waistcoat under one arm.

“Not here yet,” James answered.

Eventually, after a few hours, Selene came out with a bundle in her arms.

“Luke,” she declared. When Falkirk looked on the red faced addition to the family and pack he picked up the light scent so similar to his Papa.

“Omega,” Falkirk mused. A tug came from his trousers. Andrew had braved the scrum to come see the new addition to the pack.

Chapter End Notes

I'm not overly happy with the ending of this chapter, I know it's rushed. But I really didn't want to rewrite when I've got more important changes to make. And if you haven't noticed my original chapter count has vanished because I've split and edited so many of the original chapters.
Well Life is a journey not a destination as they say.
An ornate room of St Peters basilica played host to this meeting. Falkirk stood at a window, gazing at the tourists crowding the square below. It was diplomatically put by Mycroft, that it would be least explosive if Falkirk didn't speak. Falkirk glanced behind him to the set of rich wooden chairs, in centre of the room decorated in white marble and renaissance frescos depicting many biblical scenes.

Mycroft sat across from three Cardinals. They were outwardly pleasant, just as Falkirk remembered Urquhart being. Despite the three being men of god Falkirk knew there was little good about them. They were just the same as the politicians or military he dealt with every day. Ambition was ambition no matter whose or what name it was done in. They, Falkirk included climbed to the top on the carcases of others.

“It would be problematic for all if Cardinal Merlin were to remain in the United Kingdom,” Mycroft said pleasantly to the three much older Alphas.

“I am sure the Cardinal could be persuaded to take up a position out of your way,” The oldest Alpha drawled, one who bore a striking resemblance to Mr, Magoo right down to the wrinkled eyes that were almost shut. “Massachusetts maybe?”

“Everyone has something to offer,” the slightly younger of the cardinals said. Only for the barest of glances to Falkirk did the Cardinal betray his desire.

It had not gone unnoticed in his time forming the enquiry Falkirk had received a letters from American, Canada and Australian lawyers requesting information and data sharing. Particularly from the schemes that sent orphaned or disadvantaged children to a supposed better life out of Britain, much of which was organised by religious institutions.

“M?” Mycroft called cautiously.

Falkirk glanced away from the window. He cast his eyes over the four seated men, Mycroft in a silver grey three piece suite. The Cardinals in their resplendent crimson robes. Their dress and this beautiful room a not so subtle power play of intimidation. Falkirk shook his head once and looking out the window again.

Mycroft cleared his throat uncomfortably. He said, “Cardinal Merlin is not welcome in the United Kingdom. If he remains, if he causes trouble over Arthur...”

Lamberto, a thick faced man with leathery skin. He was the leader of the three, tipped to be the next pope. He sat in the centre and spoke for the first time.
“Mycroft, my son. It would deeply sadden my heart for this to be a wound between us.” He managed to look genuinely troubled while placing his hand over his ‘hurting’ heart. “We, all of us have troubles, my son. Sins are atoned for and forgiven. What good can come by opening old wounds?”

“Justice?” Falkirk called over his shoulder.


Mycroft braced, he even flinched back and squeezed his eyes shut. His brother answered, “Is that how you wish to play this?”

“No, my son of course not,” The Cardinal said compassionately. “You protect these unfortunates during a dark time of their lives. I am well aware your goal is to encouraging these fallen souls to a better life. You offer training opportunities, scholarships, rehabilitation, counselling, financing...”

“I'm quite aware,” Falkirk said calmly. Mycroft cautiously opened his eyes. It didn't look like fire and brimstone was imminent.

“You see, M,” The cardinal being polite and respectful while looking concerned. “We, all of us have a past. Done things we thought for a greater good, in a world of evils and dankness, that if taken out of context could be damaging to ourselves and those we try to help. Especially where there is a forum where allegations are one sided, unchallenged, unsubstantiated. And of course, we must defend ourselves against greed. It is a powerful motivation. Lawyers want their fees, journalist want to peddle their rags, liars want notoriety, money or both. Exaggeration and outright lies will be abound. The true victims will be the first casualty, followed by the truth and those who try to do Go- try to do good.”

Falkirk had come closer and rested his hands on his brother's shoulders, to look directly at the seated Alpha across from Mycroft.

“I must reluctantly agree, Your Eminence,” Falkirk said. “We must be careful or only harm will come of people being able to speak without challenge. As they say, one bad apple could spoil the lot.”

“Quite,” The Cardinal said. “We, Mother Church, of course will be happy to aid any police investigation or investigate climes made directly to us.”

Falkirk smiled and nodded. “If we could return to the subject of Cardinal Merlin, Massachusetts I think I heard?”

Lamberto clapped his hands together in joy. He jumped to his feet, spry for an older guy. The other two Cardinals, and Mycroft still under Falkirk's hands all let out a collective breath and relaxed.

“I've heard, you are partial to Earl Grey, M,” Lamberto said, snapping a finger to a priest by the white and gold doors into the room, who left at the signal. “Let's discuss this like civilised people.”

The Priest returned carrying a large tray, with legs. On it were the shiniest silver coffee and tea pots. A stand with cakes. And cups and plates of the finest bone china, hand painted with biblical scenes and finished with gold leaf. With a truce agreed, and terms set they had a polite
conversation over a lovely afternoon tea.

During the stop start journey through the streets of Rome. Falkirk looked out of the car window, able to see the colosseum. He wished he could take some time for sightseeing, but would prefer James to be with him. Thinking of James and himself in Italy though, brought back the memory of the small village where his papa was buried.

Mycroft sighed and said, “Do you wish me to make the arrangements?”

“Arrangements?” Falkirk said looking away from the window.

“I would be willing to take Cardinal Lamberto's offer. You, I know never will.” Mycroft said, little stress lines appearing around his eyes. “He is a problem, to us, to 'the cousins'. Too many are involved with your business dealings. So that leaves us exposed.”

“Oh, no need. I'll deal with it.” Falkirk said and looked out the window, to a fountain they were near. The traffic jam letting him have a long look. He wondered which one it was, it wasn't the famous one for certain, it looked like a series of marble arches.

“Dear Brother,” Mycroft said a bit exasperated. “The problem must be dealt with quietly.”

“I can do quiet,” Argued Falkirk. “No one knows about James burying Prince what's-his-name under that tower he was financing.”

Mycroft looked sharply at his brother. “So, may I ask your plan?”

“For Lamberto, suicide. Blackmail material will be found in Lamberto's rooms. Several news agencies will also be given the same material. It will appear he failed or refused to pay, so took his own life to avoid facing the scandal.”

“Fabricated?”

Falkirk looked his brother dead in the eye. “I keep telling people. If someone comes up against me, they will have to be willing to sacrifice themselves, have no past, or be a saint because everyone else will fail.”

“So what did Cardinal Lamberto do?”

“Have you ever heard of the Corleones?”

“Ah,” Mycroft said. Recognising one of the bigger Families. “In that case the question should be, what hasn't he done? For the record, I did know about Prince Razzaz!”

“For the record, you didn't!” Falkirk argued back.

“Did too!”

“Oh you suspected... at most!”

“Sherlock deduced it,” Mycroft.
“He didn't know either!”

“I had him investigate,” Mycroft said smugly. “Had me meet him at the site of Razzaz Tower. A homeless person saw a Rolls Royce being lifted by a crane and lowered into a big pit. Several tons of concrete now entomb it.”

Falkirk huffed and crossed his arms. Ignoring the superior smile his brother was sending him. Mycroft admitted, “You are quite subtle... when you leave it to James.”

Falkirk turned and stuck is tongue out at his brother, before looking at the sights again.

--

Arriving home Hudson opened the door for Falkirk and gave a meaningful looked to the lounge. Taking the hint Falkirk entered to see James running interference between Arthur and a black haired Alpha woman.


Greeting the woman, Falkirk held out his hand to Morgan. Noticing from the corner of his eye, the lithe blond omega slipping from the room. Not that he blamed Arthur, Falkirk hated conflicting alpha to this very day. He had just forced himself to get used to the pheromones, and powerful personalities.

Lady Morgan was the opposite to her half brother. Much like himself and Sherlock she had dark almost black haired and pale skin. Her eyes were dark brown though. She had the forceful personality, egotistical and cocky, that most Alpha displayed. As they sat and talked, during the get to know you portion of the meeting, it became apparent there was something about her that put James on edge.

You didn't need Sherlock's level of deductive observation to figure out why she was here. The first hint being when, in her deep and posh voice said, “My Brother, is still easily turned. An Omega, even of eighteen years is hardly mature.”

“And of course, your interest purely... selfish,” Falkirk said.

“You doubt my love for my brother?” Morgan purred.

“No, not in the slightest,” Falkirk said with his evil smile in place. “I'm just back from a trying trip. I'm tired. I just ask for some time to recover. Could I invite you to the Hind Club, where we're having a get together. There you and His Eminence the Cardinal Merlin will have my undivided attention. There all three of us will be able to hammer something out.”

Few could stand Falkirk's smile, at least the one that hinted at the blood link that existed between the Holmes and Moriarty lines.

The Lady Morgan swallowed her sudden nervousness. Nodding she said, “Tomorrow.”

“Any time after five at the Hind Club. It's a celebration so we'll be going until late,” Falkirk said and stood. He escorted her out and shut the door heavily behind her.
“Sorry,” came a soft voice from behind Falkirk. Turning Falkirk looked to the blond sitting at the top of the stairs and looking at him through the railing. Arthur adding, “I don't think she's sane.”

Giving a humourless laugh. “Who is?”

“Is James alright?” Arthur then asked.

Shrugging. “I'll have to see,” Falkirk said unsurprised the other Omega noticed James’ behaviour and agitated scent.

--

Always the safest way to bring something up with an Alpha was after sex and James was usually more willing to discuss the things that he suppressed. Spooned, tied and relaxed Falkirk broached the subject.

"Do you know Lady Morgan?"

James pulled his mate as close as possible. “She just reminded me of someone.”

Falkirk knew his Alpha. If pushed he would resist. If given freedom he would submit. Falkirk rubbed his cheek against the arm he was lying on. As the Alpha's knot receded and the erection faded Falkirk rolled over to nuzzle under the Alpha's neck.

“Her scent, appearance even her voice. She just reminded me of... of Vesper Lynd,” James admitted hesitantly. It was the first time James had mentioned the woman who he had met on a mission.

Taking the opportunity. Falkirk asked, “Did you care for her?”

“M said I loved her,” James responded.

“She prepared me for as much.” Falkirk said knowing an evasion when he heard one.

“I don't know. She was so different to... I knew I couldn't trust her. I have never doubted you. She was... OUCH!”

Releasing to small path of skin from between his teeth and sitting up. Falkirk poked James in his chest, “You're just like Sherlock and 'The Woman'. Both magpies attracted by a shiny object.”

“You're not angry?” James asked, looking the Omega in the eye. When really mad or upset, with him at least Falkirk acted like a typical omega i.e. internalizing his anger and emotions while submitting. He didn't use his sharp teeth or glare cutely.

Shaking his head, unable to look his alpha in his piercing blue eyes. Falkirk admitted, “I made the choice a long time ago. I would be willing to share you rather than lose you.”

“You haven't done that in a long time.” James said lifting the Omega's chin. “I was young and stupid. Since learning what I needed and wanted I have sought nothing, there is no one, else.”

Before Falkirk could answer James kissed his mate soundly.
Chapter End Notes

Merry Christmas!
Wake at the Hind

Chapter Notes

Thanks to all the readers.

Happy Hogmanay!

Getting out of the cab, this time she was not alone walking towards the Privater Club. The Lady Morgan had brought her nanny, a formidable woman who had become a confidant. With Sister Sybil who cradled her hand like she always did, Morgan prepared to face not only *that* omega but... him! The one in the Rolls Royce pulling into the curb.

Smiling perfectly, the Lady Morgan waited politely for the other thorn in her side to get out of his fancy car.

“Your Eminence,” Morgan called pleasantly, while Sister Sybil turned up her nose and looked away. No not even the nun got on with the clergyman.

“Your Ladyship,” Merlin said, in the same tone of polite civility used by mutual enemies.

Looking to the ornate doors of the club with the Golden Hind figure head above. The Cardinal graciously indicated the women should go first. He was so smug Morgan just had to stick in the knife and give it a twist, “I see your coven of perverts are off the hook.”

“I don't quite follow,” Merlin said with a smirk that begged to be wiped off his face with a metal bar.

“Your ilk, preening and all holier-than-thou since the press hinted the enquiry isn't going to consider religious institutions,” Morgan growled deeply. She then thought, she assumed there were three sides to this meeting. But now? She accused, “That's it! You sold my brother to get the bitch to back off!”

Merlin laughed, hearty and truly joyful. Pulling open the heavy door he said to the woman, “I don't know what you mean, your Ladyship.”

By a narrow podium stood a footman in classic livery, similar to the old Royal Naval uniform of short, dark blue jacket with tails, white breeches and stockings. The footman welcomed them with stiff poise and presented each with a guest card, a small list of rules to follow while in the club.

Morgan was fuming as they were shown along the rich panelled corridors decorated with oil, or photograph portraits of prominent members of the club, all dressed in their finest uniforms. She shared a glance with her mentor, the hard faced nun gave her a scowl, silently telling her to harden her resolve. Which was when Morgan noticed a twitch in the Cardinal’s expression, just a quick and slight droop of his mouth. She saw what caused it, a short stretch of wall with only a few portraits, amongst them was Sir Thomas dressed in formal Naval uniform, with a medal bar over his breast and white cap tucked under one arm.
“Was he in the Navy?” Morgan asked before stopping herself.

Merlin sighed dramatically, and rolled his eyes in contempt as he answered.

“No, your Ladyship. M holds the honorary rank of Vice Admiral, to signify the relationship between MI6 and the Royal Navy.”

“You want that look wiped off your face!” Morgan threatened after being talked down to.

The escorting footman cleared his throat and opened a heavy oak door into a wide hall like room. Already many guests were in attendance. An Omega, lean and dark haired stood on a chair to sing.

"...the pipes, the pipes are calling. From glen to glen and o'er mountain side...”

M came from the crowd, having spotted them. Any hint of a union between Merlin and M was destroyed for certain, the alpha was so very cautious. Morgan watched the two greeting each other so stiffly. The singing omega’s Irish lilt giving a strange atmosphere to their meeting.

To Morgan Merlin appeared to suddenly change the subject when he said, “Very good of you to repair my car, M. You surly didn't need to replace the whole door.”

Morgan saw the lie before the omega even spoke.

“I was told the damage was too severe, no point skimping,” M said with a sweet smile. “After all, my son did give it one excellent whack.”

Cutting through this bullshit, Morgan stepped closer to the omega and reached out. Hooking a finger under his tie just above where it tucked into his waistcoat.

“Danny Boy? Black ties? To whom are we paying our respects?” From the corner of her eye she saw the Cardinal pale quite badly. His shifty eyes scanning the room, now he knew they were at a wake.

“All in good time,” M said pleasantly. Indicating a table, “Help yourselves. Only the best on offer.”

Someone called out for M, so the omega excused himself and returned to the throng of people. Morgan shared a look with Merlin and in the silent moment they decided a truce between the two was for the best.

“I don't see my brother,” Morgan said.

“Nor his Majesty,” Merlin said. “There's his Grace. The two blonds ware part of 'M's' pack... Oh there's Mycroft, he's good for information.”

As a group they closed in on the tall alpha by the buffet table helping himself to canapés while talking with a shorter man. Merlin called out to Mycroft. Tanner offered to get them drinks so they and Mycroft could talk privately.

“I take it you wish to know the game,” Mycroft speculated, while off handedly recommending a puffball thing that was new to him and filled with smoked salmon moose. For show, Merlin and Morgan took a something from the table to be polite.
“What one must remember about our community. Murder is a necessity but highly inconvenient aspect of espionage,” Mycroft said, while Merlin and Morgan shared a concerned glance. “At all times, we take the path with the least blow back on ourselves. We prefer to discredit, then destroy and only as a last resort do we kill. Unfortunately an individual,” Mycroft indicated a covered photo frame on a table at the head of the long room. “Alas, he, has become too big of a threat to remain alive. So he will be committing suicide tonight.”

“He?” Morgan asked with a wicked smile gracing her dark lips. “You mean Merlin?”

The Cardinal glared at her, while Mycroft gave a soft chuckle. Gathering himself, Mycroft said, “No, not Merlin. His Eminence, like yourself your Ladyship are still just inconveniences, in the private and family sense. No the individual we celebrate tonight, risks undermining M, and his predecessor and in doing so threatens MI5 and MI6 and our friends, both the current and past administrations of the CIA... Oh here's Mr Wade now. I had hoped Mr Ryan would attend. There's a rumour he's on the verge of running for the senate I wished to know if it was true.”

A bombastic voice called loud across the room for a 'Kiddo'. M and Wade then went to the drinks section of the buffet table and helped themselves.

Pulling away from Mycroft, Morgan leaned into Merlin. She whispered, “I'm beating a tactical retreat.”

Merlin looked round. An ex-Prime Minister, First Sea Lord and a few other VIPs offering little to no comfort of safety. He nodded his agreement. They were outnumbered and in hostile territory, despite the truce with M that Cardinal Lamberto insisted had been made.

“Harden yourself,” insisted the nun with withered hand. Neither Merlin or Morgan listened. Before reaching the only door into the old fashioned room, James blocked their path.

“Leaving?” James purred. His silver suite not matching the black tie he wore. Behind him a tall lean alpha with wild black hair, also wearing a black tie that didn't match his light grey suite blocked the door.

“No, we're not leaving,” Merlin said and backed off. He went over to the drinks table, feeling the weight of all the eyes on him. He grabbed a bottle of dark rum and poured himself a good measure.

“Are you getting drunk?” Accused Morgan.

“Too right,” Merlin said and poured himself a second glass after swigging the first in one go. “It may have escaped your notice but we're prisoners and you may not know this, Falkirk Bond has no known enemies, because they don't survive once they become known.”

Morgan glanced at the omega in question, talking with the loud American she could hear from across the room. She saw something in the omega once, but in this moment it wasn't there. Suddenly her elbow was taken and Sister Sybil pulled her away and whispered, “Stop listening to that moron. Go, talk to the bitch, and be nice to him. Be nice! Listen to his silly opinions! Like you're courting him!”

With a nod, Morgan squared his shoulders and headed for M. Getting close she heard M explaining how his son smashed Cardinal Merlin's car and after the two laughed, M added, “James has the car door hanging in his study.”
The loud American gave a hearty laugh, he then sobered and asked, “How's Andy? I'm surprised you let the bastard come after he pinned the poor kid.”

“His Eminence pinned your son,” Morgan said, interrupting. “How terrible.”

M's eyes looked to the nun Morgan knew was standing a pace or two behind her on the left. He said, “Yes, terrible. It could be worse... Arthur has told me so much.”

Morgan looked behind her, finally. Sister Sybil had pulled her withered hand behind her to hide it. Looking back to M, she said, “All failures must be punished. My father taught me that.”

“Yet for all I've done, for ever punishment I've ordered,” Falkirk mused. “I've never ordered someone to pick up and hold a burning coal.”

“My brother, does like to exaggerate,” Morgan smiled pleasantly.

“Oh, then what happened to the good sister's hand?” Falkirk said, able to see a technical truth. It might not have be a glowing coal, but it was something.

“It was just an accident,” Morgan assured. Glancing to Merlin swigging back another shot, “Although His eminence has poisoned by brother's mind for so very long. Arthur could believe the most vile stories about me. Is his eminence not capable of such baseless accusations?”

“Yes, I suppose,” Falkirk offered with a masking smile.

“Whoa, is it hot in here or just me?” Jack Wade said, tugging at his shirt collar and looking between the alpha woman and omega man. The tension broke when Falkirk's phone started ringing.

A hush fell and everyone looked to Falkirk. He listened to the voice on the other end of the phone. Then solemnly he put away the phone and walked to the table at the head of the room.

“My Lords, Ladies, and gentlemen,” Falkirk called over the hushed room. Reaching out he grasped the edge of the velvet cloth over the picture frame and pulled it as he spoke, “It is my solemn duty to inform you of the suicide of Cardinal Albino Lamberto,” Falkirk looked at the picture of the tanned man with a black ribbon across the top right corner. “He was found in his apartments, ten minutes from now by his assistant.”

“Your tenses suck!” Alec called out, getting a few chuckles.

Falkirk raised his glass of bourbon. “A toast! To a man, Cardinal Lamberto, willing to do all that was needed to protect that which he was loyal to. There's no greater honour than dying for that which you believe in. Lamberto!”

Everyone raised a glass and repeated the man's name. Using his glass, Falkirk indicated Merlin, “Care to lead us in prayer for the Cardinal.”

With a bottle in one hand and his glass in the other, the Cardinal looked to everyone around him. Putting down everything in his hands quickly, Merlin gulped. Remembering Mycroft's words, he was a nuisance now but Lamberto had been a threat and everyone in this room was complicit in his murder. In that moment, Merlin decided to rely on his training and experience an offered some
words for the departed and prayer for Lamberto's soul.

Morgan watched all this with annoyed disinterest. She watched as the people drank, got louder as the night dragged on. Darren and Daniel led a round of Rugby Songs, sung loud and obscenely proud. Sister Sybil an equally disapproving presence at her side.

“Not to your taste?” Mycroft said coming up to Morgan and the little nun. “Nor mine to be honest, but we must all learn how to cope with our actions.”

“If you need to cope, you're doing wrong,” Morgan accused.

Mycroft gave one of his tight smiles. “You're right. Some here need a coping mechanism, M is not one of them. For some, his compassion is limitless. For others it is completely absent. Some speculate he is a sociopath, but he doesn't not quite fit into that category.” giving a sigh he looked into the woman's dark eyes, “I hope you understand, your Ladyship. You're playing in the big leagues now. And truly, if M deems you a threat you will vanish and I doubt he will think of you ever again.”

She was left to stew silently. Mycroft returning to the table where he inspected several bottles before settling on a sherry. She cast her eyes to Merlin, who had lost his skull cap and was completely waisted, singing the rude songs arm in arm with the ones who would happily kill him.

Morgan spun on her heels and marched for the door. When the tall alpha with dark hair blocked the door, she grabbed his crotch in an iron grip and hissed in his large ear, “Get out of my way or I'll neuter you here and now.”

With a yank to the delicate area, Morgan threw the alpha to the ground and marched out.

Alec laughed and pointed to the man on the floor, “Poor ikle Guillam, beat up by a girl!”

--

The two entered the foyer, almost tripping over their own feet. Mr Hudson hadn't even opened the door for them it was so late. Falkirk was trying not to let a fit of the giggles break out. James beckoned him to the door of the lounge.

Falkirk stood in the doorway with James. They watched the three dozing on the couch for a bit. Arthur woke and looked over his shoulder to them, he had Andrew cuddled against him with Rupert on the smaller omega's far side.

“I let them watch Jaws,” Arthur admitted quietly.

Oh, Falkirk wished Arthur hadn't spoken. He was too drunk to sound anywhere near sober. Doing his best to not be too slurred or slow he said, “'s o-kay.”

The first giggle broke out from Falkirk. James waved a 'goodnight' and escorted his giggling mate upstairs. They tumbled into bed, halfway undressed and fell asleep in a tangle of clothes and each other.
Domestic Stuff

Chapter Notes

I've been sick. Severe case of manflu That's why this is late, and short and, I was going to add a reference to the last chapter but... Oh read and enjoy, I hope.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Having stopped in on Selene and Keading on his way home Falkirk cooed over the new arrival.

“Oh you're just a little angel.” Falkirk looked from the little cherubim face, to the exhausted parent, Selene was dozing slightly on the couch.

“It's storing energy to keep us running round all night,” Keading said, returning and slumping down beside his mate. Letting Michelle slip from his arms so she could go play with her toys on the floor.

Falkirk really looked at the pair. After two children and being the primary care giver to all the pack's children, Keading looked more exhausted than Falkirk had seen him.

Joining the two on the couch. Sitting beside Keading, Falkirk asked, “Would you two like a weekend away or something?”

There was no answer. Leaning forward, Falkirk saw when Keading blinked he hadn't open his eyes again.

With baby in his arms, Falkirk looked to the toddler playing with her dolls, “Michelle? Ice cream?”

The small dark haired girl started bouncing and chanting, “I' seem.”

“Shoosh!” Falkirk said. “Go get Cody.”

The toddler trotted off, calling for her big brother. Falkirk glance back to the pair on the couch, but even with a toddler shouting they were deep a sleep.

Leaving a note in case the parents woke up. Falkirk gathered the troop of kids before heading out. After a walk, where Falkirk pushed the pram with Luke in it. The baby awake and quite content. The Sherlock-esq Cody deemed it necessary to hold his little sister's hand. After they walked to the cafe and had the promised Ice Cream they returned to the house.

Falkirk found, Keading had flopped onto Selene's lap while she had collapsed on top of her mate.

“Take Michelle to wash up,” Falkirk told Cody. The girl still wearing most of her pink, strawberry ice cream.

Finding the expressed milk Falkirk fed Luke then set about preparing a simple evening meal. Baked chicken breasts, steamed vegetables and rice.
Falkirk was just making some gravy when Selene wandered into the kitchen. Wrapping her arms around Falkirk and resting her head on his shoulder.

“Life saver,” Selene mused breathing in the scent of a calm non exhausted Omega.

“Would you like a weekend away?” Falkirk offered again now he had someone conscious to talk to.

“Love you,” Selene mumbled. Falkirk feeling the weight on him growing.

“Are you falling asleep on me?”

“M-uh,” the alpha mumbled and shuffled of and sat at the small table. Where it looked like she fell asleep again, with her head propped up on her fist.

--

On the Sunday Falkirk arrived at Selene and Keading's town house. He picked up three children and let the parents rest. Returning home Daniel and Alec were there setting everything up. Daniel took the children through the exercises with Alec and James helping. Now he was no longer Prime Minister, Gareth Mallory joined his mate and son on the weekends. Colum seemed surprised his Father was nearly as good as Alec and James in the target practice.

Braking away from the group Andrew approached the group of Omegas. Since being pinned by Cardinal Merlin he had recovered, mostly.

“I want to try,” Andrew said sitting beside his papa and looking over his new cousin.

Although Sherlock's ham-fisted approach had been nothing but traumatic for Falkirk. After some research, Exposure Therapy had been proven to lessen an Omega's reaction to being pinned. Andrew had been given the information and the choice on how he wanted to proceeder.

Darren, Arthur and Falkirk listened to the young Omega as he confirmed he wanted to try Exposure Therapy.

“Who would you like to do it with?” Falkirk asked. He had been expecting the immediate response of James but it didn't come.

“I can choose anyone?” Andrew hesitantly confirmed.

Falkirk nodded, “You must trust the person you go through the therapy with.”

“Uncle Daniel,” Andrew said quietly with his head bowed.

“Is that because I told you about Daddy pinning me?” Falkirk asked and got a shrug in answer. Falkirk let the matter drop, if Andrew wanted Daniel he should only be giving support to his son not questioning him.

“Let me speak to uncle Daniel first. He will want you to ask him, to make sure,” Falkirk said and got a nod.
In bed that night Falkirk told his Alpha of their son's decision. With the Alpha's cock firmly anchored inside him Falkirk felt the tensing, intimately. Then came the expected agitated scent.

“Why?” James eventually asked.

“We were sharing experiences and he asked if you had ever pinned me,” Falkirk informed.

James didn't raise the matter again in the face of his worst moment, when he let his Alpha's instinct overrule everything else. Before going to sleep he gave his Omega a lick to the side of his neck. It was not the first apology on the incident and not the last. Every time it was mentioned Falkirk would get a lick and sometimes he would get one when nothing was mentioned at all.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry the editing and final read were sacrificed. Hopefully this was legible.
Arthur's choice.

Chapter Notes

thanks for reading, comments and kudos.

Selene fussed endlessly as the moment of her and Keading's departure approached. Her old anxiety rearing its head in the imminent separation from her children.

Falkirk held Luke in his little baby carrier, the hard plastic handle looped though his arm. They watched Keading at the boot of Falkirk's car, inspecting Cody's bag, to make sure there wasn't any contraband being smuggled over to Falkirk's house. Cody whined he didn't need his Mom to check he'd packed right.

“You sure you can manage,” Selene whispered to Falkirk. Giving a que, of stress.

“I'll be there when not at work. Arthur…”

“Can he be trusted!” the alpha demanded.

“Yes,” Falkirk said. “James is home all week too. Hudson, Rupert, Andrew, Brayan... not to mention the surveillance and rapid response security. Selene they will be safe, enjoy your break.”

The dark haired woman hugged him then knelt to give a bye to the sleeping boy in the carrier. She then hugged her daughter, who'd been waiting in the car eager to go to Falkirk's. Lastly, whether he wanted it or not the nearly teen alpha boy got a hug and kiss from his mum.

Keading said goodbye to the two older kids, giving them hugs and kisses. He then said a bye to Falkirk and then knelt to speak to the sleeping baby, “Now you be as good for Uncle Falkirk as you are for mommy and me... let him see what you're really like.”

“He's an angel,” Falkirk defended.

“Sure he is,” Keading said with a smile. “Shame it's the red one with horns.”

“Aww, you poor thing,” Falkirk said in a goo-goo voice lifting the carrier up. Looking at the angelic face of the boy, “You're so hard done by.”

Wishing the parents a good time, Falkirk got into the car. They waved to the parents on the pavement as they pulled away. A couple of hours from now the Alpha and omega would be at a quaint park in Yorkshire, in one of the self-contained luxury lodges. Probably sleeping right through the entire weekend.

Falkirk returned home to the chaos that accompanied a visit from Sherlock. He was interrogating Arthur with Watson trying to restrain the Alpha's curiosity over the new Omega. Cody rushed up to his big brother, Sherlock telling him to be quiet, because he wanted to deduce the facts himself.
Rosie spotting the little girl of a similar age to herself, joined Michelle and took up a place around Rupert. The little omega girl wanting to be close to her favourite alpha.

“There are some downsides to being in the pack,” Falkirk warned sitting down, and putting the baby carrier between his legs to undo the harness keeping Luke safely inside it. As expected Sherlock seized on the new piece of information. Falkirk ignored the rattling off of deductions.

“As you may have guessed Mycroft’s and my brother, Sherlock Holmes and his partner John.” Falkirk introduced.

“No. We’re not together” Watson insisted. Everyone burst out laughing.

“But,” squeaked the blonde omega gesturing to John's hand. “An octagonal wedding ring is rather strange, and he has an identical one.”

“Oh,” Sherlock said pinning the omega with a penetrating stare, his silver eyes even seemed to glint a bit. “That's unusually observant.”

Falkirk took the frozen omega's hand, Sherlock's stare was something you needed to get used to. He explained John's denial of being in a relationship with Sherlock had become a running joke in the pack. Then looking to Watson Falkirk asked, “Is there a reason in particular you're here or is it just a visit.”

Sherlock intruded in an offhand tone, “Lestrade wants to get married. He thinks he needs more than just my permission... Don't know why he didn't do what we did.”

“Like you knew what was going on, Sherlock,” Watson said, “Six hours after the registrar married us, you asked why you were wearing a ring!”

Sherlock shrugged and said, “You had it all in hand, and I had better things to concentrate on.”

With a sigh, Watson ignored his partner and looked to Falkirk, “Greg's fiancée is very traditional. She would like this to be done formally.”

“Something about Pack Alphas and permission, all irrelevant really,” Sherlock dismissed with a shrug. An evil smirk came to his long face.

“What's that look about!” Falkirk demanded. Out the corner of his eye he saw, now Arthur wasn't in the direct line of fire was rather amused by the loud pack. The Blond Omega bouncing the baby in his arms absently, and with Andrew looking at his new cousin.

“Irrelevant,” Sherlock gave dismissive wave of his hand. Falkirk didn't believe his brother, less so when Sherlock turn to Cody and started telling him about the latest case. Doing it in a way that forced their little brother to deduce the clues like Sherlock had.

“Are you staying for dinner?” Falkirk asked John. As John started to politely refuse Sherlock interrupted, “Yes.”

“We have a perfectly good casserole at home,” John reminded. “Just needs warmed through.”

Sherlock shuddered. “Throwing everything in a pot and cooking it until it's a grey sludge doesn't make a casserole John.”
“That’s how the army make it! Perfectly acceptable!”

They talked loudly, all talking over each other in dozens of different conversations going on. Over the loud family meal John told Falkirk of Gillian Walker, Lestrade's fiancée. Sherlock added his observations, often snide and dismissive.

“Are you jealous?” Falkirk asked, Sherlock not one for letting new people have sway over the people in his life. As Sherlock protested John said, “Yes he is.”

“I am not jealous!”

“I forgot how much fun it is to tease you,” Falkirk said to his brother.

“It's mean to tease,” Andrew declared.

“Uncle Sherlock can take it,” Falkirk reassured. That was the first time Andrew had spoken in the loud gathering.

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The sound of Hudson opening the front door drew Falkirk's attention. It was late and he was in his dressing gown. A bourbon sat on the table beside the couch. He could still hear, a distance away a crying, loud wails that wouldn't stop. James trying to get Luke to sleep, after Falkirk had failed after two hours of trying.

A laptop sat in his lap. Unable to sleep with the crying, he decided to hack the Chinese for no other reason than to keep his skill sharp. Falkirk was trying to change his MO as his traditional approach was now easily recognisable. Even if the hack wasn't traced, the method of attack would scream M of MI6. If there was no retaliation after this hack, Falkirk would know they didn't suspect him. Shutting down the laptop Falkirk looked up as Arthur entered. Scenting G, arousal and noticing the slight blush the Omega wore.

“A good night?” Falkirk asked as Arthur sat in the chair.

“Yes, good,” Arthur said, his blush increasing and he used his hair to hide his face.

He saw Arthur making aborted attempts to say something, like he had been doing for a few days now. He suspected what the Omega wanted and was willing to give it.

“Ask, I will not offer,” Falkirk said.

It had not taken long for Arthur to pick up the MI6 name for his prospective mate and had taken to it.

“G, he wants to form his own pack,” Arthur informed.

“Not unexpected. He wants to be his own man, his own Alpha. He no longer wants to be tied to Mother's apron strings,” Falkirk said with understanding. Getting a hesitant and unsure smile in answer.

“He needed his 'Mother' to stand up to my god father, his advisors, my sister and god knows how
“Even if G withdraws from your pack. May I be part of it?” Arthur asked.

He was right, that was the request Falkirk had been expecting. Daniel acted as a buffer between Falkirk himself and James, while Falkirk was able to act as a buffer for Kreading and Darren and their alphas. And after the pinning incident, Falkirk suspected someone, Daniel or to a lesser extent James of having ‘a talk' with Rupert given how he was acting. Some omegas refused to admit it, Falkirk wasn't one of them, they needed a champion when they faced their own bound Alpha. It was just far too physically stressful to confront their own Alpha. That was why James could not answer to Falkirk, he couldn't be a proper M to Double O Seven, the alpha would push and Falkirk wasn't able to push back and eventually James would start running rampant and out of control.

But when it came to Alphas he wasn't bound to, even though Falkirk didn't like it, he could be the heartless, hard-arsed, bitch needed of him. Falkirk nodded, “Of course you can join the pack in your own right.”

“Thank you,” Arthur said before saying his good nights.
A tap came from his office door, and Mycroft stepped in. Falkirk only raised an eyebrow in question to his brother's presence.

“I heard you were thinking of gong for the verdict,” Mycroft said, frowning and picking some lint off his lapel like it was a bug. Disguising his attempt to avoid eye contact.

“You're going to tell me I shouldn't go,” Falkirk said, taking his coat from his private wash room.

“You are without a doubt, a force to be reckoned with. But your enemies are preparing. Even with the good Cardinal Merlin's support, the church view you as having broken your contract.”

“What contract?” Falkirk smirked. “In what court could they sue me? Even by their own doctrine, repentance must be genuine for absolution to be granted. Have they shown one hint they wish to make amends for their sins? I haven't seen it! Like everyone they are more interested in protecting the institution.”

Mycroft nodded. He had a troubled and concerned look if you were good enough to know his facial expressions. Blank or tight smile were his usual limit, and of course a condescending raised nose too. He said, “There are ways for you to be removed from the enquiry, attending today could be one of them.”

Pulling on his coat, Falkirk shrugged and headed out. Mycroft joining him, still badgering Falkirk that how he appeared could be used to attack him. Falkirk defending he was there at the outset.

When they were alone in his car Falkirk changed the subject. He asked, “You've been quiet on the matter of Greg?”

“What would I have to say about that?”

Falkirk picked up the dismissive note in his brother's voice. It was a defence tactic he knew. He looked at the rigid way his brother held himself.

“If you were happy for him, congratulations is traditional,” Falkirk said. “Or you could admit, you have feelings that are not reciprocated.”

“I have, I mean,” Mycroft stumbled.
“Tanner, I know,” Falkirk said. “We all live with the fate allotted us. Missed opportunities, paths we know we will never travel, desires unlikely to come to pass.”

“Regret is not an emotion to put stock in,” Mycroft said and looked out the window.

They arrived at the High Court, and entered the public entrance. Falkirk decided to use the upper of the public galleries, immediately spotting a group. Before he could usher Mycroft back down stairs, the young alpha who'd been looking around nervously spotted him and waved.

“Okay, you were right,” Falkirk said out the side of his mouth to his brother. Being here for the verdict was one thing but sitting with the Victims could be perceived as a conflict of interest. He was here now, and even knowing it was a bad idea made his way to the two victims being supported by the two omegas who ran the refuge.

“Max,” Falkirk greeted, sliding onto the bench beside the young man. He greeted Stella who was on the boy's other side, then Max's twin sister and last was the dark haired witch-like Margot who hated him.

Although he was eighteen, Falkirk couldn't help thinking of Max as a boy. So when the young alpha hesitantly touched his hand he clasped it, and gently rubbed the knuckles with his thumb. The young Alpha's que of nervous fear was quite rank to experience, so Falkirk opened his mouth slightly and stopped breathing through his nose.

Soft and precise, Stella spoke, looking from the boy one side and the girl the other.

“Remember this is a long shot. You've both been so brave to fight, don't forget that.”

Falkirk pulled the boy's hand into his lap to hold it. Max was very unsure and his blue eyes glistened.

Surprising Falkirk, his brother leaned forward and spoke gently, “Even if one should lose, the fight is worthwhile. It will be harder for someone like Mr Layton to win next time. Harder for his actions and attitudes to be justified and defended. The next who stands up to fight will have an easier fight because of your strength today.”

Max's lip trembled, he only managed a nod in acknowledgement to Mycroft's words.

The courtroom quietened down. Below them was the accused, laughing and joking as he stepped into the dock, wearing a fancy pinstripe suite. Joss Layton, the ex-director of GCHQ was so confident he joked with his own defence Barrister and the Central Prosecution Service Barrister. All three very chummy. That riled Falkirk no end.

They all stood for the Judge, coming in. He was dressed in the traditional crimson robes and long wig. Layton gave a nodded greeting to the judge which was returned. So very chummy.

“Are you okay,” Max asked sending Falkirk scared glances.

“Sure I am,” Falkirk assured and tried to control his emotions better so he wouldn't give off ques that distressed the alpha more than he already was.

Last of all, the jury was brought in. Stella was whispering supportive words to Max, while Margot was doing the same for the omega girl.

The clerk of the court stood, dressed in long black robes and a short curly wig. “Ladies and Gentlemen of the jury, would your elected foreman please stand.”
A gruff old alpha stood. A man even Falkirk could read. His mustered coloured waistcoat, tweed jacket and perfect Windsor knot spoke of the privileged middle class. A Daily Mail reader, who lusted for the empire of old with delusions of Britain being the super power it once was.

“Mr Foreman,” Said the Clerk, “Have you come to a decision on which you are all agreed?”

There was a waver in the old Alpha's voice as he said, “Y-es.”

“On the charge of Modern Slavery, how did you find the accused?”

The judge rolled his eyes at the very idea. Layton chuckled and ducked his head to hide the gesture. Even the two barristers looked bored for this charge.

“Guilty!”

You could have heard a pin drop. The Judge sat, with a goggle eyed stare to the very picture of Middle England privilege. The Clerk of the court cleared his throat and asked, “On the charge of domestic abuse, how did you find the accused?”

“Guilty!” came the gruff response.

“On which you were all unanimous?” the judge spoke and the Foreman confirmed.

As the Clerk moved on to the other charges, Mycroft turned his head to the left. He watched his younger brother smile tenderly at the dumbstruck look on the blonde alpha boy's face. The whole court was stunned. While technically illegal, no one actually thought an alpha would be found guilty of... well being a traditional alpha. Using violence to assert dominance. Maintaining absolute control of the omegas and even immature alphas of their pack.

Falkirk turned his head slowly, to look at his brother. “Close your mouth, you'll catch flies gaping like that.”

Mycroft closed his mouth with an audible click of teeth. Falkirk said, “What else did you expect from the head of Jim's legal defence?”

Mycroft thought in flashes of information. *Jim? James? James Bond? James Bond: Jim? Jim... Moriarty! His brother got Jim Moriarty off his charges! Why would... why could Jim Moriarty trust his brother to get him off?*

“Did you work for *Jim*?” Mycroft asked.

Falkirk nodded.

Mycroft swept his hand though his thinning hair. Remembering his brother back then, a teen, only a few years older than Cody or Rupert. M had sent his brother into Moriarty's organisation. What Mycroft had failed to do privately, and their father failed to do as part of MI5, was done by his school age brother as part of MI6. Falkirk had been the spy in the spider's web. How his brother had been able to appear on that rooftop clicked into place. Thinking back, to how his brother had all his pieces in place and with one swift move annihilated all of Moriarty’s London network. Looking back he was struck with how his and Sherlock's fake death plan looked so amateur in comparison.

“NO!”

The angry roar pulled Mycroft from his thought. They looked down in time to see Layton vault the
wooden dock. He disappeared under the balcony, but they could hear startled voices and shouting.

The shocked judge, with the escape attempt had to remand Layton into custody until the sentencing. Even when the Judge might sympathise with the Alpha, Mycroft deducing the delay would be the judge's downfall. When the court reconvened, the Judge would be like the jury, with no sympathy or hesitation in levelling the heaviest of terms for Layton's crimes.

“I don’t know about anyone else, but I could use a cup of tea,” Falkirk said. Everyone still a bit stunned with an unquantified victory in the face of defeat.

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Sitting at his desk the next day, Falkirk looked at the pages of Guardian. The liberally aligned paper was the only one with the shock results of the trial on its front page. Omega rights groups were calling out the victory to the rooftops. Conservative groups heralded the outcome as the doomsday for society.

James sauntered in. It was too early to help himself to the bourbon on the sideboard so slouched into the uncomfortable Art Nouveau Mackintosh chair.

“Have you see Daniel lately?” James said.

“What did you do?” Falkirk said sitting straight in his high backed version of the same chair James was in.

James raised his hands and with an innocent smile said, “Not me. He's always pissy with me, but apparently Alec says he's pissy with everyone just now.”
Falkirk still wasn't convinced. He glanced to James walking beside him through MI6. It felt like a long time since he had made the journey from the upper building that everyone saw from the outside, to the deep rabbit warren that existed under the Victorian sewers and tube tunnels of London.

“So Daniel is actually expecting you?” Falkirk asked.

James pulled out his mobile. Reading the message he said, “Get your arse down here! NOW!”

James smirked at his mate, “I got that yesterday morning, so he should be good and hopped up by now.”

“James... if he beats you up I'm not blaming him.”

James just shrugged and smiled, “I've got a diversion all planned. I'm sneaky!”

Falkirk rolled his eyes and stepped off the lift. Being M he could walk right passed the Q-Branch check point. James breezed passed, because no one tried to force him through the full body scanners.

They walked the long corridor and through one of the sets of double doors at the end. Falkirk missed this place, he'd enjoyed being Q. Back then when he was the nice guy and M was the hard-assed bitch, now he was the hard-assed M. He was still the nicer one though, especially for the Alphas and Betas. The omegas, they could get away with murder where it came to Daniel, to them Falkirk was the 'bad cop'.

“BOND!”

Falkirk glanced to Daniel storming out of his office up on the mezzanine level. The Big Alpha stormed down the spiral stairs and made his way through the rows of desks filling up the centre of Q-Branch Administration.

Pulling up in front of James, Daniel put on a higher taunting voice, “Aww, ya brought the Laddie because y'rafeart to face mean auld Q.”
“Well he doesn't believe me when I say you're an unreasonable bastard,” James said with a shrug.

“Well Double O Seven,” Daniel said leading them to one of the benches at the side of large room, used to assign equipment. Pulling out a sealed evidence tub, beyond the biohazard sticker on the clear plastic was something green-brown and disgusting. “Despite the janitor's seven warnings on the smell, you didn't clean out your locker Double O Seven,”

“Well I wasn't going near it. Did you catch the smell? No idea what I left in there,” James said leaning closer to the tub.

“When this was discovered Double O Seven, so they called in the Hazmat Team. They thought you were cultivating botulinum for an attack!” Daniel ended in a low threatening growl.

“Six inch meatball sub!” James remembered. With a smile to the angry alpha, “Yeah, Ziva arrived and I put it in my locker for later and forgot about it.”

Falkirk cradled his face in his hand. That was nearly a year ago now. Ziva had spent most of her pregnancy in their brig. The little girl was a few months old now.

“But,” Daniel said still rather calm for the rage he was holding in check. “What brings me to today's lovely meeting with your good self. And the reason I think you're going to hide behind the Laddie, is this...”

Daniel reached under the bench and pulled out a box surrounded in a clear evidence bag.

“You found a gun I forgot to hand in,” James dismissed with a shrug.

“Oh, no Double O Seven. You didn't, 'forget',” Daniel miming air quotes, “No, Double O Seven. You stole this gun.”

“You're right,” James said looking at the gun in the evidence box. “Don't like Glocks personally.”

“At lest a janitor with no experience in policing or espionage had more brains than you Double O Seven,” Daniel said “Notice anything? Like a mark? A symbol? Something that perhaps a Double O should know?”

James just shrugged. As Daniel calmly explained that even if James didn't recognise the symbol, he should have put the gun in so any symbols could be tracked and identified. Falkirk picked up the box, and clear as the nose on his face was a symbol laser etched onto the slide of the gun.

An octopus. A round head, with slanted eyes. Like a coat hanger the eight arms hung down from wide spanning shoulders.

“Spectre,” Falkirk whispered.

“Oh shit!” The colour drained form James' face. He knew that name. With a winning smile he said, “Any chance it's a souvenir from the sixties?”

Falkirk looked to Daniel with a frown of concentration. He'd been an apprentice in the armoury so had some experience to call on. “Glocks, they were introduced in the early eighties?”

“That model, late nineties it first went on sale,” Daniel said then looked back to James. “Double O
Seven. 'I' is awaiting you. He will aid you in remembering everything you know about that gun and where it came from.”

Without looking up from the gun, M said, “I'm not looking at you James. If you answered to me, it would be Alice you would be talking to.”

James turned his big blue eyes away from his mate. The psycho omega girl was the only one worse than the head of MI6's Interrogators. But 'I' was not far behind.

“M, Q,” James acknowledged professionally.

“I'll inform Tanner,” Falkirk said. “We need to find out if this is just hero worship, a resurgence or someone just finding a pretty 'Trap Stamp' for their gun.”

James gave a winning smile to his mate, “Can't you just go ask your best friend?”

“I will,” Falkirk said, still not looking at his Alpha. The moment he did this would become so much harder. As it was James wasn't releasing a que, but Daniel was he was still off for someone usually quite controlled. “I'll be home late. I'll be going to the Village this afternoon.”

“Now what,” Daniel growled heading towards the door. Falkirk dared a look up and James sent him a subtle wink.

Daniel looked over the group of strange men and women coming in. All well dressed well and had a superior, self-confidence to them. Lastly, with a casual laid back gate Alec came in.

“What are you doing brining that bunch of reprobates into my branch!”

Alec sent his mate a innocent smile, “Just a tour.”

Daniel released a deep resonating growl. Falkirk noticed one recruit, very fit and muscular but had a pretty quality to his features. A sure sign he was an omega, even when he didn't have a typical delicate body. The Omega was crushing down on his natural instinct to cower with the barely restrained alpha's growl. Falkirk was focusing so much on the omega he didn't notice an arrogant alpha chuckle and point to Daniel.

“You,” Daniel said getting into the challenging Alpha's face. A clear half foot height difference, and the recruit still smirking at the taller Alpha. “You think this is funny?”

“It is,” the recruit said with a shrug. “You growl, maybe shout, we cower.... the routine gets boring after a while.”

Falkirk glanced at James. His Alpha was waiting for something. Alec too, he looked laid back but was ready to spring into action at any moment.

“Won't be boring when I shove my size elven brogues up your arse,” Daniel's voice going soft and dangerous.

The omega recruit tried to whisper a warning. The Alpha recruit ignored him and looked Daniel right in the eye and with utter, upper class privilege in his voice said, “Oxfords not brogues.”

In a flash of movement, Daniel grabbed the younger Alpha by the side of the head. The recruit
learning his previous training didn't amount to much in a place like MI6, where he met others more experienced and just as highly trained.

Daniel knelt on one knee. The Recruit's head pinned to the concrete floor, just in front of the black leather shoe. Ignoring the flapping arms trying to attack him, Daniel pointed to his shoe, “YOU SEE THAT SHOE? YOU SEE THOSE SPOTS ALL OVER THAT SHOE, IN PRETTY PATTERNS? THAT MAKES THEM BROGUES YOU PLEBEIAN LITTLE OIK!”

“No, pleb...”

“Harry, shut up,” said the omega recruit. He marshalled his instincts to approach the raging alpha. “Sir... I mean Q. Harry is a twat, who doesn't know when to shut up.”

Daniel calmed a bit with the omega approaching. He said to the recruit, “If he he runs off at the mouth in the field, doesn't show respect, he'll be dead... not just humiliated.”

A distance off, Falkirk had watched everything. While they did tend to break recruits of existing training by a mix of methods, he agreed Daniel was a bit off.

“I think Harry, has gotten the point,” Falkirk said coming closer too. Daniel slowly let the dark haired recruit up. Falkirk smiled at him, “Now, Harry, M learns names of recruits for one of two reasons. They impress or... Do you think you have impressed me today?”

“No, Sir.” the recruit answered crisply while pulling his suite into order again.

“We are an Intelligence Branch! Civilian technically!” Falkirk snapped. “If you say 'Sir' my name had better follow. But I have not given you leave to use my name, so it is M you say.”

“Yes, M,” the Alpha responded.

Taking Daniel's arm, Falkirk started walking them away. He called over his shoulder, “Double O Seven report the gun to Tanner for me. Have him make my travel arrangements. Then report to I.”

“M,” the alpha grumbled. Whatever else he said under his breath Falkirk chose not to hear.

“So what's eating you?” Falkirk asked when they entered Daniel's office.

Daniel settled into his large chair and sighed. His brown eyes lifted to look at Falkirk, “Andrew.”

“You knew he might ask you,” Falkirk said.

Daniel stood sharply, needing to move. He began pacing.

“Might! I might grab Bond by his big ears and hammer throw him into the Thames. Might is not doing.”

Falkirk had to chuckle at the idea of James being tossed into the river by his ears. He sobered and said, “Andrew's been thinking about this long and hard. Since coming back almost. One fact, he wants to overcome the instinct to freeze. To be able to fight back the next time.”

“He came here, Arthur was with him but in essence he was alone. He wanted to ask me in person. That took guts,” Daniel said and sat. “I said yes, how could I not. Then after Andrew left, I spoke
with Dr Dean. She gave me the run down. Traffic lights. Trust. Vulnerability. CHRIST! It sounded like a BDSM scene!"

The big Alpha groaned and leaned back while covering his face. Falkirk said, “I told Andrew about the time James pinned me. That put the nail in the coffin of him helping Andrew through this.”

“I pinned you,” Daniel reminded.

Unlike James, Daniel had never apologised. And Falkirk reminded, “I was armed, dangerous and out of control. I don't regret what I did. But if you hadn't pinned me, a guard would have had to put a bullet in me. They're trained for shoot-to-kill you know? I'm quite thankful that didn't happen. I told Andrew about that incident too. He knows the difference between justified and unjustified actions.”

“It's just not right,” Daniel grumbled.

“You're just sexist,” Falkirk teased. “You had no problem pining... god what was his name again? The twat.”

“That's different. He's an alpha.”

“See sexist!” Falkirk smirked.

“You saw his arms and legs waving about. Alphas might freeze when young but they grow out of it.”

“How do they grow out of it?”

Daniel shrugged. Then looked at Falkirk, “Alpha get into so much trouble, it loses its effect. Parents scruff us, as kids we scruff and pin each other. Alphas grow out of freezing, Omegas don't.”

“So bloody sexist,” Falkirk teased.

Pointing at Falkirk. Daniel blasted, “What about you! Addison, James, Maloney. Men, alphas preferably and charming, they have you wrapped around their little finger.”

“Don't!” Falkirk argued with a pout and arms crossed. He knew it was true though. Then pointing at Daniel, “HA! Maloney, you've never once brought him up on loss of equipment!”

“Besides the point!” Daniel said with an exaggerated pout of his own.

“And don't get me started on Thomas,” Falkirk said. “Would you have sent him to I? No matter what.”

“I'm not the handler for Double O Six,” Daniel said with a smug look.

They bantered back and forth. Coming back to Andrew every now and again. Tanner knocked on the door to tell Falkirk his plane was ready.

Falkirk stopped at the door before leaving. Daniel, taking back his agreement had not been mentioned at any point, or even hinted at.
“Daniel, thanks for doing this.”

The big alpha nodded in response.

Chapter End Notes

'Traffic Lights' will be touched on later. They're way of clearing communicating comfort in a situation. Notably used in BDSM
Lestrade taped the wheel nervously as he drove. The woman beside him he had been slowly getting closer to after Sherlock put the nail in the coffin of his last marriage.

She was a traditionalist, and an alpha. He was not looking forward to the meeting she had insisted on. The waif like Omega was easily more scary than his brother's combined. Mycroft always implied threat. Sherlock was less implied but if you were good enough you could fight him off. The pack Alpha always seemed to be the central point of focus as the attack came from the sides and back.

“The thing is,” Lestrade started, just to chicken out again. Gillian glanced at him with a look he was starting to get concerned with. She was not appreciating him bottling whatever he was about to say. “I don't know Sir Thomas that well. We're not that close. Usually a formal invitation to Christmas Dinner.”

“No one should not be close to a proper pack Alpha. 'Most needed or least wanted' Grandfather always maintained was the perfect relationship,” Gillian responded abruptly. “Are you afraid of him?”

“Yes, no, sort of. Don't take him at face value.” Lestrade admitted.

“Good, as it should be,” Gillian said.

Pulling the car to a stop Lestrade got out. Walking along the houses with his fiancé, Lestrade indicated the correct one and they climbed the steps. Just as he rang the bell Lestrade said, “The Alpha's an Omega.”

“What?” Gillian demanded. Earning a disapproving lift of a one golden-blond eyebrow from the unamused butler who had pulled the door open.

“You are expected Sir, ma'am,” Hudson said indicating the Library. Lestrade led his fiancé to the door indicated. The woman with streaked blond hair and murky-blue eyes kept the disapproving butler in her sights.

Lestrade knocked before entering, pulling her along with him. Gillian glanced around the room. Sherlock she knew along with John, while the one she assumed to be Mycroft stood by the fireplace. The only Omega in the room was behind the desk just to the left of the entrance.

Standing Falkirk extended his hand to the Alpha woman.

“A pleasure to meet you Ms Walker,” Falkirk said. For a few moments he was left hanging.
Gillian sent a sideways glance to Lestrade thinking it was a trick. He had not been overly supportive of her traditional views and wouldn't put it passed Sherlock to play tricks on them both.

“She doesn’t believe you're the pack Alpha,” Sherlock dismissed and slouched a bit further down.

Giving an annoyed eye roll at Sherlock, and as politely as an Alpha could Gillian said to Falkirk, “I hate agreeing with Sherlock, on principle. He is quite correct though. An Omega? This joke is in poor taste, I’m insulted! Which I think is the idea.” She glanced to Sherlock, “You've been trying to sabotage this from day one!”

“Well it doesn’t really matter what you think,” Falkirk said to her pleasantly. Falkirk's comment, in a strange way appeased the alpha. He indicated the seat across from his desk. Before Lestrade could sit, Falkirk said, “A bourbon!”

Gillian watched the tanned man jump and go over to the book case. He fumbled, knocking the books until he found the disguised hatch and lowered it.

“Ms Walker,” Falkirk said drawing her attention. Hearing Lestrade in the background, the click of glasses, some bangs, apologies, and Sherlock and Mycroft sniggering. She couldn't look away from the omega's cool unblinking gaze. It started to tingle at the back of her neck. The second she squirmed, the omega continued.

“I'm not especially close to Greg. He is of my pack though,” Falkirk indicated the drawing above the fireplace. “I have gone to some considerable effort to get him his position as Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. If you can hold your own against Sherlock, all the better. But I would be so....aggrieved. Should Greg be hurt again.”

The woman gulped, while held mesmerised by the strange gaze of the calm, in a strange way calm, omega. A clunk, broke the omega's gaze of her. They both looked to the tumbler that had been put down on the pale desk. It was so strange for Gillian to see her normally, fairly laid back and slightly gruff fiancé so flustered.

Falkirk lifted the glass very carefully. Holding it up for Gillian to see, filled to the very brim with the smokey straight Kentuckky whisky. He burst out laughing, and so did Gillian. Lestrade blushing as first John laughed, Sherlock smirked and Mycroft gave a shake of the head.

“Could, if I may ask,” Gillian said, while pulling the blushing Lestrade down to sit in the chair next to hers. “Greg has met my pack Alpha, my uncle. I've met you.”

“The next step, I meet your pack Alpha,” Falkirk said and nodded his agreement.

John stood and escorted Lestrade and his fiancé out. They were staying for dinner though, so there would be more time to get to know her. Hopefully without Lestrade making more of a fool of himself.

“Dear Brother,” Mycroft said to Sherlock still slouching, sulking a bit. His thoughts on a new person in Lestrade's life quite clear. “Could Falkirk and I have a private word.”

“Why?”

Falkirk had to laughed at Sherlock, he did so delight in winding Mycroft up. He said, “Because, if Mycroft mentions the village in front of you, you and he will have to be shot.”
“The village? The village?” Sherlock mused. His eyes darting about, while his brain tried to come up with something. While Falkirk returned his full glass to the little bar and poured most of the contents back into the cut glass decanter.

Before Mycroft could dig a big hole, that Sherlock would love to exploit. Falkirk just gave a casual dismissal, “Just a prison, an open prison at that. Mycroft’s curious about a Prisoner I went to speak with and why.”

Falkirk was a master in handling Alphas now. Sherlock shrugged as he expected. So long as Sherlock didn't think something was being hidden from him, he'd class everything as boring and ignore it.

“Mycroft,” Falkirk said looking at his brother by the fireplace, now with a normal measure in his glass. “I am friendly with Number 1. I like our chats. And that is all we had... oh and some lovely tea. He still doesn't tell me the blend. And these lovely little tarts, sort of custard but not as eggy and lightly spiced with cinnamon I think. Really quite nice.”

Falkirk headed out, with Sherlock. Mycroft staying quiet. Despite only the relevant pack members being here, the lounge was still a bit loud. Lestrade sat with his fiancé beside John. While James sorted pre-dinner drinks. Arthur had Andrew close by, and a protective Rupert. Rosie was back at Baker Street, in the care of the one time MI6 agent and current housekeeper for John and Sherlock.

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Sitting back in his chair. Falkirk watched Tanner bring up a security video on the glass wall. It showed the Double O locker room. Nine large wood fronted lockers covered one wall. Maloney went out, the omega shouldering James coming in.

“He was pissed I got the mission,” James said. Sitting in the office watching too.

The James on screen, opened his locker. Gave an obvious gag, and threw a bag in and quickly closed the door. James then opened Maloney's locker to swiped his towel and toiletries before heading for the shower.

“That's when the complaints about the smell started,” Tanner said.

James adding, “That's the night I got back from Jordan. After going to Prince Razzaz's home. Q Branch said the retrieved intel. was 'of limited use'.”

“Well we didn't get all of it,” said Daniel standing by the window.

“Oh, don't start that again,” James shot at the big alpha. “You know how many guns I take off henchmen? I don't. I can't count that high.”

“I'm surprised you can count to twenty without taking your shoes and socks off.”

Falkirk cleared his throat to stop the argument before it started. He then looked to the last person in the room. A quiet man, with wavy blond hair. 'A' the Archivist of MI6 maintained the deep vaults of the deepest darkest secrets. His narrow blue eyes flashed to Q and away again.

“M,” A said. His voice soft and educated. “On your and Number One's recommendation we looked
at the Archive. The spectre signet ring is gone.”

A, came forward and placed down a gold ring. An oval of onyx, or some other black stone had a picture, of a white ghost, it couldn't be an octopus of later designs because it only had four squiggly legs hanging from the round head.

Picking it up, Falkirk felt the ring was very light. With a slight pressure, the ring deformed. A good replica, so long as you didn't touch it.

“So we are looking at a Fan?” Daniel speculated.

“I take it, you can't tell me when the original was removed?” Falkirk flicked his eyes up and the nervous Archivist flinched. Their relationship had taken a knock during the problems with the Masons. A, having to undergo a loyalty exercise, he passed but loyalty exercise are never nice thing to experience.

“No, I can,” A said. He looked at a note as he said, “Since the then Double O Seven, Henry Jones, detained Blofeld, the ring has only been accessed once. By the then Double O Five, Jonathan Hunter.”

Falkirk groaned and scrubbed his face. Remembering the first Double O he lost. “Can't ask him, blown up by an American tomahawk missile... There was an uncle, I think, as next of kin. A complete arse, only asked about the money.”

Tanner said, “We went through Hunter's effects after his death. No Spectre ring.”

“Or the people who went through Hunter's belongings were pocketing things they didn't think would be missed,” James said.

“At a minimum, this is about twelve years ago,” Falkirk groaned. He'd not long been M. About a year before he fell pregnant with Andrew.

“We'll do what we can,” Tanner said. Falkirk dismissed them. James and Daniel staying.

“Well?” Falkirk said looking between the two Alphas.

James shrugged. Daniel said, “Only time will tell. But we are vigilant for any new organisation on the rise.”

“Half the time it's luck,” Falkirk said. “One strange gun, and one wrong boy. That's what started this.”

A buzz came from Falkirk's desk phone. Darren said, “M, eh, Jack Wade's here to see you. But wants to meet outside.”

Falkirk shrugged. He pressed the talk button of the intercom, “Tell him I'm on my way.”
He found Jack, sitting on a bench just watching the river flow by. He was dressed in a shirt, in the style Falkirk had come to associate with Jack Wade. A midnight blue background, covered in large bold flowers with white petals. Beige trousers, and sturdy boots completed the look. It had been a while since Falkirk had seen the heavyset man like that, since Jack started working for the president and had to wear suits that always looked out of place.

Sitting down, Falkirk called the other man's name in greeting.

"Kiddo," Jack said rather somberly. He held out a carton cup, which Falkirk took.

Looking at the tab hanging down at the side, Falkirk was pleased to see the 'Twinings' Earl Grey label. He took off the plastic lid and set it down beside him, so he could remove the tea bag. It was just one of those things, British people never drank tea with the bag in it. Unlike Jack, Falkirk did a double take. Yes, there was a string hanging out from under the lid of Jack's take away cup. One of those silly blends, jube-jube berry and macadami, 'Or was that a shampoo advert?' he thought. Certainly not the liquid tar that passed for coffee, that Jack liked.

"So is this just a visit?" Falkirk asked taking his first sip.

"Sort of. I escorted this kid's body home. Gary Bell, I met him, you met him once at Stark's place. After reading an article, he decided Forensic Anthropology was his thing so quit the CIA," Jack looked at the cup in his hands. A little rushed his spoke, "And I need to officially tell you, the FarSight is going to be exposed. One of our operators wet rogue. Broadsky set up a couple miles away, he then made a called to the Jeffersonian. The kid, just the intern the closest to the phone picked up. Broadsky asked to speak with the FBI agent, and when Agent Booth was about to take the receiver. Broadsky killed Bell, right in front of Booth. One helluva statement. Not even in the depth of the Jeffersonian were they safe. The bullet went through three wall, hit the kid so fast there was no transfer of energy, he just stood there with a hole in his chest. Then fell. It took him about thirty seconds to die... begging not to go."

"We've seen targets taking precautions against the use of the FarSight's targeting system. So it is known about," Falkirk frowned. Something feeling off about the encounter. More carefully he said, "I'm not like the others. Mycroft with his complete disregard for others, so long as he doesn't get his hands dirty. Or Sherlock, who is a Sociopath. Even James, Alec, Daniel and Selene can de-compartmentalise their emotions. Unless I hate someone, I do feel for them. But Jack, we lose people..."

"Damn, I know that kiddo!"

Falkirk glanced to the man beside him.
"Don't you ask! FIT AS A HORSE, I AM! Had my physical just last month."

Falkirk nodded, but heard the defensive tone.

"Okay," Falkirk said. In the long moments of silence that followed he tried changing the subject.

"I was reminded of when we moved back in," Falkirk nodded to the building a bit further up river. "That operation. The Navy liaison was pissed 'a kid' got him out of bed to stop a missile attack. The Ambassador wouldn't interrupt his fancy dinner, when I tried to complain formally. Then, that's when I felt my wrath stirring. I was going to go after them, when the Prime Minister called me in."

"Urquhart sent the Ambassador back on the first plane. Insisted the liaison get a dishonourable discharge. That man was a psychopath!"

"He was trying to keep me sweet." Falkirk smiled, he never saw what other's did in Francis. He'd been like many other Alphas in Falkirk's life, maybe a bit more respectful after the first meeting both to Falkirk's face and he suspected behind his back too.

"You're a psychopath too."

Falkirk chuckled, and shook his head. Then sobered, "No, I need emotion. I must hate my opponent."

"God! I didn't want this question," Jack blasted, "Okay, Kiddo. What's wrong?"

"The first gathering of evidence for the sexual abuse enquiry, is next week," Falkirk said. "If someone gets up and speaks. If I believe them. If the ones they accuse are powerful, thinking they're above the law. I don't know how I'm going to stop my self from battering down their door, show their supposed power is an illusion as I... I..."

"Kneecap them?" Jack said with a smirk.

"Oh, don't you start. I get enough of that from James, Alec... hell even Tanner made a joke about it once."

"I really thought it was Jimbo, you know with your dad," Jack chuckled to himself. "Then the video made the rounds."

"You bugged my father's hotel room?"

Jack shook his head. He pulled out his mobile and some ear phones. He found the video he was looking for and held out the device. Like teens, they huddled close so they could share the earphones, and both could look and hear the video. This close, Q could scent the alpha, there was a hollow-bitter smell he associated with stress but nothing else of note.

As the images on the screen started to move. Falkirk remembered that day, in New York, about twelve years ago. It was a surveillance video from across the street, of a six story apartment block’s penthouse.

"Target sighted," came a drawling southern voice, as the image focused on a younger Falkirk entering the shot. Falkirk joined the Latino crime boss being dragged by a black man dressed in combat gear to the glass dining table by the window. The broad and muscular Oso, and Helmsley
the then 009 had their backs to the sliding doors, and the then Q, Falkirk facing it. The two talked, Oso spat on the papers Falkirk placed on the table. As Falkirk pulled out his gun, the excited surveillance guy commented, "What's he doing? God the bitch is doing it himself! Wo-ho! Bam! One in the knee!"

Jack said, "Seeing this was when I figured it wasn't Jimbo who put the bullets in Control's knees. It was you."

Falkirk nodded.

The excited voice from the video was crowing, "OH OH! He's riled the bitch again. Big mistake! And yes, the bitch has some balls! BAM! Two for two! He won't be walking that off, won't be walking at all! Think I'm in love."

Jack took back the phone. Falkirk asked, "So who's Mr Sports-commentator?"

"Someone who was given a lecture on appropriate comments to make on surveillance tapes." Jack put his phone back. He went sombre a moment, "Like M thought you wouldn't walk Stane to his execution. I made a bomb that day, lots of guys bet you'd cower somewhere till it was all over."

"Stane, that's when I met that Bell?" Falkirk said with a frown. Remembering the token investigation he did at Stark Industries. Jack and M knew the Vice President of the company had been the guilty party. M just wanted to see if Falkirk could stomach taking a man to his murder.

Jack nodded. It was his turn to change the subject, "How's the little blond thing the king's after."

"Good. I convinced Arthur to take some time, explore his freedom somewhat," Falkirk said. He spoke of Merlin and how he was rather loyal now and had given up all claim over Arthur. How Morgan still tried to get her hooks into her brother, but without Arthur's consent couldn't do much but make an annoyance out of herself.

The morning passed as they gossiped and reminisced. They talked about Greer, the clubs that now spanned from Washington DC to Sydney. Jack telling him about the time the Vice President slept with one of Falkirk's call girls. Which led to Falkirk asking about President Santos and being told Bartlett was the better in Jack's opinion.

"Well kiddo, I better be getting to the airport," Jack stood with a groan. He looked rather awkward as he stood there, unable to look at Falkirk. "You know kiddo, I, this might be inappropriate. Hell, from the kid I first saw, to you know... I'm proud of ya."

Before Falkirk could respond Jack walked away, quite fast. He watched Jack take something from his pocket and slipped something into his mouth. Falkirk felt James come up behind him.

"What's up with him?" James asked. Falkirk could only shrug though.

Gathering his thoughts Falkirk called to the Alpha a distance off, "WHATEVER IT IS! GET YOUR THUMB OUT OF YOUR ASS AND GET IT CHECKED OUT! OR SO HELP ME I'LL KNEECAP YOU."

They heard the bark of laughter. Jack just raising his arm in acknowledgement without looking back. Falkirk shouted, "YOU THINK I'M KIDDING! TRY ME!"
Jack stopped and looked back a moment, before heading along the path. A casual amble, like he was taking in the sights while heading towards Westminster.

"Is he sick?" James asked, standing with Falkirk in his arms as they watched the older man go.

"I think, he is choosing not to know. He's only drinking warmed fruit water, that some idiot calls tea. Doesn't even have the good grace to fill it with ice and alcohol. I would have prefer that, he's talking of the past like one of his drunk dials when stone cold sober."

Trying to cheer him up, James said, "Well you want me to get Maloney or Addison ready. Go pay him a visit. A kneecapping will get him go to hospital."

"Oh shut up! I've only done it twice."

"Four times," James said with a smirk. Heading back to MI6 with his mate's hand in his own.

"Two people, four knees and I'm never going to live it down." Falkirk pouted a bit.

"Like me with the Embassy. Some little dick swaggered up to me the other day and asked about it." James had a chuffed smile, "And the recruits thought Daniel was scary. I have a licence to kill, that they forgot about."

"Are you and Daniel in a pissing competition again," Falkirk said. Breezing passed reception and heading for the lifts.

"No," James lied with innocent smile. "But I am winning. Scared two of them off, to Daniel's one."

Falkirk just rolled his eyes. "Really, Double O Seven!"
Glancing up to the omega. The older man asked, “Sir Thomas, have you decided on your opening statement?”

“No,” Falkirk said while looking over his information. He glanced up to Lord Foster, the round old man affixing his formal crimson robes of a high court judge. He was here to give his legal opinion to the proceedings Falkirk was to chair. The old man didn't need a curly wig, his grey hair was naturally curly enough as it was. He still put it on though.

Sir Humphrey opened the door. Another grey haired, 'old boy'. One of those alphas that went to the proper schools and universities. He came complete with a condescending smile, that must have been learned at the same place as Mycroft learned his. He said, “Are we ready, Sir Thomas, Lord Foster?”

“As we'll ever be,” Falkirk said, following Sir Humphrey out. Lord Foster following last. The corridor, like the anteroom was rather nice and classic, but rather confined. They passed another judge, making use of the private passageways. Falkirk heard someone call an 'All rise!' just as they exited the corridor into a large chamber.

This wasn't a court room, but it was in a court house. A large planned room, with the Royal Crest behind the large table Sir Humphrey, Falkirk and Lord Foster sat at. A single table was across from them for the witnesses, and behind a dividing barrier again made of dark wood were pews like those found in churches.

As Falkirk sat down in the central chair, everyone else in the room sat with him. At the back of the room were reporters, a whole row of them. There were cameras set up, but they were for official use. Footage had to be requested, because reporters couldn't use their own recording device. Witnesses couldn't be identified publicly, and what they said was protected from defamation only when spoken in this room. If a reporter quoted something, it was they who took the risk of libel. It was complicated with the reporting restrictions, but the goal was to hear the accusations then determine the validity, truth and whether further action should be taken.

Falkirk realised everyone was waiting on him. He wished he had a gavel or something but that only happened on TV. He cleared his throat and adjusted the microphone in front of him. He welcomed all, and acknowledged this was the first day of hearing testimony.

He glanced at the row of omega bois, beta and omega girls, making up the first two rows. He didn't recognise any of them, but was sure that would change at some point.

“I received many petitions, from many groups. Finding when and were to begin was a difficult choice.” Falkirk spoke. “My staring point shall be the most difficult, for I must here by declare a
conflict of interests. I was present at an event in which a future member of my pack was involved. I and the then Detective Sargent, now Deputy Commissioner Lestrade did conduct a raid of the Bunny Boi Club, in which Special Advisor to the Prime Minister Guy Haines and the Foreign Secretary Peter Creedy were arrested. At the time Gareth Mallory, the then MP for Eltham, was questioned and released by me. I had no personal association with Gareth Mallory at the time, and I believed him to be only casually connected with Haines or Creedy. Gareth Mallory is here today and will give a full and frank account of his actions at the Bunny Boi club and any other similar locations.”

Falkirk took a breath. There was no one jumping to his feet to declare him unfit at least. Falkirk then said, “The second point I must make for the record. I have no moral objection to the idea of prostitution. It is my personal opinion, which I have stated before both publicly and privately. I believe legalisation and regulation is a more effective option than prohibition and criminalisation.”

Falkirk waited a moment for any reaction, there wasn't.

“So, I bring this first session to order. Sir Humphrey?”

The Alpha to Falkirk's left called out, “Gareth Mallory, Director of MI5?”

Mallory sitting beside Lestrade stood and made his way forward.

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The scent of a scared and highly distressed Omega floated across the room. Falkirk sat in the centre, directly across from the Omega at the witness table giving evidence. He was being supported by a lawyer, but the omega had to be the one to speak for his testimony to count.

Falkirk wanted to be shocked by the depravity he was listening to. This omega boi was the 5th person Falkirk was hearing the evidence from. None had accused Mallory of the worst yet. His pack mate had admitted to going to the clubs, watching strip shows and even a lap dance. The second of the omegas to give evidence had been the only one to remember Mallory, and only as a customer who tipped well and didn't want anything more than a drink at the strip club.

The blond omega speaking, his story was following a familiar arc, just like the others. He was taken from a bad home life, and put into care where he'd been groomed and abused. He hadn't reached the next part but Falkirk was sure when the omega was thrown out of the home at sixteen was when he had to start working. Eventually, being pretty, when he reached eighteen he could work openly in the clubs Mallory had admitted going to.

Falkirk knew what he would look like and the press would gleefully revel in it. Falkirk focused his vision on the table in front of him. The press would call him 'cold', 'unfeeling', 'heartless'. The truth was if he gave more than a cursory look, he would break down with the witness and he wouldn't be able to do his job and bring them the justice they needed.

The Omega had his head down and neck bared. An Alpha near the front of the public gallery, a mate Falkirk assumed was looking highly concerned and agitated. The omega was getting to the end of his testimony when he said, “I was getting older and Peter Creedy got me a job as a Bunny Boi. I worked there until you came in.”

Falkirk looked over his notes. “You are referring to the raid I participated in with, at the time DS Lestrade?”
“Yes, sir,” the Omega answered.

“For the record, the details have been declared by myself, Deputy Commissioner Lestrade and Gareth Mallory,” Falkirk stated. As kindly as he could Falkirk asked, “What happened after that?”

Shrugging, the Omega glanced to Falkirk with red rimmed eyes.

“All hell broke loose. Creedy and his friends were too busy saving themselves. The moment the police let me go I ran. Met my mate,” He said indicating the agitated Alpha Falkirk had noticed.

“Until you came forward as part of this enquiry. Had you been contacted in any way, by anyone from your youth?” Falkirk asked.

“No, sir,” the Omega answered. Falkirk wished he'd stop using 'sir' but didn't want to bring it up. The term had too many implications on class and status, rather than it being a mark of respect.

“Is there anything you would like to add?” Falkirk asked.

“You asked for a Green Widow. I'd never served an omega before.” The Omega ducked glancing up at Falkirk and away constantly. “It was kinda amazing. I'd never seen an Alpha afraid of an Omega before either. Especially Mr Creedy.”

“I was not alone,” Falkirk informed just as softly. “Thank you Mr Samuels. Your testimony has been acknowledged and recorded, you may step down now.”

Sir Humphrey called, “Bailey Morgen?”

The lawyer stayed at the witness table. While the blond, Samuels returned to his mate a dark haired young man came from the crowd. Nervous and jittery he pushed through the swing gate and sat at the witness table. Falkirk remembered him, he'd heard the dark haired boi talking before. This time as he listened it wasn't a polite, abridged version of his history.

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With James holding his hand Falkirk stepped out the urine smelling lift. Falkirk had cringed all the way up able to identify the marking Alpha as male and adolescent. The Block of flats was as grimy inside as it was on the outside.

Finding the door he was looking for Falkirk knocked. There was the sound of suddenly exited children. Then a deeper voice, a father taming, command and restoring order before the door cracked open. The Alpha looked at him with suspicion. He would know who Falkirk was and have a good idea why he was on the door step.

“How can he not be left to live his life?” The Alpha demanded.

Before Falkirk could answer Samuels, the Omega from the enquiry called, “Who is it?”

The Alpha let the door swing open and a wave of pure, clean and warm air washed over Falkirk. Beyond the Alpha was the Omega Falkirk had now met three times.

“I feel I need your permission for something,” Falkirk said.
Hesitantly Samuels nodded and gestured for Falkirk to enter. Passing by, the Alpha stepped in front of James to stop him from following. Falkirk asked James to stay. Samuels pointedly looking at Falkirk and James' clasped fingers as they pulled away from each other.

Stepping into the small lounge of the well kept home Falkirk looked to the Alpha and Omega at a small table eating. The younger Alpha wearing most of his spaghetti meal. The older Omega encouraging her brother to slow down and he would get more in his mouth. The little Alpha just gave up on his little fork and started using his fingers.

“Is there somewhere we could speak privately?” Falkirk asked. Nodding, Samuels led the way through a door into a small kitchen. It was barely big enough for the two of them. The Alpha looked concerned as he stayed in the living room with the children. Closing the door Falkirk pulled out a photo from his inside pocket and placed it on the counter.

Samuels looked at the picture of himself in the bunny boi costume of long fake ears, fuzzy tail. Wearing skimpy white underwear made up of a corset, thong and stockings. A younger Falkirk reclining back with his legs crossed and accepting a matt green drink in a cocktail glass from Samuels' tray.

“I was teased for weeks with that photo,” Falkirk mused with a sad smile. “Given what I heard today. Out of respect I feel I should get rid of it. I would like your permission to keep it.”

The other Omega nodded without hesitation. Almost a frightened gesture.

“Would you like to know why?” Falkirk asked, getting a hesitant shrug in answer. The scent of distress was beginning to taint the air of the confined space.

“You remembered me. Do you remember the man who took the photo? Alpha, round flat face, brown eyes, six foot,” Falkirk continued until Samuels shook his head. “I counted one day how many would have a proper memory of Bill Timothy. I counted at maximum of fifteen. If a few of them have more than just a passing memory I would be surprised. When I needed him he was at my back, with him I could face Alphas like Haines and Creedy. For this country he died in a slum, in Argentina, a place so bad even the local police refused to enter. In a gutter, with a knife between his ribs he was left to rot.”

Falkirk got a watery smile from the other omega. He lifted his glasses to wipe away the moisture threatening to leak out of his own eyes. With a thicker voice Falkirk said, “All Bill's assets were sold off. He had no will, because he had no benefactors or dependants. So the contrary took all he owned as well. I was left with a photo.”

“You can keep it,” Samuels said sliding the photo towards Falkirk. Trying to lighten the mood, “I have good legs.”

“Better than my flipper feet and spindly sticks,” Falkirk offered. His voice just as hollow.

“There is was something else. I can't tell you the details beyond I did things that needed to be done but I was never proud of it. Like at the club, Bill was at my back for most of it.” Falkirk said and pulled out a few paper covered cylinders.

“For the jobs I did, Bill acted as courier between me and a terrorist. At the time I was paid in Krugerrands. I never wanted them, but Bill encouraged me to keep them. I still have them. This has
nothing to do with what happened then at the club or now letting me keep the photo. Keep them, throw them away, perhaps with you some good could come of them,” Falkirk finished placing the rolls down.

With cautious fingers Samuels reached out for one of the brown paper covered tube on the counter. The weight taking him by surprise.

Now he was lost in his thoughts. Falkirk picked up the photo looking at it.

“My Alpha and our pack Alpha needed me to get rid of the Foreign Secretary so they could investigate something called Quantum without him or his friends interfering. I did! I wasn’t even think about you or the others at the time. If you’re ever in need. I will descend with every force at my disposal. It will not matter who I have to face,” Falkirk said letting a resolute hardness enter his tone. He placed down a business card.

The other omega picked up the card with an email address and phone number. Falkirk watched the Omega's lips move silently as he committed the number to memory. Samuels pulled out his wallet and slipped Falkirk's card inside.

Opening the door no doubt the combined stressed scents of the two Omegas hit the Alpha. Falkirk smiled and ducked his head, baring his neck to Samuels' alpha.

“Thank you,” he said to the Alpha and headed to the door. He heard Samuels gasp when he realised what a Krugerrand was.

The moment he was in the foul smelling communal hall Falkirk shrugged off the submissive pose. He was upset, but the pose had been to appease Samuels' alpha.

“Try the stairs?” Falkirk said to James who was looking a little green. The Alpha had his lips slightly parted so he could breath without smelling the landing but it wasn't working. They clasped hands and the moment they were through the fire door into the stairwell, they decided the lift was a better idea.

Chapter End Notes

If memory serves. There was some confusion with Guy Haines. He's from Quantum of Solace(which was went the raid being talked about took place), not the Stranger on a Train character. With Tim Pigott-Smith only listed as 'Foreign Secretary' in Quantum of Solace so I used his V for Vendetta character name for this fic 'Peter Creedy'. And the Krugerrands were how Moriarty paid Falkirk for his hacking work.
A weekend doesn't mean peace.

Chapter Notes

thanks for reading, comments and kudos.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

-{Saturday}-

Falkirk chuckled to himself, just thinking of the civilian, ham-fisted investigation into him. It had triggered every alert Falkirk had set up when someone searched for him. Not that that was rare at the moment, lots of people were researching him, including the Alpha he was to meet today. Unlike that first meeting with Gillian and Lestrade, the whole packs was here for this meeting. Mycroft of all people had enjoyed all the formalities and customs, and being Falkirk's emissary as the two packs established dominance and a hierarchy. Alan, Gillian's uncle and alpha of her Pack had ultimately agreed to a meeting at Falkirk's home and in so doing recognising him as the more dominant in the negotiations to come.

Falkirk and Mycroft were waiting either side of the front door, on the large outside step. While the pack made a corridor of two lines, from the front door and into the house.

Three cars pulled to a stop. From a nice BMW a small white haired man got out of the rear seat. James leaned into Falkirk, “He's so teeny!”

“So was M,” Falkirk said out the side of his mouth. The short and rather round man, with snow white hair and piercing blue eyes looked up at them from the pavement and started to make is way towards the steps up to the house.

James scoffed. Whispering, “My money would be on M. I'm pretty sure she could K.O. him in the first round.”

Falkirk elbowed James to shut him up as Alan reached the bottom step and started to climb up. Just behind the old alpha was the blond woman with slightly sagging eyes, that were the same shade of crystal blue as her uncle.

Mycroft nudged Lestrade forward a step. Remembering his bit, Greg welcomed the little old man then indicated Falkirk and introduced him by his professional name of Sir Thomas.

In a very high and rather effeminate voice, Alan said, “Oh, such a pleasure to meet you, Sir Thomas.”

He was stunned, Falkirk didn't even realise he held out his hand until it was taken in a soft and warm grip. Alan just claspings his fingers, in the weakest hand shake Falkirk had ever experienced.

“Eh, yes, sorry,” Falkirk said kicking his brain into gear. Using the sometimes confusing pack-rankings he spoke, “Yes, a pleasure. Daniel, the Ranking Beta. Mycroft I believe you know. And James, my mate.”
Alan skipped over James, in accordance with custom to meet the commonly acknowledged second of the Pack, Daniel then to James and Mycroft next. As they entered together, Alec, Selene, Sherlock, John, Gareth, G, Keading, Darren, Arthur. The old man having to do a double take on some members.

Tipping his head to the side, Alan said, “I take it that is the next generation I hear.”

“Yes,” Falkirk said then glanced to Keading, “I think they've been unsupervised for as long as we dare.”

“They're fine. No one's screaming in pain yet,” Keading said but led most of others off with Darren and Arthur beside him.

Falkirk escorted the short man into the library. As Falkirk let the man pass, up close he could see right over the older man's head. Alan stopped and looked to his niece, “Dear, why don't you and Greg go enjoy the sun too.”

“Yes, Uncle,” the blond woman said, taking Greg's hand and escorting him the same way as the others went. With a jerk of the head, Falkirk silently told the others to go with. James glared, not liking to leave his omega with a stranger. Alec grabbed the alpha and told James, “Don't be so paranoid. Falkirk is the best shot in MI6 after all.”

Falkirk closed the wide panel door while Alec continued to drag James away. When he looked round, Falkirk saw the old man at the window with a wishful smile while watching the kids play. Absently he dug a finger into the white cat lounging on the deep windowsill to scratch its scruff. Without looking back, Alan said, “For once I hope I don't have to explain a Pack Alpha has to be different from an Alpha by sex.”

“No, I understand. If being a Pack Alpha was down to pure base strength and physical power, our old Alpha could never compete with the likes of James and Alec. She needed to be someone they respected,” Falkirk said coming to sit on the small settee. He just watched the old man at the window. “Although, given Gillian's attitude I thought you would be more... how shall I say it...”

“Impressive?” Alan said coming away from the window to sit in the chair to the left of Falkirk. “I've known her since she was the size of the ones out there,” Alan indicating with a wave, the children outside the window. “You wish Gillian to join your pack?”

Looking from the white haired man, to the snowflake picture above the fire place. Falkirk said, “Greg may make his own decision. I'm not so domineering that I must make all the major decisions for my pack.”

“Your pack is quite unique, yet,” Alan said. The two looking directly at each other. The old man looking for something in Falkirk perhaps. “Have you never noticed, for all their independence, Alphas crave structure? A leader? Hierarchy?”

“Yes,” Falkirk said. “But the Alphas I deal with cannot admit it. And they can't suspect that's what I give them either. They must feel they answer to no one, and every choice they make is their own.”

Falkirk felt a twinge in his chest. He was talking about the Double Os, but James was there too. As long as Falkirk let him state his wanderlust he knew James would come back. But if he tried to pin
him down and keep him here James would wither and fade, possibly walking out one day and never coming back.

Shaking off the thought, Falkirk looked at the old man again. Noticing how the white goatee beard went a bit wide and pointed at the sides when Alan smiled. Falkirk said, “I'd like to know Gillian a bit better. We go hunting every mid-term. I would like her to come.”

“Acceptable. We will discuss the marriage after,” Alan said.

Falkirk nearly choked. He thought, 'I have to arrange the marriage too?'

“May I ask,” said Alan. “That, eh, I forget his name. The one who called you 'Falkirk'. And Greg, he uses several names, M, Sir Thomas, Falkirk.”

“It's complicated,” Falkirk said standing up to get the picture hanging from the wall. He let the old man see it, and see it was in fact the pack digram. “My birth name was Thomas McLair. When I went to live with my father he wanted something more appropriate so to his name of Holmes, I was renamed Falkirk to fit in with Sherlock, Mycroft, and Sherrinford. My bond name is Falkirk Bond, but for security reasons I used my birth name Thomas McLair.”

Alan held out the large framed picture for Falkirk to take. “Sounds like an interesting past.”

Falkirk smiled, slightly too wide with lips tightly closed. Rather creepy, he waited until it unsettled the alpha a bit, “No wonder your Private Eye came up with nothing with me using all those different names.”

“Quite,” Alan said fortifying himself. Pulling his shoulders back and sitting straighter. Appearing unafraid. “Gillian will have to be discreet if joining this pack.”

“Quite. I'm glad we understand each other,” Falkirk said. Liking he didn't have to outright threaten the man for him to understand the sensitivities. “If that is all for now. Why don't we take afternoon tea outside seeing it's such a lovely day.”

-{Sunday}-

Yesterday, Andrew had taken Daniel and Falkirk to the side shortly after the guest pack had left. He asked, “I want to try again.”

Falkirk braced. The first attempt was a non-attempt. Andrew pulled out as soon as they stepped into Falkirk's library. It had been a couple weeks for him to get to this point again.

Daniel had knelt in front of the boy, “Please be specific.”

“I want to try the desensitisation again. I want you to pin me.” Andrew said to the big Alpha forcing himself to hold his chin hight.

They prepared like last time for the desensitisation technique. They had taken instruction on the process. Andrew was to be given control with the use of safewords. There had to be a place for him to recover from the stress, preferably with other Omegas.

Falkirk pulled out his supplies and with Keading they starting to build a nest. The open nest was built in the back corner of the library. Falkirk, Keading, Darren and Arthur climbed in leaving a
seizable bolt hole between them.

Daniel was on one knee, in the other back corner of the library. Alone, Andrew shuffled close and closer to his uncle. When the small omega was within arm's reach, Daniel reminded, “Green:Okay. Yellow:wait. Red:stop.”

Andrew took a deep shuddering breath. His face falling. He forced himself to say, “Green.”

Daniel tuned Andrew side on. With his arm across Andrew's chest, holding his far shoulder. He warned, “I'm going to put my other had on the scruff of your neck.” Andrew nodded. “Say the word please.”

“Green.”

Daniel brought his other hand to the back of the boy’s neck. The adult's hand so large against the narrow column of the child's neck.

Andrew stiffened at the contact and sent his Papa a pleading glance. The pinch of skin sent a wave that knotted Andrew's stomach. It wasn't has bad as being pinned, but the neck was sensitive for Omegas and even just the firm pinch caused a physical reaction. He was being scuffed. He still had control over his body, because it was means of control to guide and move an omega.  He just stood there for a bit, being held by the back of the neck.

“Gre-en,” Andrew said his voice braking into a mewl.

Daniel started putting pressure on the boy's neck and pulling him down by the shoulder. Andrew locked his knees breathing deeply and refusing to be pulled down.

“Colour?” Daniel asked softly.

“Green.”

Daniel moved his knee to knock the back of Andrew's leg. Whining at the contact, Andrew's knees bent and he fell to the floor face first, “RED!”

Instantly he was let go. Crawling and scrambling on all fours, Andrew shot in-between the other Omegas. Andrew buried himself as deep as possible.

Falkirk looked to the Alpha, Daniel's face a mask. The frightened scent of Andrew filling the air. Daniel dropped from his knee to sit fully on the floor.

“You did good Little Laddie,” Daniel said his soft voice resonating and deep.

After several long minutes. Peeking out Andrew looked to the reclining and relaxed Alpha. Pulling himself out he sat in Daniel's lap and rested his head in the crook of the Alpha's neck. Breathing in the familiar, relaxed scent Andrew was able to calm himself. Slowly Daniel stroked down the boy's back. Making sure his touch wasn't restrictive and went nowhere near his neck.

“Again?” Andrew demanded.

“Andrew,” Falkirk said coming over and sitting beside Daniel so he could brush his son's face. “Red means stop! You can try another day. Next Sunday? Remember, at any time 'Yellow' means
wait. It doesn't matter how long. Always, red means stop.”

Andrew nodded. Daniel stood, and deposited his godson on his feet. Falkirk took his son's hand and walked with him.

Waiting at the open door of the dining room was another boy, a bit older than Andrew. Taking in Andrew and how subdued he was, the dark eyes flicked to Daniel with a cold glare in place.

“I've got you some cake,” Rupert said, holding out his hand. Andrew pulled away from his papa to go to his brother. The two heading for the dinning room. Where Rupert had set a up a glass of milk and a small plate with a slice of chocolate cake on it. Andrew admitting the session didn't go too well. Rupert saying Andrew would do better next time.

Daniel leaned down to whisper to Falkirk, “I think Rupert wants bash my head in with a mace.”

“Luckily we don't have any maces,” Falkirk said, leaning against the frame and watching his two boys. Wishing he had that sort of relationship when he was young, with Mycroft or Sherlock. Even Daniel admitted his relationship with his own brother was rather antagonistic.

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“Hay,” James said coming into his son's room. Andrew curled up in his bed, reading a comic book before lights out.

“Hay,” Andrew responded quietly.

James came to sit on the floor by his son's bed with his back against the night stand. He took one of Andrew's small hands in his own. Just looking and taking in the differed. Rough, to smooth. Golden tan, to milky white. Bloody, to clean.

“You did good today,” James said.

“Didn't even last a second!” Andrew's anger at himself clear.

“So?” James said meeting his son's dark eyes. “You like Star Wars. That frog alien,”

“Yoda, dad.”

“Whatever he's called. He's so wrong. There is no try? Bullshit! Don't tell papa I swore,” Andrew gave a small smile and nodded. “Try, everything is try. You tried a couple weeks ago. You tried today and lasted a second. You said you're going to try next week. If you last two seconds, that'll your best time yet! A 100% improvement.”

Andrew gave his dad a weak smile. James looked round before leaning in to whisper, “You have any idea how often I get knocked on my arse? Lots. You just get up and try again, and if you're like me you'll have to do it again, and again and again and again. Trying is just the first step in succeeding.”

“Papa said that too.”

“Well I was the one to tell Papa first. Back when he was so frightened of his dad. He eventually stood up to him, after trying.” James leaned in and kissed his son's forehead. Pulling back he said,
“Never worry about failing. Just keep trying.”

Standing, James headed for the door. Looking back, he said, “I'm proud of you.”

Andrew blushed and squirmed down. Happy and a bit embarrassed. James wished his son a goodnight and told him not to read too much longer.

Going down stairs, feeling great. Really he was impressed by Andrew and Rupert. Andrew was learning to face something that was holding him back. And Rupert, he was showing he had a real Alpha under the quiet and sensitive shell.

Opening his bedroom door, James came to a grinding halt. Falkirk was standing there, with arms crossed and looked pissed off.

“I didn't do it,” James said automatically.


That wasn't a good sign. His full name ringing alarm bells. He picked up the comic, it was one he brought back for Andrew. Just a small token, something positive for Andrew to look forward to when he went away on a mission.

James' eyes going wide when he came on the cell, with an image of Bruce Wayne getting out of a pool. He cleared his throat and squirmed, “He's tailored to the right.”

“Yes, James. A very well endowed Alpha.” Falkirk snatched the comic from James' hand.

James braced and was whacked over the head with the comic. James said, “I didn't realise it was so... graphic. Sorry,”

Falkirk sat on the bed. He sighed, it was more than just the comic bothering him. He said, “I'm not sure if it's time to start the talk. Keading said he saw Andrew in the Library, watching Braylan cut the grass shirtless.”

Going over the memory of the alpha, Braylan liked to train so had kept his physique. And objectively he was attractive if you were into the surfer look of long shaggy hair. James said, “Omegas, that's your area.”

James sliding into bed, taking off his tracksuit toruses and shirt as he did so. Falkirk slid in under the covers beside his mate. Giving James a kiss, on pulling back Falkirk teased, “That makes Rupert yours. I checked the logs of the internet activity, someone is trying to circumvent the parental filters.”

James just gave a low rumbling growl, and pushed Falkirk down and covered his omega's mouth with his own. Their naked bodies beginning to respond to the mutual pheromones and their proximity.

-{Monday}-

Letting out an annoyed groan. His ringing phone waking him up. Falkirk elbowed James to get the Alpha off him, “If this is a Double O I'm going to have them shot.”
James chuckled, lifting off his omega’s back. He teased, “I didn't do it.”

Lifting the glowing rectangle. 'Wade, J' was displayed on the screen with a picture of the man himself, wearing bright yellow Hawaiian shirt. Waving at the camera with a broad smile.

“Hi, Kiddo,” Falkirk sat bolt upright. The voice was so weak. “Oh, sorry I forgot. It should be like three am there?”

“Never stopped you before,” Falkirk said. James pressing to his back, aware something was up. With their heads so close, he could hear the Jack too.

“Well I got my thumb outta my ass,” there was a waver in Jack's voice. “Ya see Kiddo, I've been having pains in my chest for a few weeks. The doc said I should make the calls I need to. They're taking me in right away.”

“I'm on my way,” Falkirk nudged James. The Alpha picked up his own phone and started to make the arrangements. Falkirk spoke with Jack until Jack said he had to go. Falkirk could hear a nurse in the background telling Jack it was time.

“See ya, kiddo,” the line went dead.

Chapter End Notes

Because I poach characters rather than do cross overs, I don't tend to tag them or their fandom. Rupert Graves(Lestrade) played someone 'Gary' in a series called 'Last Tango in Halifax'. With Nicola Walker playing 'Gillian' and Derek Jacobi playing 'Alan'. I picked out known actors and altered the characters to fit the rolls I wanted them to play. So Gillian in my story is the niece of Alan not his daughter like in the TV series. The character of Alan took on a characterisation more based on 'Stuart' on 'Vicious'.

Falkirk pulled out his phone the second the seatbelt light went off. While James stood to get their bags from the overhead locker, Falkirk switched off flight mode. Immediately his phone came alive with dozens of messages, the voice message logo blinked and e-mails were syncing almost into the hundreds. A service provider message came in, there had been thirty missed calls over the course of the flight.

Seeing his mate distracted by the phone, James leaned down to hook his arm with Falkirk's and lifted him out of the large seat.

With his arm entwined with James', Falkirk trusting his Alpha to guide him while concentrating on his phone. Twenty of the missed calls were from the same, unknown, international number beginning with the +1 dialling code of the US. There was one the phone recognised as from Jack Ryan.

“Falkirk,” James whispered.

Looking up to the alpha then to the direction James was looking. Over the crowd of travellers, he saw Ryan standing tall and stoic. Suspecting the Alpha was waiting for them, Falkirk and James headed for him.

When Ryan saw them, he put his hand on the solder of a shorter woman. The fiery red head, with large bust looked at them. Ryan pointed to Falkirk and the woman in black leather skirt ran towards him.

“Aw, hun,” she said called. Getting closer Falkirk saw the tears in her eyes. Falkirk was pulled into a hug, his head pressed firmly to the ample bosom. He came face to face with a rose tattoo on her cleavage. 'Jack' written on the marquee across it. In espionage circles, there was a famous matching tattoo on a bum cheek, 'Moffy' on that marquee.

She pushed him back, new tears sprung in Moffy's eyes. She tired to say something, she couldn't get the words through her shuddering breathing. Ryan came closer, “We've being trying to get a hold of you. Darren said you were already on your way.”

Falkirk felt the emotion grip his chest. Moffy got her breathing under control to say, “He didn't... the surgery. He didn't... They tired their best, he didn't...”

Falkirk nodded, so she didn't have to say the word. But he couldn't talk, his throat felt like it was closing up. The moment he felt a tear slip from his stinging eyes, he was pulled close again. The woman taking her own shuddering breaths as she cuddled him.
Falkirk sat in a kitchen in a rather nice house. A bachelor's house. Good microwave and coffee-maker, both well used. The cooker looking like it had never been switched on, there was still a safety tag on it. Every glass and mug was mismatched and chipped, some stolen from local bars. Not a single soft touch to be seen.

Falkirk stared out through the wide open French doors that looked over a pool. He wiped at his eyes and nose. Jack's living scent still clinging to the house, when his mind told him the alpha was gone. A strange and uncomfortable feeling as instincts and intelligence disagreed with each other, to make him feel queasy.

He could hear Moffy, as Jack had described her, like Jack himself. Very loud, larger than life. She was arguing with someone. A someone Falkirk assumed to be one of Jack's other ex-wives. Ryan was making some calls too, to Jack's professional colleagues. Falkirk had made the few asked of him, Adam Lang, James' predecessor as Double O Seven being one of them. Jack had helped Lang a couple of times, once for an incident involving Russia and Cuba, another was to do with an insane media mogul intent on starting a war.

Falkirk took up his phone again. He could only do this once, so decided Selene was the best to call. She agreed to look after Andrew and Rupert, and get Tanner to clear and rearrange his schedule. The funeral was in five days, he wanted to go so there was no point returning to just come back.

“No good whore!” Moffy blasted as she came back in. Slamming her phone down and wiping her eyes. “Another three to go... god that man's taste in women...”

Falkirk felt the strong arms of the alpha woman come round him from the back. He was a teddy-bear to her, but didn't mind. At every mention of Jack, Falkirk found himself in a strong hug, often with his head pressed to the large bust.

Ryan hung up his phone. He joined Falkirk in sitting at the table. Moffy whipped out a large arm and pulled the alpha into her chest too, in a headlock of a hug.

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There was no time to appreciate the bright modern city of Dallas. Far cleaner in Falkirk's opinion than London where an oily sooty grime seemed to have set in a hundred generations ago and never having been cleaned since.

He and James had only arrived with an overnight bag. So they were in a store. They need a change of clothes and suits for the funeral. More of Jack's family had arrived and to Falkirk it felt just as grimy dealing with them as it was walking the streets of London. Already Moffy had blazing argument with Jack's second wife, that ended up in James pulling Moffy off the other woman while Jack's eldest son held his mother back.

A lot of the tension coming from Moffy and Ryan being the executors, so they were the ones responsible for Jack's wishes being seen to. Jack Ryan being a stranger to most, and Moffy the first wife still having an amicable relationship with Wade and now holding power over his estate. Falkirk had heard some quietly talking about lawyers if they didn't get their way.

“James,” Falkirk said taking his alpha's hand. Leaving the store with their clothes. “Are all families
like that?"

"Don't know," James said.

In his duties as M, Falkirk had to inform individuals of a relative's death. Sometimes in person. There had been Charles Robinson, his family cried and wished his death to be a lie. But there had been one or two next of kin who had asked about 'money', not even inheritance or estate, just the cold hard cash.

"You think when we go there will be fights?" Falkirk just letting the city slip by without his notice as James drove.

"Speak for yourself, I'm immortal!"

Falkirk looked down to his hands clasped in his lap. He wished that were true. But when he compared his early memories to now. They were not as young as they'd been. Falkirk himself wasn't even technically an adult at the time. James was a handsome young Alpha entering his prime. Now they both had wrinkles, grey hairs and sagged a bit too in places. And James refused to admit it but had to wear glasses for reading small print.

Whispering to himself, "Time marches on for all."

"What?" James asked.

Telling his mate he was just thinking. James accepted it and drove them out of the city to a nice suburb of large villa like houses. Most sprawling single story buildings set in ample grounds. Falkirk had been surprised, he's always thought Texas to be an arid place but it was quite green here.

The long drive of one of the houses was populated with rental cars. They had to park in the street because the drive was so full.

When Falkirk opened the front door, there were more arguments. It was so confusing, with four wives, and five kids of Jack's here. All topped off with emotion running high and tense.

Moffy's broad voice was shouting, coming from the corridor to the right of the living room, "He's dead, it's not a trick! You don't need to check his pulse!"

"What! I can't see my husband!" shouted a nasally woman. Following the irate Moffy through the living room was the third wife, a blond with big perm, Bunny. Jack did have a preference, all his wives were rather top heavy and big haired. They were also kindly described as stout, their kids too.

In the background was a monotone voice of Jack's eldest son, practising the eulogy. He was born to Jack's second wife. Moffy rounded on him and shouted, "Jack Ryan's giving the eulogy. I don't care what your slut of a mom says."

"Mom?" the rather dopey Billy-Glen begged, looking to a dark haired woman coming in. She started shouting at Moffy, Bunny started shouting at anyone, wife or child it didn't matter.

Falkirk knew somewhere would be Jack Ryan keeping his head down. Probably the small pool house was used as home office. A young woman came into the living room. The youngest was blond haired and the most slender of Jack's children. Falkirk saw the bright yellow shirt Taffy held,
one with a palm tree print on the front. She looked over the argument and her big brown eyes welled up. Falkirk went up to her, “You okay?”

Taffy shook her head. She looked at the shirt she held, “Dad didn't like suites... I thought.”

Falkirk put his arm around the woman. He always thought of Jack as a favourite uncle. But he was a friend, and this was Jack's family. As the argument continued, Taffy turned and buried her face in his neck. An Alpha seeking the calmer scent of an omega.

“MOFFY!” Falkirk's commanding bark caused a moment of calm as he became the centre of all attention. “Taffy here has something to ask you.”

Taffy lifted her head and wiped her eyes. Through thick emotion she said, “Moffy? I know a suite is traditional but...” The blond held up the bright yellow shirt with a palm tree on it.

Bunny, said, “He's not getting buried in that!”

“But Mom?” the girl said with tears in her eyes.

Moffy went up the daughter of Bunny and took the shirt. She smoothed it down as she looked at it on the hanger. With tears in her own eyes she nodded.

“I think, he'd, like that,” Moffy said, her own voice growing heavy with emotion.

--

Moffy and Taffy had gone to the funeral home to see to the arrangements. Falkirk and Ryan were to stay, to make sure items didn't disappear from the house. Falkirk thought Moffy was overreacting until Richie, Jack's other son was spotted taking an antique Revolutionary war era musket to his car. And the near riot that set off, Jack's fourth wife and Richie demanding he had a right to take whatever he wanted.

Falkirk was concentrating on the task given to him. Organising the catering. He wanted to help, and it would be one less job for Moffy to organise. He found a catering service that did the barbecue and snake items Jack liked.

Hot wings, ribs, crab claws, everyone would have to wear bibs and he thought Jack would have laughed heartily at that. Which brought a tear to his eye.

A gentle hand landed on his shoulder and he was turned so his face pressed into James' stomach. He just sat there, crying into James' stomach. His Alpha holding him.

James hated this, he ran, drank and fought, he didn't talk through his emotions. But for Falkirk he spoke.

“I remember Haiti. It was my second mission after joining MI6. I was just an operative there to assisting a senior field agent. I thought I knew it all. I was following the target when I was jumped from behind. Dragged behind this building, I got my arse handed to me. They worked me over a bit, then bold as brass this America walked in like a tourist who took a wrong turn. I expected him to be shot and mugged. But these guys dressed in black poured in from all directions,” putting on a broad, deeper voice James said, “Well hell Jimbo, that could have gone better, he said while I just bled there and the CIA squad cleaned up the bad guys.”
“I couldn't look at him in the eye when we first met,” Falkirk said, remembering the time when he was a bit hung over and newly arrived in the states after his kidnapping. James dealing with his fear of planes by getting him drunk.

“He warned me, that I could hurt you,” James said. Remembering the few quick talks with Jack after they arrived.

Falkirk wiped his face of the tears and pulled James down beside him. They sat in Jack's kitchen, with his family arguing in the other room. He said, “I'll miss his drunk dials. He was always so loud and happy, just wanted to talk to someone.”

“And you listened,” James said leaning in to kiss Falkirk on the forehead.

Chapter End Notes

This was a rewrite and expanding of the original chapter. The names of Jack's family come from various films Joe Don Baker films, Goldeneye and Mars Attacks mainly. Hopefully some of my own experience of funerals, and the bitter fights didn't taint this too much.
It always felt like it should rain on days like this. But here under the Texas sun, it was bright and hot, with clear blue skies as far as the hotel window could see. Falkirk and James dressed in the black suits they bought. Twin duties Falkirk had to perform, he was here to mourn his friend but he also had to represent MI6 for the ally who helped them on many occasions.

Leaving the hotel, they made their way to the church first. Then would come the procession to the cemetery where Jack would be buried. The area around the large white building was a hive of dense security. The driver needing to wait for the car and its occupants to be inspected by the Secret Service Agents.

Blinking back the tears. Deep in Falkirk’s mind, he made several more choices. He didn't like these big affairs, he made plans to amend his wishes. Small, with only the close pack when his time came.

The car pulled to a stop out the front of the church. James and Falkirk getting out and entered the fresh and clean building. Nothing like the old, soot an grime covered buildings of London. Inside a runner carpet hushed their footfalls in the cavernous building. The low hiss, of many hushed conversations came from all around.

Walking towards the alter along the aisle. Falkirk saw Adam Lang, an alpha with grey beard and blue eyes, his hair was still rather dark. The Double O Sevens, both past and present nodded to each other in passing.

Falkirk slipped into the pew on the left of the aisle. He found himself beside Felix Liter, a deputy director and representative of the CIA. There was someone from the NSA, and other intelligence branches. Across on the other aisle was Jeb Bartlet, the President under whom Jack served as Director of National Intelligence. The incumbent, President Santos just beyond the small grey haired omega. Their presence the reason for the enhanced security.

The last to arrive and sit at the very end of the same pew as Falkirk were Jack Ryan and his wife. The Minister came out, and called for silence then for everyone to rise.

James held him tight. Falkirk looking around Ryan and his wife, watching the silver-grey coffin coming up the aisle. He gulped thinking of the night before. Taffy and Moffy got their way, only at the wake the night before though was it seen. Inside, that box, Jack wore a lemon yellow shirt with a slanted palm tree going across the chest and with big spanning leaves wrapping around the shoulder and sides. That led to friends being less traditional. Instead of roses or other flowers, some had laid cans of beer, a bottle of bourbon or bag of chips. Falkirk had slid a phone into the shirt pocket. On some level he knew it was sentimental nonsense, Falkirk turned his face into James to hide his tears. The solid lump of emotion in his chest stopped him taking a smooth breath.
Not that Falkirk really noticed through tear blurred eyes and thick emotions. They day passed, with Jack being buried with full honours.

At some point, Falkirk found himself sitting side on, on a low deck lounger. He was outside, beside a kidney shaped pool. The large single story house to his right, a small pool-house to his left. The sky going pink and orange. For the first time, Jack's house was quiet when his whole family was here. No drama, no arguments. Everyone was tired and recovering.

“You should eat something,” James said, returning with a disposable plate. He sat down beside him. The alpha holding out a short rib, done in a dry rub marinade.

Taking the rib, Falkirk picked matchstick long strips of meat. Playing with it rather than eating.

The line was corny and stereotypical, but James needed to speak. “Ryan spoke well giving the eulogy. I didn't realise Jack was eighty.”

“Not yet,” Falkirk corrected off hand. “His Birthday is in December.”

“Ryan only gave his year of birth,” James said.

Falkirk absently talked. He watched Moffy come out of the house, her long black dress fluttering a bit and with the trailing shawl around her shoulders. He watched her put a hand on the much younger Taffy's shoulder and jerk her head in a signal. The two women then came up to him.

“Jack wanted you to have something,” Moffy said, her voice very weak and tired.

Falkirk put down the rib he'd been playing with. The four went to the pool house, where Jack had his office. Moffy unlocked the door and let them in.

They looked carefully at the pictures on the walls. There was one of Wade and Admiral Greer in Hawaiian shirts, on a boat as they fished. Others, some could be identified like Haiti where Jack rescued James or Jack in a thick coat and fur hat while in Moscow, others Falkirk couldn't identify.

“The kids never really understood what Jack did or why. He wanted you to have these,” Moffy said and put her hand on a display case pressed against a wall containing a sword, medals, coins and other awards. All surrounding an old picture of a trim and handsome young Jack Wade in a Marines blue dress uniform, with white peeked cap and sword at his side.

Taffy gave a humourless laugh, as tears sprang in her eyes, “Dad, he once said. You were the son he always dreamed of, a no bullshit hard ass.”

Falkirk's face crumbled. The two women surrounded him. All three wiping at their eyes. He didn't feel like 'hard ass' in this moment.

--

Leaving was done with a hollow pit in Falkirk's stomach. A quick and uncomfortable goodbye to Moffy, Taffy and Ryan. Now he was in the first class lounge waiting for his flight.

“For your approval,” James said sitting down and handing over a couple graphic novels. Falkirk just looked for the parental advisory on the back, 'moderate depictions of violence', 'minor
profanity' and no nudity or sex.

“They should do,” Falkirk said.

James pulled him close and held him. “Not the plane ride is it?”

“It's not helping,” Falkirk answered, but in truth he was very tired all of a sudden. He felt James hold him a bit tighter and a kiss land on the top of his head.

Through his own grief, Falkirk felt something. He smoothed his hand over James' stomach, the alpha was so tense. Taking a deep inhale, he detected noted in James’ ques. There was an under-note of stress that Falkirk had just put down to the recent events. James had been here to let Falkirk grieve the way Falkirk needed. It was time for Falkirk to return the favour.

--

Arriving home. Everyone was at their evening meal. Falkirk went up to Andrew first, putting his arms around his son and kissing the top of his head.

“Pa-pa,” the boy whined and squirmed to escape.

Falkirk moved on to Rupert. The older boy turned in his seat to wrap his arms around Falkirk’s wast. Never embarrassed by getting a hug or kiss.

Hudson had laid two places. So Falkirk and James joined the meal. Selene, Keadig and Arthur were careful not to ask about the trip. Cody asked if his Mum was coming home, seeing as Falkirk and James were back. Selene nodded in answer. She had stayed while Falkirk and James were gone. Arthur and Hudson could have been the responsible adult but Falkirk preferred, well, someone in the same league as James, Alec, Daniel to be on hand.

After Selene and Keadig had taken their kids home. Arthur was with the boys in the lounge. James went up stairs to his home gym/office. It surprised Falkirk that James hadn't gone out for the night, dragging Alec with. The two used to find illegal fights and drinking dens with ease when they needed to work something out.

Pulling out a large book, Falkirk sat at his desk in the library. Pulling out his phone and calling Tanner to make the arrangements while with a creak of the thick bindings Falkirk opened the album. He had several of these albums. While he spoke to Tanner, he found the picture he wanted. Jack was on his knees, with a younger Andrew in the circle of his arm. Both holding a short baseball bat. Ready to swing.

James had thrown the ball. Jack and Andrew swung, and the ball sailed through the air and smashed a neighbour's window. Jack bunged Andrew fifty bucks to take the flack. Not that it really mattered, the little Chinese neighbour was CIA, there to watch over M. Jack just told the neighbour to put in an expense claim and Jack would sign it off. The Neighbour spluttered and tried to protect his cover. Jack was smart enough that he figured Falkirk would peg every agent and operative around the house so didn't bother trying to protect the Neighbour's cover. It had been funny to watch. Almost as funny as the time Andrew forgot he took the blame for the window, and reminded Jack it was him that broke it.

With the arrangements made, Falkirk hung up. He continued to sit there looking at the photos.
Smiling at the one from the paintballing. Where all team structure had broken down, and James, Alec and Daniel were peppered in all the team colours.

--

James walked through Q Branch and up to the offices overlooking the area. He climbed the spiral stairs and pushed open the door that used to be Falkirk's office. Now a different Q used it.

“There is such a thing as knocking, Double O Seven,” said the big alpha in large wing-back chair.

“Tanner said you wanted to see me,” James said sitting in one of the guest chairs uninvited.

“Yes, we find ourselves short on Double Os,” Daniel said placing down a mission brief for James to read. “Sean Miller. He was an IRA Bomb Maker. He's now teaching a Muslim extremist group in Libya the finer points of improvised explosives. The army want to deploy their new toy, a drone. We want to make sure he's dead. A Double O is going in. You.”

James smiled, a dark gesture.

Daniel added, “No embassies worth a damn for hundreds of miles. No officials worth a damn for thousands. I don't even think you could make a diplomatic incident out of this one James.”

“I'll take that bet,” James stood and left. He had a mission to prepare for.

--

“Why has daddy gone?” Andrew asked at dinner. “You just got back.”

“Poppet,” Falkirk said. Looking over Arthur and his two sons at the table. “Daddy and I, we went to a funeral because a friend died. Daddy has a job to do now, that's why he's gone.”

“Don't like it,” Andrew pouted and poked at the food on his plate.

“Neither do I,” Falkirk admitted, reaching out to stroke his son's long straight hair. “Daddy is needed to do a job. And it's Daddy's nature to do the type of work he does.”

“Like on Uncle Daniel's Island?” Rupert said.

Falkirk nodded. “Someone has to stand up to the bad people in the world. That's us, in all our different ways.”

Chapter End Notes

I'm going to take a break for a couple of weeks. To do an editing blitz again. I hope you understand. Normal service will resume. This whole fic has become such a monster. And as I improve and know how this finishes up, I want to correct my old writing before I post, make elements clearer, drop story lines that go nowhere and highlight the ones the will. Thanks for all the encouragement given. In the words of James Bond, 'I will return.'
“Why am I doing this?” said the handsome blond man cautiously opening the bedroom door.

“Because you're the big brave Alpha,” Answered the pretty blond with long hair.

“You were the one to volunteer, why am I doing this?” G said to himself and with a fortifying breath stepped into the room. A single bed was on the right. It was what was on the left that was causing him trouble. The metal shelves were full of terrarium, glass tanks used to keep all manner of creatures.

“Okay, what do I do?” G called towards the doorway. Feeling his skin crawl just looking at the insects, arachnids and snakes inside those enclosures.

From out in the hall, Arthur called, “There should be some distilled water. Fill the small dish in the Millipede habitat.”

G found the box with a bottle inside marked 'Distilled Water'. He then went to the zoo Cody had built up. There was an arid one with yellow scorpions scuttling about. A snake was in the one beside it. G looked at the large tank with the bottom covered in soil and bark chips, and two thick tree branches, and separate smaller branches with leaves. A shudder went up his back when he saw the foot long insect which moved upon a ripping wave of legs.

“Disgusting,” G said with a shudder. He lifted off the lid of the tank, “You're going to owe me big time.”

“You can take me out to dinner,” the coward called from the safety of the hall.

G reached his arm into the tank, with the small bottle in hand. He squirted water into the upturned lid of a jam jar. He was so busy watching the millipede he could see, that he didn't notice the one on a lower branch move. He screamed when it touched the back of his hand.

“What's wrong!”

Shaking his hand, still feeling the creepy sensation of legs on it. G watching the millipede that touched him right itself and crawl its black cylindrical body under the branch. G looked round, “Oh, thank you! I could be dying here and you still won't come in.”

“It's only a millipede,” Arthur called. “Only the Scorpions and snakes have venom. Speaking of which, the mice for the snake is in the freezer. It needs to be microwaved before being fed to the snake. Don't worry, Cody said its venom is very weak, no worse than a bee sting if it bites you.”
“You’re lucky I love you,” G muttered under his breath. Louder he called, “Is there anything else I need to do?”

“No, just the mice for the snake.”

G recovered the Millipede tank. Arthur going down stairs with him, but hid in the lounge while G found the bag of frozen mice. Using some long tongues from the utensil drawer G returned to Cody's room, with the warmed little dead mouse held out as far from him as possible.

Arthur shouted after him, “You have to wave it about, until the snake attacks it.”

G swore under his breath. Putting the mouse through the small hole in the lid covering the tank, he watched the green snake take notice and lunge.

“Yuk,” G said and closed the small hatch in the lid. His last sight was the snake swallowing the mouse whole.

Stepping into the hallway. Arthur was waiting for him. The omega came up and kissed his cheek. Taking the slender hand in his own they headed down stairs.

“I hope you know how disgusting that was.”

“Sure I do,” Arthur said with a wide smile on his elfin face. “That's why I got the big brave Alpha to do it.”

“Coward.”

“My hero,” Arthur said and gave G another kiss.

--

A classical panelled room, in an ornate Whitehall building played host to this meeting. The white maned woman sat at the head of a long table of rich and old wood. To Victoria's right was the Deputy Director of MI6, Rhett Butler. The other MI6 trustees sat down the sides of the table.

“We are convened, at the request of the Civil Service,” Victoria said with an air of annoyance. When everyone nodded in understanding, she looked to the man standing by the door, who called in three guests. Seeing a silver haired man in the middle of the three speakers, Victoria gave a smile of pure hate, “Sir James. We're ready.”

The suave man stepped up to the foot of the table. Putting on a tight smile, that the likes of Victoria and Butler as ex-Double Os wanted to wipe off. Sir James said, “M is quite frankly, out of control. He deployed a Double O, on an operation where the Army had jurisdiction-”

Admiral Roebuck leant forward, “Come now James, that's overreaching. Foreign Operations and intelligence gathering is in the remit of MI6.”

Sir James glared at the old man, ignoring Roebuck and the insult of his dropped title. He looked back to the woman at the head of the table. “M is not in control of his Double O Operatives. In the course of this operation, Double O Seven travelled to America to murder Petrofex's Vice President in full view of the public-”
“Victoria,” interrupted a seated man. Leaning forward to see the chairwoman, Sixsmith said, “I've seen the particulars of this operation. We should tread carefully.”

Butler let out a chuckle, “I'm told Q could be heard giving Double O Seven his dressing down up at surface level.”

Victoria raised an elegant brow, in contempt. “James, as I understand it. Double O Seven discovered Petrofex paid, 'Sean Miller' to train a Muslim extremist group. Just so the army had a reason to deploy the Petrofex supplied drones, which are under a spending review because they have never been deployed in a combat roll for the three years the army has had them. As far as the trustees are concerned, this incident is closed.”

Sir James said, “Our allies in the United stats are not pleased...”

Victoria held up her hand to stop Sir James, “An old friend, an 'Ultra' assassinated a target on the streets of London. I know because he told me all about it over Coffee and Cakes afterwards.”

“How is Frank?” Butler asked. Victoria started to gossip, explaining Moses had a girlfriend who was turning out to be an adrenalin junky that was perfect for him.

James gave a tight smile, one so hollow that Mycroft would have been proud of it. He turned on his heels and walked out. The sound proof door cutting off the conversation between Victoria and Butler.

Sir James and his two companions walked through the ornate corridors of state, to get to his own office. With a languid gesture he opened the door to an office and stepped in.

A woman was in one of the chairs in the seating area by the window, holding a cup and saucer. Without turning her dark eyes to them, and in a slight flat accented voice she spoke.

“They won't do anything.”

Sir James went to his large desk and sat behind it. “No.”

The smaller of the two other men. Slightly rat faced with small black eyes sneered, “Not that anyone is surprised.”

The dark haired woman spoke casually, “If we attack Falkirk Bond, we have to do it in a way that he doesn't realise he's being attacked.” there was hate and anger in her eyes as she looked to the Silver haired man behind the desk. “Luckily for you, I've been studying him. We will have to act carefully, the second M realises we are attacking he will respond quickly and decisively.”

“I want a demonstration if we're to proceed,” James demanded.

The woman lifted a manilla folder and held it out.

“Geoffrey,” said James to his taller companion and then nodded to the folder held out.

When the tall man with rectangular face took the folder, and tried to hand it to his boss. James waved it away. Geoffrey said, “You wish me to deal with it, Sir James?”
James nodded once. So the tall man opened the folder to see what it contained. He hummed in thought, “Yes, not an efficient strategy. But nothing else has succeeded.”

“I don’t want to know,” James said. Then looked to the woman in the chair, “I think this is the last time we should meet, Ms Elbaz.”

“Agreed,” the woman said standing. “Mr Dromgoole?”

James nodded, for his companion to show the woman out. He was left with the shorter rat faced man.

“Director Denbigh, make sure none of this can be traced back to me. You are our shield in this matter.”

The rat-faced man smiled. “GCHQ is at your disposal, Sir James.”

--

“Well, it was nice meeting you Jamie,” Falkirk said shaking the handsome young man's hand. Quietly, the alpha ducked out of Kincade's cottage. The red-head went by the living room window a moment later, waving in as he passed.

Falkirk turned to the old man at the table. “Okay, spill it!”

The old man chuckled. Needing to sit at the table while sliding in a knife to gut the fish. “The lad's good.”

“I can read alphas like a book,” Falkirk said, crossing his arms. “I know he's hiding something and what's more I can tell you know about it. Spill it, or I'll do a full Criminal Background Check, followed by a far more in depth investigation.”

Kincade sat back, putting the old knife with thin blade down. His fingers covered in blood, and a small pile of guts on the large chopping block. He looked at Falkirk in a way that meant he was weighing up how Falkirk would react and deciding if he could be trusted.

“He's running from something. The law, debts, responsibility, I don't know what. I remember him when he was a nipper. I've known his aunt since she was a lass, known his mother too. Now he's staying with his aunt and using his mother's maiden name,” Kincade wagged a finger at Falkirk, “He was a good lad, and is a good man and hard worker. That's all I judge him by. By what I see!”

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“Okay,” Falkirk said. “If you need the help, I leave the hiring to you.”

“Y'r no listening lad,” Kincade said. “I've not hired him. I bung him some cash, so he helps with some chores.”

“Fine,” Falkirk said, realising there was no paperwork. “I'll set up a general maintenance allowance. You can spend it on who... whatever you think is necessary.”

“Good lad,” Kincade said with a wink. “Knew you were a smart yin.”

“And I knew you were a sly old bugger,” Falkirk said heading for the door. Kincade laughing and going back to work on his fish. “See you tomorrow.”
Crossing the moor, Falkirk saw something in the distance. Like free range animals, a cluster of children frolicking across the heather. He was loathed to interrupt but now felt the right moment. So Falkirk cupped his hands around his mouth and bellowed, “AN-DREW!”

Like gazelle, all the children turned to him as if sensing a lion in the area. With an air of the condemned Andrew started trekking towards him. There were some obvious comments from Cody and Yulian, to which Andrew snapped something back Falkirk couldn't hear.

Tucking Andrew under his arm. Falkirk realising how offensively tall his son was getting. He wanted Andrew to stay a size that could be carried in the crook of his arm. Not this gangly, stretched out, pre-teen.

“You're not in trouble,” Falkirk assured. Beginning to walk them in meandering circles over the moors.

“So why did you call me?” Andrew asked, looking to his cousins still having fun, chasing and wrestling each other. The very young, Michelle, Luke, Rosie were still at the house. Although Michelle had thrown a tantrum because she was thought of at too young to come by the older children.

Falkirk took a deep breath. Knowing this was going to be so embarrassing, for both.

“Andrew, you're getting to an age where you'll notice changes...”

“Eww!” Andrew squirmed out of his papa's hug. “Please no. Not this. We had health classes at School.”

Falkirk gave a wavering smile to his son. “It's all well and good that a Health Visitor gives a lesson. They aren't the ones that will have to deal with you... or your heats.”

Andrew screwed up his face. Falkirk grasped his son's hand, suspecting Andrew of having come form the 'James Bond School of dealing with things'. That meant no planning, and running away if emotions got too complicated.

“Andrew. Keading, Darren, Arthur and I can take suppressants because we have established Heat Cycles. It took me until about eighteen for my tri-annual cycle to normalise. My first heat was just me feeling out of sorts. That time I just tried to cling to my father, the prick that he was. The one after that came nine months, not the usual four months, later, it only lasted a day not the five-seven of a normal heat. Then six months passed, and that heat left me out of sorts again. Four months later, I started to bulk but nothing happened.”

Andrew was bright red and glaring at the ground. Falkirk wasn't sure if his son was listening to this but it needed to be said.

“If you chose to take suppressants, you will need to take them a week before your heat, the week of your hear and the week after. They are still a very powerful and toxic drug, so you can only take them for the three week course. That's why we need to know a stable cycle has established before you can go on them. There will be a few years where your only choice will be to bond, be locked in a room, or tied to a bed.”

“FINE. I'll bond!”
“This is uncomfortable for me as it is you, you know!” Falkirk said. More calmly he said, “Do you have any idea what a heat is like? You eat, and gain about a stone. Your brain, it goes completely doolally. Your mind packs up and goes on holiday. You have no idea what your body does in that time, or who it's with. Then you wake up about a week later. If you've spent that time with an Alpha, he will have entered a rut. You'll be bruised from neck to knee. The ache will feel like it reached into your bones. Your skin will feel like it will split like an over ripe tomato. Everything that makes you you, will be suppressed under a roller-coaster journey of hormones and base instincts. Even if you don't spend the time with an Alpha, your body will be sore. Your skin will go so sensitive. There will be an itch that will not have been scratched and your body will know and torment you about.”

“Please stop,” Andrew whined.

Falkirk nodded. He pulled his son close. Only needing to bow his head to plant kiss of Andrew's forehead. “You have time still. But please think. Keading, Darren, Arthur, I, we will answer any questions you want.”

Very whiny and not wanting to be here, Andrew demanded, “Can I do now.”

Falkirk released his son to go play with his brother and cousins. He watched Andrew near the group. The golden brown haired boy, Yulian said something to the storming Andrew and got a punch. Rupert jumped in to separate the two, while Cody and Colum just watched.

Chapter End Notes

Okay! When editing, I found I was suddenly very close to the end of 'Then the Justice' but the story became very fragmented and about two years passed in the space of a couple of disjointed scenes. So I'm unifying the next series of chapters and expanding it a bit as the 'Where Loyalty Lies' arc, also solidifying some elements and laying the ground work for an arc in 'Sixth Age'.

In writing, editing and uploading on the go, I'm doing something I swore I'd never do. I'll try and keep to my weekly update schedule but the day might drift a bit. I hope this isn't too much of an inconvenience and hope you enjoy what apart from a few scenes will be new material.

Again, thanks to all my readers. Commenters. And those who've hit the kudo button. It's all appreciated.
Silently, leading with the ball of his foot so the soft footfall and runner carpet masked his approach. The stairs were of stone, so there were no creaks to worry about as a shining black leather shoe was placed on one tread, and then the next landed on the lower step. Reaching the first floor landing, the man's rolling accent was just a little sharper, “Off to bed Sir!”

The two at the doorway sprung apart. Hudson looked from the young Alpha to the young Omega. Both looking as guilty as hell. G recovered first, “Oh, Arthur was just showing me a knife he made.”

“Oh, very good your Majesty,” Hudson said with a proud smile. “Sir has really taken a shine to the craft.”

G nudged the omega, Arthur belatedly jumped to action. He entered his room and came back with a rather decorative dagger, with a silvery blade and reddish hilt of polished rosewood. Hudson watched the two talk about the knife. Hudson remembered the day, two months ago when Arthur brought it back. It had been an exam piece for the bladesmithing course Arthur went on. After the two had tried to fool him long enough, Hudson said, “Well it's late, Sir. I shall show his Majesty out.”

“That won't...” G stopped talking as a firm hand landed on his shoulder. The butler frog marching the king away from Arthur's room, down the stairs, towards the front door and out.

Hudson making sure he closed the front door sharply and with enough force, that it hit the young man's backside on the way out.

“I'm sorry,” came a soft voice from the stairs.

Hudson turned and looked up at the omega. “Not to worry Sir. Even to one as old as I, remembers what it was like to be young. If I may, your position in the king's life is tenuous with many pitfalls and individuals that want to see you fail, fall or replaced.”

“I love him,” Arthur said quietly.

“I'm sure he loves you too, sir,” Hudson said. “You are both young though, and that often comes with silly decision making. If you trust the master, he can give you sound advice. And the informed choice from then on is one you and His Majesty must make on your own.”

Holding his arm out, towards the corridor that led below stairs. Hudson asked, “Brayan and I are having a hot chocolate. Care to join us?”

Arthur nodded and gave his thanks. This house was quite big and with Falkirk and the others away
it was very quiet. They found the handsome blond alpha at the large table, slowly reading several newspapers. Brayan liked current affairs but didn't like the TV or Radio news, it was too fast and noisy, he liked to digest the information at his own rate.

Arthur helped Hudson by warming of the milk, while the butler got the glasses and Hot Chocolate out. While he worked he thought back to what happened. He and G had been watching a film, a kiss led to grope and the next thing they were running up the stairs. It had been so stupid and he would have gone all the way. But if he bonded to G, just as a common law bonding like Falkirk and James they would never be allowed a Ceremonial Bonding. Their children would only be one step above a bastard. Arthur wouldn't be allowed to hold any official position. Not that the Ceremonial bonding gave him much more protection, he would only hold title and their children only be in line for the throne so long as G never took a wife.

“Something wrong, sir?” Hudson said.

“Yes, no... thank you, I mean,” Arthur said, pouring out the milk into the glasses with the chocolate powder at the bottom. “Just thinking of the future.”

A laugh drew their attention to Brayan. Arthur went over with his and Brayan's glass mugs. There was a good picture of Falkirk from the last session of the inquiry, he was sitting back in his large chair and scowling into the middle distance.

'Do You Know Who I Am!' the headline above the picture read.

Arthur scanned the article quickly, reading over the handsome man's shoulder. MI5 officials were being accused of hiding they were using brothels, some with alleged underage prostitutes as honey traps to blackmail Republican and Loyalist supporters during the Northern Ireland Troubles. Some old MI5 Executive was trying to hide behind the official secrets act. Falkirk used the quoted headline before ordering the documents on what MI5 had to be released to him.

Arthur sat beside Brayan with Hudson at the head of the rustic table. Arthur said, “There are times I think M is fearless.”

“He's brave,” Brayan said. Still reading the article carefully, and letting out a few more chuckles as it quoted Falkirk tearing some old codger to pieces.

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His eyes were going crossed. There was a fire in his belly though, seeing him through. He wasn't an expert but he thought MI5's historic actions bordered on the criminal. And no, despite what some claimed this information was embarrassing to the country not the threat to its security that would be covered by the Official Secrets Act.

Firm hands landed on Falkirk's shoulders. Lips pressed to his neck from behind. The deep musk of an Alpha washed over him, but not just any alpha, his alpha. There was also the other smell, the nature, peat, gunpowder and oil. Even a hint of the cigarette he sneaked from Alec.

“Andrew better not catch you smoking,” Falkirk sighed leaning back so his head rested against James' stomach.

“I could smell your que out in the hall,” James whispered. “Who's going to die?”
“I’m giving it over to the police, I’m not a Mafioso.”

“Could have fooled me,” James said, and reached round to place a wicker basket on top of Falkirk’s laptop keyboard. “Well before you go off on your crusade, your Alpha wants your undivided attention for at least three hours.”

Pulling back the gingham cloth, Falkirk peered into the basket. Champagne. Strawberry. Some oat cakes, cheese and grapes. James shooed Falkirk’s hand away and covered the contents again.

“Come on,” James said. Lifting the basket and tapping the windows-key and ’L’ on the laptop. The screen lock appeared, to protect the confidential documents. Falkirk let himself be pulled up and lead out of the Skyfall’s Library.

“RIDDIKULUS!”

Falkirk glanced to the living room door, with the sound of Darren and Keading's shout came from. Followed by their hyper giggles.

“Judge Judy,” James whispered. The Double O giving a terrified shudder thinking of the omegas in that room. “They started off with Jeremy Kyle. Every time he said 'Scum' they ate a chocolate. Now it's Judge Judy and how she says ridiculous.”

“So they'll be diabetic by the time we get back,” Falkirk teased. He'd only seen the shows briefly, but were mush the same. A rich person sitting in judgement of poor for the adoration of a baying crowd. Good quality daytime TV.

“RIDDIKULUS!”

They escaped quickly. Trekking up the side of a hill, arm in arm their strides synchronised. Falkirk leaning a bit more then necessary against his alpha's firm body. Under a tree, James spread out the checked sheet from the basket and laid out the pic-knick. Falkirk could see several people in the valley below, he couldn't tell adult from child at this distance.

A wolf whistle drew his attention back to James, lying on his side atop of the sheet. A champagne flute in each hand and a strawberry held between sparkling white teeth. Reaching the sheet, Falkirk dropped to his knees and crawled forward, to seal his mouth around James'. Suddenly a burst of juice and sweetness overpowered the masculine taste of James. The pulped fruit mixing with their duelling tongues as the kiss deepened.

“Ewww!”

Falkirk pulled back from James. The Alpha trying not to laugh his arse off. Falkirk glared at his son, “ANDREW! GET LOST!”

“Gladly,” Andrew muttered. He, Yulian and Column heading down the side of the hill. The two young Alphas giggling away as the went.

“Never a moment of bloody peace,” Falkirk pouted, and with a surprised yelp found himself in the arms of his strong Alpha.

“Stop complaining and kiss me!”
In the large living room, in what had become custom, a nest was set up where the two outer walls met to make a corner. The adult omegas were there, with the toddler Luke snuggled up between his papa and uncle Falkirk. Darren complaining about eating so much chocolate and blaming Keading for leading him astray.

Andrew sat with Cody, Colum and Rupert who were being taught the finer points of Poker by James and Gareth. Rupert had a little helper, the smaller dark haired girl with brown eyes, Michelle a bit more of a hindrance than a help but liked the alpha. Rupert not minding she blurted out what cards he had.

Rosie was in Sherlock's lap, the blond girl being read to. Sherlock speaking evenly, his voice the loudest thing in the otherwise quiet room so Cody could hear too. Of all things to read to a child, it was an article on how to use the facial structure of a skull to determine ethnicity.

Alec came in and went to the couch where Daniel had fallen asleep. The big Alpha had slid down, and a half drunk glass of whisky rested on his chest. Yulian smiled evilly when he saw what his papa had brought. Alec opened the box and held it out to let his son take some of the tiny Christmas baubles for beards. Alec and Yulian then set about hooking the ornaments onto the sleeping man's beard.

Falkirk looked away from the game Alec and Yulian were playing. Around the corner from where most of the pack sat, Mycroft read to himself in a large chair. Tanner and John were in quiet conversation with Greg and Gillian.

Gillian was a bit, well a bit of an alpha. She and Sherlock butted heads the most, which wasn't surprising. What was surprising, she didn't take any of the detective's nonsense. Thinking of them, Falkirk had a strange impression of Greg and Gillian as parents, with Sherlock as the baby. Greg let Sherlock walk all over him, while Gillian was all business.

A loud snort sounded, drawing everyone's attention to Daniel. The big alpha reached up to his face, “What the hell...”

Realising what his mate and son had been up to. Daniel grumbled, “Sods, the both of ya.”

Everyone laughed. Daniel shook his head like a dog trying to dry itself. The little balls flying off into the faces of his son and mate. When he settled back, while awake he let Yulian return the little ornaments and peg them to his beard while snuggling with Alec.

Falkirk reached over to the small boy laying along Keading's body. He brushed the soft raven strands of Luke's hair. The small pug nose twitched and the big blue eyes blinked open a moment before closing.

“Wish they would stay like this forever,” Falkirk whispered, stroking the little omega's hair.

Keading shrugged, “I like them like this too. Before they can really talk back.”

“Speak for y'r sel',” Darren whispered. “I like'm self sufficient an aw that.”
Arthur sat on the small wooden settee, a white dust cloth over his lap. The US Marines sword being carefully polished by him, while Falkirk hung the pictures and medals. He asked, “When is Moffy and Taffy coming?”

“I said I'd invite them when Jack's stuff had been put up,” Falkirk said. On the wall beside the door, a carpenter had taken some of the shelves of the library away, to make an alcove so Falkirk could hang Jack's sword, medals and a few pictures.

He glanced to the blond omega, and smiled proudly. Arthur had taken to swords quite obsessively. It all started with Arthur taking Andrew and Rupert to fencing, but Arthur had taken to more than just sword play. Falkirk was happy the omega had found that special something that sparked Arthur's drive and curiosity. And it was funny when the delicate Arthur complained about the calluses his hands got.

With two photos up, one hanging above the other. The top one of Jack how Falkirk remembered him with a loud shirt, reclining with a beer in hand and broad smile. The lower picture was the very formal one of a young Jack Wade in his Marines dress uniform. Falkirk stood back and sat in the chair near Arthur.

“Is this the bit where I get into trouble?” Arthur said concentrating in making the metal of the sword shine like it did on that parade day photo from decades before.

“Why?”

“Didn't Hudson tell you?” Arthur asked with a bit of confusion, getting a shake of the head in answer. Taking a breath, realising it was down to him to tell Falkirk. “G and I, we were about to... you know.... when Mr Hudson interrupted us coming down the stairs and threw George out.”

Falkirk laughed thinking of G getting the bum's rush. “Hudson knows when to be desecrate. When I was very young, he... he always felt like a secret friend or fairy godmother or something. Whatever he might of seen me doing, my father never learned of it from Hudson.”

Arthur gave a weak smile. “I love G, but I know if we don't bond officially I'll be nothing more than the bit on the side. I don't mind. But what if some woman turns his head, and she doesn't like me. I'll have no official position. Our children won't be protected or entitled.”

“What do you need me for?” Falkirk said with a tender smile. “You've obviously been thinking hard. Do you wish a common bonding like James and I. Or do you want more?”

“More,” Arthur admitted. “But still. G could marry and cut me out. Our children would be protected better but still a child of a marriage will supersede a child of a bonding.”

“The gay rights movements have given you more security.”

Arthur gave a wondrous smile. “I was thinking about that. I could have a ceremonial bonding, to appease the Church of England and tradition. Then a civil marriage, for the legal protection.”

“See,” Falkirk teased. “You hardly need me at all. Have you discussed this with G?”
"The Ceremonial part, yes. I was hoping our pack Alpha would be there to discuss the Civil Marriage bit. I'm not so worried about George, but there are others that won't like it."

Falkirk nodded, 'won't like' being an underestimate in his opinion. Getting a thanks, as Arthur handed the sword over.

Falkirk went up to the alcove in the shelves and hung the sword lengthwise beside the two photos and ribbons of medals. Falkirk then closed the glass door and the soft light came on to illuminate the private memorial to Jack.

A gentle hand landed on Falkirk's shoulder and Arthur leaned in to offer some comfort. Falkirk tore himself away from the display case after several moments of thought for his lost friend.

There was one more thing to be hung today. A small carved wooden shield plaque, with a set of mounted antlers on it.

Looking at the small set of antlers that was already hanging on the chimney breast beside the pack digram. Andrew's name on the plaque of the shield that had been hung a couple of years ago. Arthur said, “He was asking questions about heats. Andrew I mean.”

“I was hardly thinking you were talking about Rupert. But, I had the talk with Andrew when we were away,” Falkirk said, standing on one of the chairs to reach the hook to hang Rupert's kill from this year's hunt, on the opposite side of the digram. “Do you mind answering any questions he has?’’

Arthur shook his head. “I was just wondering how truthful I should be. Merlin always signed me into this special 'retreat' for my early heats. I hated having to go to that plastic padded room. I couldn't get on suppressants quick enough for my liking.”

“Tell Andrew that if you feel up to it,” Falkirk said, carefully getting down from the chair and putting it back at the small coffee table near the fire. “I want Andrew to have as much choice as possible.”

Falkirk then looked to Arthur, then away. This was embarrassing. “You don't have to answer, but have you ever...are you a virgin?’’

Arthur shook his head. “I had this omega friend, Gwen. She and I... you know.”

“No men though? Or Alphas?” Falkirk getting a shake of the head to both questions. “If you want to know something…”

“Darren has given me enough advice for a lifetime,” Arthur said, his pale face going scarlet. “Then Keading added some other points.” Arthur going a bit green. “He's a dark horse. I know about Keading’s past- Darren's so in your face vulgar you expect his crassness. But Keading! He's so, so normal but whew! Some of the things he comes out with!”

“I think you need some hot sweet tea,” Falkirk said steering the slightly shell-shocked omega out.

Arthur looked at Falkirk though, and whispered, “Is it true James lets you, you know... top him?’’

“He's secure in his masculinity,” Falkirk answered. Then shushed Arthur as they went down stairs
to get some tea. James would not be overly pleased with that secret getting around.

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Falkirk was reading over his notes, while his car took him to the Inquiry. Tanner was sitting across from him, finishing up Double O Six's pre-mission briefing. The blond Double O sat beside Falkirk. It was nothing major, an assassin on assassin mission. Stewart Thomas against an assassin known only as Marius.

“It has been a time since I did this,” Falkirk said absently without looking to the Double O beside him. From the between them he first handed over an envelope, “Your passport, travel visa and ticket to Seoul. Black visa card- that’s not an invitation to go on a spending spree Double O Six. Station S will assign you your other equipment.”

“You make a good Q,” the Double O teased.

“Now pay attention Double O Six, Good-speed,” Falkirk said as his car pulled to a stop and he got out with Tanner. The car with the Double in it going to Heathrow so the Operative could begin his mission.

After going through his preparations, Falkirk reconvened the Inquiry in the same large committee room. Falkirk sitting behind the bench with his two aids from the judiciary and civil service. In front of him, at the table for witness a silver haired man stepped forward and was sworn in. Falkirk spoke.

“Having read over the surveillance reports from MI5,” Falkirk glowered at the witness, with the witness glaring right back. “There was no threat to the security of the united Kingdom, Sir James Salt. Your previous statement of refusal to this inquiry, I find to be protecting yourself not the country. You have acted dishonourably and without integrity, and possibly criminally by failing to raise the issue of the brothel in Belfast when knowing full well there were children as young as fourteen being prostituted.”

The man sitting before Falkirk was bright red, with thin pursed lips and a look of utter hatred. That was nothing to the growing buzz in the public gallery. Falkirk delivered the death nail, “Having found no threat to the security of the United Kingdom in the documents I read. So, in the interests of justice, and with the support of Control of MI5, they will be released, un-redacted for the purposes of beginning a criminal investigation.”

The older man stormed to his feet. Some in the crowd of observers jeering him as he made his way up the aisle.

“SIR JAMES!” Falkirk roared stopping the man. “On a personal note. As M, I know sometimes we must do bad things to ensure the protection of this country. But one thing I find disgusting, is innocents caught in the middle. You did not run that brothel, but you did bug it and have it under surveillance. You exploited those bois and girls along with the pimps and IRA. They needed your protection, for they were citizens of this country and it was a dereliction of duty for you to just sit back and listen to the abuse that went on there!”

Thunderous clapping came from the rows of spectators. Falkirk had gotten his wish though, he had a gavel and banged it so he didn't have to strain his voice to restore order.

“Sir James, you are now dismissed!” Falkirk said. “Your testimony and all evidence will be
forwarded to the police for investigation.”

The silver haired man stormed out, to the sounds of clapping.

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Falkirk sat back in his chair, it had been a long day. He rubbed his temples and when he opened his eyes he saw that the lights of London shone beyond his office windows. He looked through the internal window, Darren's desk was empty. Glancing to his computer screen, the clock showed it was still a bit early for Darren to leave so he assumed his PA of running an errand or something.

At least it was after five, so Falkirk stood. He worked his legs a bit while he poured himself a drink. He had just taken the first sip when the door opened.

“Falkirk,” Darren said, the use of his name meaning whatever Darren wanted was personal. When Falkirk nodded the Irish man said, “My cousin is here. He wants to speak to you.”

“Why?” Falkirk asked, still standing. His bum had just stopped being numb so didn't want to sit just yet.

Darren closed the door. He scratched his head nervously. “He saw you at the Inquiry this morning.”

Darren passed Falkirk to help himself to a bourbon. Without looking at Falkirk he said, “Philly, was like me. My Pa was a traitor, Philly's messed up an got some guys arrested. Mine got a bullet in the head. Philliy's got his kneecaps blown off. I was thrown in with a captured English officer a few days before I went into heat and kept with Gareth until a couple weeks later. Philly, he was put in a brothel the English soldiers liked.”

“He wants me to go for the IRA?” Falkirk said. Darren nodded. “Well if I'm pissing everyone off, I might as piss everyone off. Get that lawyer, the victims' advocacy one, the real pain in the arse one.”

“All ready done,” Darren said with a smile.

Falkirk and Darren headed out. They moved through the building, to one of the conference rooms used for those without clearance. There was a guard on the door because there was an un-vetted visitor inside.

Darren opened the door, “Philly-boi, d boss. M, dis is Philly-boi.”

Falkirk raised an eyebrow at Darren's guttural pronunciation.

With a quick glance Falkirk weighed Philly-boi up. Physically he was like Darren and even Falkirk himself. Rather lean like most Omegas. In his thirties. Dark hair that almost reached his shoulders, in gentle waves rather than Darren's wiry locks. His eyes were deep sapphire blue rather than the strange shifting shades of Darren's. More than that, Falkirk took in the rather cheep suit that was a bit small meaning he bought it a while ago or borrowed it. The guest was far more nervous and less self assured that Darren.

“It's Philip!” hissed the man in the room.
“Shut the feck up, ya poncey arsed cunt.” Darren let out a grunt as the other omega gave him a jab to the stomach, Darren punched back.

Okay, perhaps Philip did have a bit more of Darren's temper than first appeared. As the two cousins tussled, old arguments were brought up. Darren reached up to pull the other omega's hair.

“Children!” Falkirk snapped. The two looked at him, stopping mid way into trying put each other in a headlock. They both blinked their large eyes in that same moment of confusion that Andrew often had, wondering why Papa was mad at him. Philip recovered first and pushed Darren off him.

“Sir Thomas...”

“Oooo, Sir Thomas, yo gonna curtsy too?” Darren teased, dodging the jab towards his stomach. “He's not the king ya know, wrong hair colour, that's the big give away.”

“I should have brought my drink,” Falkirk said, sitting down.

“Sorry,” Philip said.

“Don't be,” Falkirk said. “Darren could start a fight in an empty room.”

“Me?” Darren said with a look of such hurt and betrayal it couldn't be real. “I'm perfect!”

“You cold-clocked me the first time we met,” Falkirk argued.

“I thought you were making the moves on Gareth. No ma fault I got the wrong end o' the stick,” Darren defended with a pout.

Out of the corner of Falkirk's eye he saw a small smile light Philip's face. This chaos Darren was causing had a meaning, one that broke down the mystique and put Philip at a sort of ease.

Holding out his hand to the guest, “My real name is Falkirk Bond, it's a pleasure to meet you Philip. I believe there's something you wish to discuss with me?”

The other omega looked to his cousin first, and after getting an encouraging smile turned back to Falkirk. “Yes, it's not just me though. We were just tools, just part of the arsenal like a gun or a chemical component to make a bomb. No one cared before.”

“I care,” Falkirk said and invited the omega to sit so they could talk.
“This is not the way things are done! The church cannot allow this!”

“A boi is acceptable, on the side. A King also needs a wife! My niece…”

Falkirk frowned, while running his fingers over the tortoiseshell like veneer of the old table. Only when a smaller and slender hand was placed over his did he look up. Arthur was looking at him, stress lines around his eyes. Beyond the omega, G was breathing deeply and heavily while glaring out into the middle distance. The young Alpha's que, spicy, something that catches the back of the nose and a bit unpleasant. Anger, G was very angry.

“Oh, I don't talk at these things,” Falkirk said, just loud enough to be heard. “If I do... I dictate, when the alphas ignore that, I blackmail. If they ignore that, I threaten. If they ignore that, I start kneecapping people. After that... we don't talk about after that.”

Arthur looked at him like Falkirk had just grown another head. G was hiding behind his hand to snigger. Falkirk cast his eyes around the large round table.

Mycroft cleared his throat, to draw the attention back to himself. “Forgive my brother, he has been under some stress of late. Where were we, Dame Melba, you were talking about your niece?”

The old woman, with curly grey hair looked down her nose. “I was saying...”

“I'm not marrying a horse,” G said. “Have you met your niece? Long faced girl, buck teeth, goes round neighing for more hay.”

Falkirk went back to studying the mottled paten of the table they were at. He let G offend the woman that was one of his his god mothers.

“I must come back to the ceremony,” said a small man with a neck that came forward as much as up, small faced and creepy looking like tortoise sticking its head out of its shell. Falkirk had been surprised the Arch Bishop of Canterbury had avoided being summoned to the Inquiry, he was the type of man no parent willing left their children near. The Bishop said, “The church will never recognise, 'marriage' between two men.”

“I believe that's why we're having the civil service first,” Mycroft said. “Because the Church of England doesn't recognise it. But the law would recognise a CoE Ceremonial Bonding. Just a way to avoid the pesky bigamy laws, even when it's the same two people marrying each other.”

“This is unacceptable!” Screeched another weirdo alpha who somehow managed to be the leaner than either of the omegas at the table. “Tradition must be adhered to.”
“Enough!” G shot to his feet. Arthur taking the young man's hand to offer comfort. “I will marry Arthur in a civil ceremony. We will then have a big ceremony at Westminster where Arch Bishop you will give us the traditional blessing of Omega and Alpha. And if you don't like it, we... we...”

“Always have the threat ready when you blow your top,” Falkirk said.

“WE!” Suddenly it came to the king, “Will find a new Arch Bishop! A more progressive one.”

“What fire Your Majesty,” the bishop said in a rolling voice of patience, like when dealing with someone stupid and you thought yourself smarter. Closing his eyes as if seeking divine strength he said, “You are very young. I'm sure Arthur will make a good bond, but children from an omega have not inherited the throne since...” he opened his eyes, gulped and froze.

Falkirk just gazed at the Arch Bishop with that smile. A little too wide and with cold dead eyes. He dropped the insane look when G, Arthur and Mycroft all turned to him. To them just appearing a normal, innocent, silly little omega not taking note of the important Alpha's discussion around him.

Falkirk let Mycroft play nice with these self important blowhards that attached themselves to the Royal Household. Falkirk would much prefer to hobble them and be a dictator. Him telling them what to do and them making it happen somehow. As it was, it was up to Mycroft to deal with the diplomacy, and Falkirk to be the threat when needed.

Once everyone had talked themselves to exhaustion Falkirk looked up, “Arthur, weren't you thinking of spring for the Ceremony?”

“We have not reached that part yet,” Mycroft sighed.

“GOD! We've been hours here!” Falkirk blasted. “Does none of you have anything more important to do? I do! Can we get to the point were people with too many opinions are told they don't get a say?”

“Hear-hear,” G said, knocking on the table to show his agreement.

“Sir Thomas has been helping His Majesty and I, but it has been our decision always.” Arthur looked away from those on the far side of the round table and to Falkirk, “Yes, spring.”

“And it is to be a state occasion,” G ordered. “Arrangements are to begin being made.”

The Arch Bishop put on a forced smile, “At once Your Majesty.”

A politician who'd done very little talking said, “I think this would be good for the country.” He got some glares from the more traditional so ducked his head.

The second the group was out of the ornate gallery of Buckingham palace the reaming four breathed a sigh of relief. Mycroft, while checking his tie and suit in the mirror mused, “Dear brother, I'm sure we could find you some small African Country to rule if you desire.”

“Why? This one's so much easier. It's run by some of the worst humanity has to offer, what's more most of them are cowards.”

G chuckled, remembering an old man who spoke very much like Falkirk at times. Although he
wasn't frightened of Falkirk like he was Urquhart.

“M?” Arthur said. “Still having problems with Darren's cousin?”

Falkirk nodded. “I spoke too quickly with Philip.”

“You had to make a mistake one day,” Mycroft mused, so very and utterly helpfully.

Falkirk said, ”I don't know what I can do. The inquiry is looking at government or political institutions. Orphanages, youth detention centres, schools and the like. I can't just say the IRA falls under its auspices, especially after the Inquiry has already started. Then there's the evidence. The British are very bureaucratic, we like everything written down in triplicate. The IRA didn't work like that. Evidence is hearsay, or one person's word against another. I don't think I can include the IRA in the inquiry. But I am meeting someone.”

Mycroft rolled his eyes at the idea. “Goodbye dear brother. I shall leave you to your crusade to save every lonely little sheep.”

“Opposed to you, who sees them as lamb-chops in waiting,” Falkirk taunted.

Mycroft stopped at the door, “That reminds me, Mint Sauce.” He closed the door behind him.

Arthur looked to Falkirk, “Was he joking?”

“About the mint sauce for lamb chops, or not caring about the metaphorical 'lambs'?” Falkirk thought about it. “Mycroft doesn't joke. He needed mint sauce, and doesn't care too much about the little people.”

G, showing Arthur and Falkirk out observed on how weird the Holmes family was. G then sent a sparkling smile to Falkirk, “You think Andrew will want to be a page boy?”

“An opportunity to dress in fancy clothes and parade in front of people...” Falkirk had a metal picture of a sulking Andrew dressed like a little drummer boy. Forcing himself to speak pleasantly Falkirk said, “I'm sure he would love to be part of the ceremony.”

Arthur smacked the king in the arm and told him to stop being mean. G defending he liked Andrew. Falkirk let the two love birds say their goodbye while he waited by the car. The blushing omega joined him a few moments later, using his long hair to hide his red face.

The cameras were waiting at the gate of the palace. They didn't take much notice of Falkirk's car. He was in the Privy Council, an adviser to the king. That was well known and mostly ignored. They hadn't quite twigged the blond beside him was the rumoured love interest, yet.
Falkirk came down the stairs. Waiting in the foyer was an annoyed alpha with watery grey eyes, standing beside the two dark haired omegas.

“M,” Mallory's voice as cool as his posture and unamused scowl. "Going to Belfast is unwise. It will be a clear provocation.”

“I didn't know you cared,” Falkirk responded.

“With all due respect, I don't, not compared to my omega the papa of my son.”

Falkirk looked to the blushing Darren who gave an eye roll. Looking back to Mallory, Falkirk said, “You think for one second I've not prepared. Have you noticed James about?”

Mallory looked round. Being the weekend, the house was rather full but no, there was no James that he’d seen.

“M, you can't be serious! Double O Seven! If there is a situation he is hardly the type to calm it down.”

“Opposed to me?” Falkirk said. Darren started giggling, his cousin Philip was lost having never seen how Falkirk deals with 'situations'. “Gareth, you have my word. Darren will be safe.”

“He wasn't the last time,” Mallory said quietly.

“He wasn't with me last time, or had a Double O on station or the few other surprises I have up my sleeve,” Falkirk said with a winning smile and headed for the door. The two other omegas following him.

With just the three of them in a black cab, Philip relaxed. They went to Stansted Airport. Being incognito, it was a Ryanair flight to Belfast they were taking. No obvious security, and dressed in casual clothes. Falkirk had dressed in skinny jeans and a hoodie, making him looking younger than his usual self.

Finding a bar, Falkirk was about to have some Dutch Courage when Darren took the glass from him and swigged it himself. Unrepentant the Irish bastard said, “So sorry, that means you need to drive.”

Darren nudged Philip, “Ya've no lived 'til ya've seen Falky-boy drive.”

“Piss off,” Falkirk said and started a meditation technique. When their flight was called, with a merry Darren clinging to Falkirk the three headed for the gate. For M, where private planes and
First Class was a standard, Falkirk baulked seeing so many people packed into a tin tube of a deathtrap.

The three omegas stuffed themselves into a single row of the plane. Falkirk couldn't even put his head between his knees to breath deeply because the seats were so close together. The take off was hell, the stuffy pheromone clogged air was worse. Darren the bastard had dozed off and drooled on Falkirk's shoulder.

Philip reached over to brush the wiry hair from his cousin's face. “I think this will be the first time back, since he left with Gareth.”

'Damn!' Falkirk thought, he hadn't forgotten that but he had overlooked it. To Philip he said, “Darren never sounds bitter about the IRA.”

Philip shrugged. “In our own country, the land of our forefathers we were the intruders, vilified, oppressed, discriminated against, held in contempt. For our home it was... war. Traitors were the lowest from of scum. I bet Darren has never mentioned his dad.”

“Not much,” Falkirk said.

“That's because he was a traitor, going against everything Darren had been taught to believe in. Then there were the enforcers. They made sure families remained loyal to the cause. Twice my dad set the timer wrong. When the warnings were phoned in to the police, the bombs detonated before they were supposed to. That's not how it was done when a warning was given, it was to cause disruption not kill. My dad threatened that understanding. I was given the choice you know, sort of. I could help the cause, or watch my dad getting a bullet in the brain.”

Falkirk reached over Darren to take the other omega's hand. Philip said, “There were good guys, like Grandpa Joe. But there were ones that would do anything, and I mean anything. They thought my da' was one of them, wanting to maim and kill as many as possible.”

To Falkirk it sounded messed up. But looking back at history. How many cowards had been shot by their own country, with their families disowning them. Only looking back do you realise how wrong it was. Pressing his head to Darren's, where it rested on Falkirk's shoulder. He wasn't sure how Darren resolved his past with his present. Going from being someone who saw the British as enemy to being part of the establishment.

“Philip?” Falkirk said quietly, very sombre.

“You can't do anything can you?” Philip said, reading him correctly.

Falkirk shook his head. “The Inquiry is not the answer for your situation. Philip, for what it's worth, what I can do, I will. No matter what or who.”

Philip looked down, using his black wavy hair to hide his face. Falkirk reached across Darren to clasp the other Omega's hand. Philip glanced to him, a bit upset but resigned and unsurprised.

“If you want me to kneecap someone, just say,” Falkirk said. “I'm known for it.”

Philip tried to give him a smile. “Grandpa made the same offer. But John-boy is not a man to cross.”
“Nor am I,” Falkirk said with a smirk. “And if it's Mr Power you're talking about, I've been keeping an eye on him for a long time now. Since I hired Darren in fact. I was always worried he would try to return to Darren's life or influence him. If John 'John-boy' Power tried, I wanted to know right away so I could deal with it before Darren was compromised.”

Even when they'd been speaking quietly, Philip dropped his voice further when he said, “So you know he's very dangerous!”

“Not as dangerous as me,” Falkirk said just as softly. Taking a breath, wondering if it was right to suggest this. Hoping for the best, “I have found one weapon to be the most powerful in my arsenal: exposure! Everyone I come up against, every institution want to be seen in a certain way. To be considered, noble, honourable, powerful. The dirty secrets threaten that.”

“You want me to tell my story?”

Falkirk shook his head. “I'm not telling you to do anything. I'm suggesting a strategy that has seen me through my life. I threaten to reveal some secret, and everyone bows, bends and scuttles back under the rock from whence they came. Information has always been my power. I'm a blackmailer. You must find yours, Philip. If you don't want to tell your story, there might be someone willing to tell theirs. I've found that with the Inquiry. It's amazing the people who find the courage to talk simple because someone is willing to listen and believe them.”

A snorting snore form Darren punctuated the moment of silence that followed. Although on a packed plane silence was relative. Falkirk held the other omega's hand, while Philip thought hard for the rest of the short flight.

Falkirk nudged Darren to wake him when they were about to land. A less sympathetic Philip slapped his cousin to wake him when he refused to rouse. Darren just snorted and opened his eyes, asking if they were here. Darren had noticed a change in his cousin, but Philip was still thinking hard. With no baggs they got through the airport very quickly and went to the rental desks where Falkirk picked up the keys for the car.

Getting into the Silver Golf Hatchback, Falkirk behind the wheel. Darren looked over the back, to his cousin. “Falky-boy only drives at one of two speeds. Fast an-” Falkirk pulled away “OH MARY MOTHER O' GOD PLEASE DON'T LET ME DIE!”

Philip grabbed the handle with one hand and braced on the seat in front with the other.

“My driving is fine!” Falkirk defended. “Unlike you, Darren....fuck missed the exit!”

“Ma driving's perfect, can't park for shite though!” Darren holding on for dear life too.

Philip in the back gulped, nearly hitting his head on the seat in front when Falkirk braked. His head bouncing on the headrest behind him when the light turned green and Falkirk took off like a racing driver on the grid.

Thirty minutes of what felt like a roller-coaster and they were out of the city.

Darren saw something flash in the mirror. “Ho-ho, you're in trouble. The fuzz!”

Falkirk glanced in the mirror, and saw the police car flash its headlight then the blue lights. Pulling over, he grumbled, “What the hell do they want?”
Darren and Philip were giggling to themselves, while Falkirk waited for the policeman to get out and come up to the window.

“Sir,” came the rolling brogue of the beta who stood at Falkirk's window. “Could I check your licence?”

“Yes, why?” Falkirk asked pulling out his wallet and handing over the pink photo card.

“That last bend you took. You didn't appear to be in full control of the vehicle. Excessive speed.”

“I was going 60!” Falkirk defended.

“That's a speed limit, not a recommended speed sir....Sir,” his eyes widened when he saw the unique title of the individual in the photo licence. A bit more formally he said, “Please, Sir Thomas, for bends like that, make sure you come down to third gear and take them at about thirty miles an hour.”

“Of course,” Falkirk said and took back his licence. The Officer stood back and waved them off.

Still Falkirk was a bit sharp on the acceleration. Followed by harsh breaking at the next sharp bend on the road and coming out of the bend his foot was flat against the floor.

Philip in the back complaining, “If that had been me, I'd have gotten a ticket.”

Darren answered, “It's the ponce accent and his sir-ship. Racist bastards!”

Falkirk eventually arrived in a small town just outside of Belfast. The peace agreement was signed a year or so before Falkirk started working for MI6. That was nearly twenty years ago. Yet there were still hallmarks of the troubles. Remnants of barriers to separate Catholic and protestant areas. Murals on the houses. And of course the graffiti.

A terrace house set a short distance from the road, Philip pointed to. Falkirk parked with a whip-lashing jerk of the car. The three omegas got out, and stretched their legs a bit. Then with Philip in the lead headed up the path.

Philip knocked an opened the door. Calling, “Aunt Mary, it's me.”
Where Loyalty Lies: Belfast Part 2/2

Chapter Notes

Thanks for reading comments and kudos.

The characters in this chapter mostly come form a series 'Derry Girls' With Philip and Darren added. There has been a change, the enforcer I edited out. The heart to heart bit was a more forced than I would have liked. It was meant to happen in a slightly different way. I just didn't feel comfortable with a violent confrontation in this at the moment.

Hope you like this chapter. I haven't had the time to edit it as I would have liked.

A mug appeared in front of Falkirk's nose. He took it quickly, deciding not to comment in the opaque brown liquid.

The alpha woman, Aunt Mary returned to the kitchen area. “Now son, it was milk and two!” the blond woman said looking over her shoulder. Falkirk nodded franticly.

He was sitting at the end place of the sofa, near the old man in the arm chair. He wasn't even attempting to follow any of the dozen conversations. All semblance to the King's English had gone out the window as the family descended into a quickly spoken brogue that was shouted at each other. Falkirk only managing to get the odd word, mostly, feck, shite, airse-wipe and a few more mangled swear words.

The Matriarch, the woman who handed Falkirk the tea was the second youngest sister of four. Aunt Mary. Also here was her husband Gerry, sister Sarah. There were three more cousins here, Mary's two daughters, and one of Aunt Sarah's.

Erin, Mary's teenage daughter was preening over photos Darren was showing her of Colum. The old man sitting in the arm chair looked over his shoulder to his grand son, “A cracking little lad ya got there son, too bad about the airs-wipe o' a pa.”

“Nou, Da,” Aunt Mary snapped. “Be nice.”

Granda Joe grumbled settling back in the chair. “Will I hell! Only one place for English pillocks like him.” Aunt Mary's husband said something snide under his breath, Granda Joe whipped his head round to the beta, “You can feck off ta England too! What my Mary was doing marrying a pillock like you I'll never know...”

“Nou, you don't talk to my husband like that!”

Falkirk concentrated on his milky, very sweet tea. Letting the riot go on around him. Just sending a glance to the quiet teenage girl on the couch with him. She was looking at him like he was a bug. Very unsettling.

“So son,” said Granda Joe to Falkirk. Everyone was still shouting but he wasn't taking part now
he'd started the current argument. “What do you do?”

“Oh,” Falkirk said, suddenly a plate of biscuits held under his nose distracted him. He took a half coated digestive and Aunt Mary whipped the plate away as quickly as it appeared. She returned to the attached kitchen/dinner where the others were. Falkirk looked back to the leaning forward old man, “I'm just a civil servant.”

Darren's teenage cousin leaned forwards, the one on the couch with Falkirk. He leaned back as her long face came closer and closer. Her eyes gazing at him from point blank range. Dreamily she said, “I'm sure I've seen you before.”

Granda Joe said, “Orla's got a cracking memory son.”

She had a 'lights are on but no one's home' quality in Falkirk's opinion. People like that were so hard to read, they could be as dumb as they first appeared or they could be really smart in their own way. You really couldn't tell.

Falkirk looked at the old man, ignoring the girl right by his face. She was distracting though.

“I remember you,” the girl said in a slow distracted way. “You run that inquiry. The one who's in charge of MI6.”

You could hear a pin drop for all of five seconds, then Darren's maniacal laughter broke. Joe shot to his feet, “NOT IN MY FECKING HOUSE!”

“It's no' y'r house now is it,” Said Uncle Gerry. Aunt Mary adding, “He is still a guest. Now you sit down and be polite!”

The old man crossed his arms and sat in his armchair, glaring at Falkirk constantly. “Y'r getting nothin' outta me, son. Better men have tried!”

“Granda,” Darren said standing from the kitchen table and coming over to the living area. Kneeling down beside the floral print chair he took the old man's hand.

“Darren?” Falkirk said softly. He glanced to Philip for help. Philip said, “We don't need him. Thomas and me spoke while you were asleep. Thomas can't help.”

Granda Joe laughed, “Too right, the English only help their fecking selves!”

“Like you helped us?” Darren dropped his head. Standing he let his hand slip from his grandfather's grasp. “Okay, there's nothing else here for us then.”

“Now son,” Granda Joe struggled to his feet. Reaching out for Darren. “I, I know what happened to you and Philip was awful.”

Oblivious, both teenage girls asked at the same time, what happened. Aunt Mary sent her daughter and niece out of the room. Uncle Gerry took his baby daughter and ushered his sister-in-law out too.

“Son,” said Joe turning Darren round to face him. Glancing to Philip to as he spoke. “I love ya both. I was blessed with four daughters, not a single one had a man worthy o' them. Mary got the best, even if Gerry's a spineless pillock. I have five cracking grand kids, and one great grandson.”
Mary, who seemed to be the pack alpha now her father was past his prime, pulled Philip close to 
hug him. With bitterness she said, “So help me god, If I got my hands on those men I’d wring their 
fecking necks.”

“Now Mary,” Said Granda Joe, “These are men ya don't mess with.”

“Did you know?” Darren asked his grandfather.

Shaking his head, Joe said, “Not at the time. When I learned, you were both gone by then. John 
Boy- the rat bastard -had you stolen away and there was nothing I could do. They would have 
come for me, y'r Aunt Mary, Aunt Sarah, an' your mothers.”

Falkirk spoke softly, “That's when you stopped being an active member.”

“How the feck do you know that!”

“I didn't become head of MI6 because of my pretty face!”

“Less o' your lip boy!” Joe shot, then looked back to Darren and held his arm out for Philip to 
come close.

Hugging his two grandsons, Joe said, “I had others ta think o' but I loved ya both wa all my heart.”

Like Philip, Darren was curled into the taller Alpha. Glancing up to the old man he said, “Even if 
I'm the god parent to the next king?”

“Even then,” said the old man.

“Good, Arthur already asked me.”

“Who the feck's Arthur?” the old man grumbled.

Falkirk went to the kitchen, while Darren, Philip and Joe forced some small talk. He set about 
making tea, helped by Mary. They may view themselves as Irish but when it came to tea, it was the 
cure all just like it was for the British. Falkirk finally getting his black unsweetened tea, Mary even 
had a slice of lemon for him to make the Tetley drinkable.

“YOU MEAN Y'R NO' FECKING JOKING!” Granda Joe roared. “O'r my dead body is my 
grandson being the godfadder ta the next king o' fecking England!”

“Oh yes I am!”

Falkirk looked back over to the lounge area of the small house. Darren looking a bit better and in a 
heated argument with his grandfather.

Joe retorted, “Are you trying to put me in the fecking grave? My heart will shatter and I'll just lie 
down and die.” The old man gesturing to the floor as he spoke.

Falkirk said, “Darren you could invite your grandfather to the Ceremony.”

“You stop stirring it boyo!” Joe wagging a finger at Falkirk. "Or I'll come out of fecking
"That might not be the best idea," Falkirk said as he brought over the teas. He saw something in Darren, a desire to reconnecting with his family. He didn't want to hold a grudge or anger. He wanted to be a part of them.

Falkirk sat at the kitchen table while Joe, Mary, Philip and Darren spoke in the lounge area. He could watch them but for the first time they were speaking low. Slowly the rest of the family came out of hiding and the noise grew. The blond alpha girl sat beside Falkirk asking him loads of questions, she admitted to wanting to move on to bigger and better things, journalism being her goal of the moment.

They stayed for dinner. Falkirk, Darren and Philip offered to help, but Mary was one of those people that had to do everything themselves or nothing. There was no in between place. Although, Darren Philip and Falkirk were given a pile of potatoes to peel.

The house was as lively and mad as they ate. Until the oblivions girl, Orla looked up, "Wha' happened to Darren and Philip's mams?"

Granda Joe said, "They moved way. Dublin."

Falkirk wasn't sure about Philip but he knew Darren's mother had married and started another family.

After the meal they had to leave, to be in time for the last plane back. Darren drove them back to the airport. To break the silence, Philip latched onto the one thing that had been bugging him, "I wonder why the windows are so thick."

Falkirk looked at the car window beside him. He knew precisely why they were about three times thicker than a normal car and why for such a small car it had such a high torque to get it off the mark and probably why the police truly decided not to stop them. To Philip he said, "Don't know."

Reaching the airport, Darren drove to the return spaces for the rental cars. Seeing the concrete bollard getting closer and closer, Falkirk shouted for Darren to stop. It was too late, the car lurched to a stop with a squealing metallic crunch.

"Thanks Darren, that's my deposit gone."

Darren sent him a huge smile. "I'll tell Q."

"That sexist bastard, he'll let you off with it," Falkirk said getting out.

Darren called back, "That's why I'm willing to tell him."

Philip asked who Q was. While making their way through the airport he was told the big Alpha he met at Falkirk's had the title Q. Pleasantly and a little confused Philip said, "Oh, he was real nice."

"When it comes to omegas he's too nice," Falkirk said and stepped through the scanner on his turn. Darren adding, "You two work well together. You let the Alpha's away with murder, and Danny Boy lets the omegas away with murder. Poor, poor, Evens just an unloved beta."

They got to the bar nearest their gate. Falkirk ordering a tequila for Philip and Darren, and a
bourbon for himself. As soon as the barman put down the three glasses one was suddenly snatched away, downed in one and the thief giving a choking gasp.

“I must say I'm very disappointed in you,” James said, while indicating the barman should replace the tequila he stole and add another. “Sitting in a crows nest, watching an ex-council house through a sniper's scope.”

“I'm so sorry,” Falkirk said in a soft scared voice that instantly hardened, “Now be a dear and pay the man!”

“Sir, yes sir,” James snapping a salute. He handed over his credit card, then followed Falkirk through the bar to the small table the omegas had grabbed. “I mean, Falkirk, when I go on missions with you I expect a certain amount of adrenalin, 'This is a bad idea' and a lot of 'Oh my god I'm going to die.'”

Taking his drink, Philip looked up, “You mean like on the car ride?”

“Oh yeah, I saw! What idiot let Falkirk drive?” James demanded, his omega and the cute dark haired one with crystal blue eyes both pointed to Darren. “Okay, at this point even sitting in a car Falkirk was driving would do.”

Darren asked, “So where were you?”

James described an electrical pylon that gave him a good view. Ending with, “Even had the the old duffer in his chair in my cross hairs.”

“That's my fecking Granda!” Darren shot. James just shrugged, unrepentant for having the old man in the scope of his sniper.

They talked until their flight was called. Falkirk quite happy to snuggle up against his alpha for the walk to the gate. And being pressing to him in the squashed interior of the plane was good too. As the other passengers arrived and settled, James whispered, “Isn't he on your security detail?”

Falkirk stretched his head to see the Alpha who just walked passed. He nodded and snuggled back into James. His Alpha's scent so calming on him, even while in this flying metal deathtrap.

“I recognise her too,” James added. “And him.”

They arrived at London Stansted about forty minutes later. Having no bags they were making good progress until James pulled them to a stop, “Thomas too! How many did you take with?”

The name 'Thomas' confused Philip a bit. While the name said confused Falkirk, “Double O Six wasn't involved, he's not even in the country.”

Darren squeaked in excitement, “Who's he with?”

“Who is he with,” Falkirk said a deeper suspicious note entering his voice.

Just leaving the baggage hall, were the two being discussed. In an embrace very similar to how Falkirk and James stood, intimately close and hugging. Philip said, “What's wrong?”

Darren answered, “Thomas hasn't mentioned being in a relationship.”
“The omega looks kinda cute... he can't be dangerous,” Philip said. Darren started giggling, Falkirk politely informing the cute blond omega was the Double O being talked about. It was the tall alpha with wavy black hair that was the other half.

“Let him have some fun,” James said getting a cute glare from his omega. Teasing he said, “Warning! Deranged Mother-M alert. Proceed to your nearest fallout shelter and await all clear!”

Falkirk thumped his Alpha in his tummy, still James teased him. Darren telling his cousin some of the more repeatable stories, that didn't compromise national security. Falkirk starting to make plans while they returned home. No one messed with one of his Double Os
Daniel reached across the Omega's chest to grasp the far shoulder. He then gave a warning before grasping the boy's neck. Rocking the boy forward while using a leg Daniel forced Andrew's knees under him. Before Andrew's face touched the floor, “Colour?” Daniel asked.

“Green,” Came the more controlled but hesitant reply.

Pulling the arm from under Andrew Daniel pressed his head down by the back of the neck. The tightening grip on the Omega's neck caused him to mewl.

“Colour?”

“Yellow,” Andrew whimpered. So Daniel relaxed his grip slightly but didn't let Andrew move.

“Green,” Andrew said after a few moments. The grip on his neck tightened and he felt his body freezing.

Andrew wanted to whimper, scream, something but nothing happened. The scent of his calm and relaxed uncle was the only thing keeping him from crying and panicking. When Merlin did it the strange, frightening scent had made his experience all the worse. The world started to tip again as he was pulled upright and against the big chest. A deep rumbling from the chest became words and the hands holding him had loosened and started to stroke him. Andrew let out a gasp as his body came under his control again.

“There you are, little Laddie,” Daniel reassured seeing the glazed blue eyes start to focus again.

Hiccuping Andrew clung to the the Alpha while he continued to be stroked by his uncle. Then there were more hands and the scents of his Papa and Uncle Keading became stronger. Opening his eyes Andrew was met with the proud green eyes of his Papa. Looking to Keading he looked proud as well.

The three omegas and one alpha sat there in Falkirk's library for a while, just letting Andrew go through his recovery period. After an hour or so, they started to move. It was getting late so Daniel, Alec and Yulian went home, followed by Selene and Keading and their three children.

Given Andrew was still recovering, dinner was informal. Falkirk sat at the corner of the couch with Andrew beside him, Rupert the other side of his brother and James at the other end. Hudson came
in still wearing his coat. In the older blond's hands four wrapped bundles of white paper, and some cans of coke.

James unwrapped the first bundle. “Pizza Supper,” the Alpha said with a shudder.

“Shove it James!” Falkirk said and held out his hands for his dinner. Looking at the batter covered pizza that had been deep fried and covered in a portion of tick cut chips. The heady fumes of vinegar floating off it. Falkirk started to dig in, to the lovely heart clogging meal. Andrew opening his portion of chicken nuggets. Rupert and James being very boring with just the traditional Fish 'n Chips.

Snuggled together they ate with their fingers. All watching the evening movie. Falkirk tipped his head one side to the other, “So why is the the one with the big hammer hitting the one with the shield? Aren't they both the good guys?”

James rolled his eyes, Rupert sighed. Andrew looked up at his Papa, “Why do you always talk during the movie?”

Leaning down, Falkirk planted a kiss on the top of his son's head. “Because I know it bugs you... Like Captain America could stand up to Thor! All those muscles and a big... hammer. One hit and Cap. would be a squashed tomato under his shield.”

While Falkirk and Andrew debated fantasy physics, Rupert excused himself and slipped off the couch. They watched the action move to the sexy red haired woman, dressed in black leather kicking some ass. James complained, “Now she is completely unrealistic! Russian agents in real life are the most sour-faced cows you've ever seen. If they smiled their faces would shatter into a million pieces.”

Rupert returned. Andrew took one look at him and a bit angrily said, “That had better not be for me.”

“No,” Rupert answered.

“Busted,” James whispered and tousled Rupert's black hair and pulled him back down to the couch. The large slice of Chocolate Fudge cake helped in the boy's lap. Picking up the pastry fork, James said, “Well if the omega doesn't want an Alpha's token of affection. I'll eat it.”

“He brought it for me,” Andrew whined. Looking at his father eating the first fork full. Rupert took the fork from James' fingers and held the plate out. Andrew felt a secret nudge from his papa, “Thank you Rupert.”

Both boys a bit bashful. Usually there wasn't open acknowledgement of the older Alpha taking care of his younger omega brother. The tokens from Alpha to omega were part of that, it was still a bit sexist though. An Alpha showing he could take care of an omega. But when push came to shove, Andrew was willing to let Rupert play the alpha rather then see his father take his token affection. A small rebellion to the tradition, Andrew shared his cake with Rupert.

“So tomorrow?” James asked, changing the subject.

Falkirk groaned. Alan, the pack alpha was coming round, with Gillian and her parents. Mycroft, Sherlock and John, and of course Greg Lestrade. All for the pack Alphas to arrange the wedding.
“I still don't see why the Alphas have to do all this rubbish.”

James chuckled, “Because you're a progressive Alpha.”

“That means I don't care about all the bullshit,” Falkirk teased. Andrew turned to look at him with his lips covered in dark chocolate, “Naught language, Papa.”

“I've heard you swearing when you don't think I can hear,” Falkirk glared and Andrew ducked his head. With a smile though, he tipped Andrew's head up and wiped his son's lips, “Still can't eat without wearing your food.”

Andrew stuck his blackened tongue out. Falkirk could only manage a half hearted glare. From taking weeks to recover from a pinning session it was now a matter of hours before Andrew was showing his spirit again.

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Sandwiches, mini sausage rolls and small quiches. Scones, thick jams and clotted cream. Dainty cakes of several verities. And of course pots of tea and coffee. All laid out on the long dining room table.

For several long moments Falkirk had been sitting at one side of the table, directly across from the plump old alpha. Mycroft beside Falkirk, while there were an older man and woman either side of Alan. Four were missing though.

“Mycroft?” Falkirk said. “Be so good as to call Lestrade and the others, see how much longer they're going to be?”

“Of course,” Mycroft stood sharply and headed for Falkirk's library.

The house was silent. Falkirk would have preferred if Andrew and Rupert to have stayed at this point, children were a good topic for distraction. But G had offered to take them all riding. So they were acting as chaperones while courting Alpha and Omega traipsed around the countryside.

Mycroft came out of the Library. A pinched expression on his face. He wasn't happy. He came up to Falkirk and whispered, “I’m getting no answer from any of their mobiles. Miss Marple said Sherlock, John and Rosie left on Friday. My contacts at the Home Office say their passports were logged at Heathrow going to Newark with a connecting flight to Nevada...”

“Las Vegas?” Falkirk asked pulling back. James burst out laughing, twigging like Falkirk had.

“It would appear so,” Mycroft said coolly. “Lestrade and Miss...”

“I think you mean Mrs,” Falkirk stared chuckling. Looking back to the Alpha across from him, “We might as well start. It appears we're not to have a part in the wedding.”

“You're amused by this?” Alan said, rather calmly. Taking the hand of the woman beside him and giving it a comforting squeeze. He started helping himself to a quiche, then offering the plate to his niece.

“Quite,” Falkirk answered. Helping himself to a goat's cheese tart. “As the wedding is... well probably over by now. Why don't we discuss the reception. And I believe the marriage will have to
be registered here for it to be legally recognised.”

“Good,” Alan purred, his bright blue eyes glinting a bit. “They will still have to face the family. I suggest the Savoy.”

“White tie?” Falkirk added, knowing Lestrade didn't like dressing up. Alan agreeing. Falkirk adding, “And a best man speeches from Sherlock and John.”

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Falkirk was wondering what to give Lestrade. What he and Alan had come up with would leave him red faced and uncomfortable, with Sherlock and John not much better off. It was Lestrade and his down to earth quality Falkirk felt for.

“Maybe a honeymoon to Spain,” Falkirk mused to himself as his car pulled into MI6's garage. Yes, he would rent a small villa or something so the two could be alone.

Getting out of his car he made his way through the building up to E-Branch. He stopped at Darren's desk and spoke with his PA for a moment. Well it was about Philip they spoke, so Darren wasn't acting as his PA at that moment. Falkirk had pulled in a favour at Tomorrow, the paper secretly owned by MI6. One of their investigative journalist was helping Philip write his first story. Darren was even considering giving an account of his history.

Falkirk said, “Exposing the IRA's conduct with Omegas. If you need someone threatened let me know.”

Darren shrugged, “Addison already offered.”

Falkirk rolled his eyes, “He's not meant to chose who to use his licence to kill on.”

“Yeah, that's your job!” Darren teased back. “Maloney too, he refused to be out done by an Alpha.”

“No bloody surprised,” Falkirk said and headed for his office. Calling over his shoulder, “You know, that's how I became M, having those Double Os wrapped round my little finger.”

“An Irish Republican M?” Darren mused with a strange gleam in his eyes.

“Any more absurd than me being M?” Falkirk entered his office before Darren could respond.

Tanner came in to give his daily briefing. Falkirk had a phone conference with Felix Leiter and the head of the French Secret Service about a group in Morocco that was in the early stages of forming. So far the unnamed group was made up of Al-Qaeda, Isis and splinter groups from other cells. Falkirk agreed to pull out any British assets and leave it for the CIA to deal with. His work was progressing well when his door was opened without a knock. Darren's belated voice came over the intercom, “Pissed off Double O six to see you.”

“Mr Thomas, come in seeing you're in anyway!”

The blond closed the door and paced about. “Home of Britain's secretes! You can't keep anything private here!”

“Ah, is this about Dr Harrow?”
Thomas stooped and looked at him. The anger deserted him and the omega relaxed. He nodded, “Bond! Addison! Maloney! Mrs Ponsonby! Trevelyan! The alpha arsehole who empties the rubbish bins... you'll be getting a complaint from him. He wasn't respectful so I decked the bastard. How the hell does everyone know?”

Falkirk pointed to the side. The Double Os baby blue eyes followed M's finger to the Omega on the other side of the glass wall. Darren gave them an innocent wave. Falkirk said, “We were coming though Stansted when we saw you together. James was with me, so he might of helped spread the gossip.”

The omega sighed and sat in the guest chair. “It's not serous. Well not very serious. We just spent the weekend in Paris.”

Falkirk nodded in understanding.

“I've done a background check, Mr Thomas, because I'm an interfering busybody who cares about his Double Os. There's nothing to worry about from my end. I would have preferred you told me but I understand you have a right to privacy and can't tell me about every fling. And going from a fling to a lover is a complicated process.” Falkirk stopped that line of thought. Approaching this from a different angle Falkirk sat back and asked, “So what is this Dr. Harrow like?”

“So long as this doesn't get passed around?” Thomas said. Falkirk made a locking motion in front of his lips. Thomas started telling him about how the two met, what Dr Harrow did(which Falkirk knew but kept quiet about), how the relationship was going.

“M,” Thomas said standing up. “Thanks for listening. I know you've got better things to do.”

Falkirk shook his head. “I'm here to keep you whole, as best as I can... If you ever decide on a new path in life....”

“I'm not ready for that, M.” the Omega said and headed for the door. “Don't tell Darren please.”

“Is that for your privacy, or his torture?”

“Darren's torture of course,” Thomas said and stepped out.

Darren came in a moment later. His strange hazel eyes wide and alive, “So? Details!”

“Nope,” Falkirk said and put his head down to get back to work. Ignoring the begging for gossip.
Where Loyalty Lies: Resignation

The intercom buzzed. Darren announced, “Double O One, here for her appointment.”

Falkirk told Darren to send her in. The round faced woman entered a moment later. The only mission for the far east needed someone who was more decisive than the usual far east specialist, so Falkirk was a bit curious for the appointment.

“Miss Kew, please,” Falkirk said indicating the chair opposite his desk. “What can I do for you?”

Before sitting the beta placed down a single piece of paper for Falkirk to read. Only a single paragraph, stiffly saying the operative was resigning. Kew was good, in her way. All the betas were. They tended to be slower and more careful in the execution of their missions. They didn't tend to enter problematic physical relationships either. All this left Falkirk confused. Usually a resignation was preceded by an event, that to Falkirk's knowledge had not happened with Suzi Kew.

“I cannot refuse you,” Falkirk said looking up from the letter. “Could I have an explanation at least?”

“It's time I left, M.”

“Have you met someone?” Falkirk asked getting a no in response. “Has something happened? You can tell me.”

“No!” the woman said sharply.

This was confusing Falkirk, and in turn making him cautious. “Miss Kew, I find this course of action suspicious. If you can't, or won't give me an explanation I will have to launch an investigation. That means travel restrictions, surveillance teams, the whole nine yards.”

With a shrug Kew said, “Do what you must. I'm out of here.”

“Then you are dismissed, Miss Kew. Do not leave the country. If you do you will be arrested,” Falkirk said more sharply than someone who had served the country deserved.

The woman stood and marched towards the door. And with head held high she walked out of E-branch. Falkirk summoned Tanner and ordered him to begin an investigation. The Chief of Staff asked, “M, have you considered Kew has just had enough?”

“Yes, and I don't buy that explanation,” Falkirk said. “People only change when something causes it and it takes something big. John is drawn to the wild life Sherlock offers, even Rosie hasn't altered that. James is drawn to the one MI6 offers, a family hasn't stifled his need for a dangerous life. Miss Kew is no different, she is in this life because she got something to of it. Until I know why she suddenly wishes to change her life I will be suspicious.”

“M,” Tanner acknowledged with a nod and took his leave.

Falkirk packed up. Darren was the same, packing up and leaving for the evening. The two walked through the building together. Near the garage they met their mutual bodyguards, Darren's also
acting as his driver. They called goodbye to each other at Falkirk's car waiting by the underground entrance, while Darren and his bodyguard headed for his parked car.

Arriving home, Falkirk heard a loud southern American voice. Even when he invited her, Muffy's visit causing a flare of grief in Falkirk's chest. He came to the door of the lounge where her voice was coming from. Arthur was pacing back and forth while the shorter busty and very feisty Alpha was trying to calm him.

“What can she do!” Muffy said to the distressed omega. “Sit on the sides and bitch! That's all son.”

Falkirk stepped in. Arthur looked to him with red puffy eyes. The visiting guest nodded to the TV, where a dark hired woman was giving an interview. While taking about Arthur she dabbed at her perfectly dry eyes while making hiccuping sounds.

“What's your sister up to now?” Falkirk asked.

“She's accusing You and G of kidnapping me,” Arthur said, spitefully glaring at the TV.

The timing of the interview was no coincide. Tomorrow would be the civil union, the first stage in formalising G and Arthur's bonding. Falkirk took Arthur's hands to help focus him, “Muffy's right. What can Morgan do but sit on the sidelines and spit venom?”

“But...”

“Son,” the woman interrupted. Cupping Arthur's face she said, “You see it all the time back home. Whenever some star gets married, always some minor relative crawls out from under a rock to tell wild stories. They're interesting but no one believes them.”

“Who can argue with that,” Falkirk said giving an encouraging smile. “Now I suggest drinks and trashtalk!”

“I knew you were smart kiddo.”

Falkirk covered the stab of pain the nickname caused. To cover he asked where Taffy, Muffy's step daughter, James and the others were, and was told they had caught a west end show. So a quick call was arranged. Darren and Keading arrived, ahead of the Chinese take out. Over drinks and food they shared some horror stories of their own families.

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The reception room of the Town hall was rather busy. An official photographer stood at the rear, already taking photos of the guests as they arrived and waited. For show Cardinal Merlin was here, and that was the only person from Arthur's past. Arthur as a member of Falkirk's pack, the pack was here in force. Lestrade and his new wife hadn't forgiven Falkirk or Alen yet for the surprise reception on their return. G and Arthur stood with the Registrar who would conduct the civil service. Many filled the King's side of the hall, Falkirk and G didn't know most of them, distant relatives. A cousin being the closest relative so was the current first in line. Falkirk suspected she was here to look for any legal ambiguity to support a future claim by herself.

Muffy on the row behind Falkirk leaned forward to ask, “So there's gonna be a church service too?”
Falkirk nodded. “I believe the saying is: We're covering all bases. The Church of England doesn't technically recognise marriage between two men. So Arthur gets this civil marriage then what's called a Ceremonial Bonding at Westminster Abbey in a few months time. That will be the one with the full three ring circus.”

The woman leaned back. Falkirk looked to his brother, “Mycroft what about the line of succession?”

“The legislation is going through parliament as we speak. His Majesty's first born child will be the heir, not the traditional first born male of a marriage between man and woman.”

“Good,” Falkirk mused. Keading elbowed him to shut him up.

The Registrar called the room to order and conducted the rather dry and formal service. Falkirk quite liked it, he hated when speakers dragged their sermons on too long. Arthur and G then signed the certificate. When called Falkirk went up along with G's friend from the navy, they signed the marriage document as witnesses. Returning to his seat, Falkirk noticed his son was a bit bored and looked off.

'Poor Andrew,' Falkirk thought. The poor little omega still didn't know was was coming to him.

After the service, Falkirk took Arthur's arm. The omega a bit down. They were legally bound, but if he pitched up at the church physically bonded to an Alpha the old bastard of an Arch bishop could refuse to endorse the Ceremonial Bonding. And one thing was clear, when it came to fancy chairs and golden metal hats people went a bit crazy.

Arthur gave a last look to G before they left. Falkirk whispered, “Not long now.”

Arthur gave him a forced smile. Darren and Keading came up to the omega's other side, Darren asking, “So what we doing for the hen-do? I was thinking pub crawl and stripper bars.”

--

Falkirk was sitting back, watching Tanner at the internal glass wall. Doing his weather man routine, as he gave the overview of a mission. Falkirk was dreading the bill already. A Double O going to Tokyo, Macau, South Korea and Hong Kong, chasing elite money launderers. Already Q Branch had a two Mercadies lined up for South Korea and Japan at a hundred grand a pop. Hopefully they would get them back in one piece. What Thomas was going to lose at the casinos they would never see again, but he had to pass as a high roller. This was the type of mission James usually beat the other Double Os away from but he was focusing on another investigation.

When Tanner finished. Falkirk looked to the blonde Double O. “Mr Thomas, discretion is the word of the day. Understood!”

“M, I'm wounded. I'll be in and out without a fingerprint left behind,” the sapphire blue eyes sparkling in mischief.

“Fingerprints, Double O Six I'm not worried about. I will settle for no explosions and wreckage left behind!”

“You're just asking for the impossible now,” Thomas said and stood.
Falkirk wishing him good speed as he left. “WAIT!”

Falkirk gestured for Thomas to come back in and close the door. “You haven't heard anything about Miss Kew have you? Gossip? Gripes? Anything?”

The blond Double O just shook his head. “She's in Japan so much I don't see her often. Can't say I have much of a relationship with her.”

“Thank you, Double O Six,” Falkirk said and sat back.

What Thomas said was accurate, Double O One spent most of her time at Station-T in Japan or Station-H Hong Kong. Missions often issued over video link. It was unlikely for someone to know her personally at Vauxhall Cross.

Falkirk shook his head, trying to dispel the mystery for a time. He was knocking off early, so Muffy and her step daughter could have a good send off. Halfway on with his coat, Falkirk remembered there might be a goodbye hug. The one he got at the airport on Muffy's arrival he feared would pop his head right off with the crushing pressure.

Pulling on his coat fully. Falkirk straightened his back and marched out. Bracing himself to experience a hug from what felt like a couple of anaconda like arms.
“Relinquishing no Claim, I offer Arthur Pendragon in union,” Falkirk said.

The Arch bishop choked, his eyes bulging and glaring at Falkirk. Looking to the king, dressed in casual trousers and a blue shirt. “Your Majesty, a word! Please.”

G followed as the old man took him over to the side where there were some other ministers and advisors to the king.

For the rehearsal everyone was dressed normally. For Falkirk it was the brown three-piece suite he wore at MI6 that day.

Arthur, and Andrew still in his school uniform came up beside Falkirk. They sat on a pew to await the Bishop and G's return. Falkirk put his arm around the slender omega, this rehearsal at Westminster Abbey just another milestone in the journey. Falkirk started stroking the back of the other omega's neck gently. Andrew giving a bit of an oblivious glance to the young omega who cuddled him in turn. Not that the calming gesture helped much Arthur much, he bounced his legs and sent constant glances to G and the workers preparing the Abbey.

The bald fossil of an Alpha looked down his nose at them, Falkirk just knew he was the subject of the discussion. G was probably going through the same litany of recommendations and warnings again. And a new special warning given Falkirk's response to the line 'Who offers this omega?'

Unlike a traditional marriage 'Love' and 'Honour' were not mentioned. An Omega male was a commodity to produce children and unite packs, neither needing love or to be honoured traditionally. If the Ceremony had not developed to protect a Pack Alpha's interest there would have been no formal acknowledgement of the union or children produced. There were still risks, if G married the children of the marriage would be the heir and the children of the bond would be disinherited, like Daniel and Douglas had been. At least until some specially arranged legislation went through parliament but that was slow at the best of times, even with Falkirk and Mycroft twisting arms, metaphorically in Mycroft's case and less metaphorically in Falkirk's.

As in most cases and what the Arch Bishop had championed. G should take a wife and keep the Omega on the side. Which was the more common approach, like M, her husband and Villiers.

“NO!”

The voice of a king echoed around the long hall with its high vaulted ceilings. The choir stopped its practice, the men setting up the lights and cameras all stopped.

Falkirk snapped his attention to the Bishop being glared at by the king with G's annoyed voice still ringing out. The way the Bishop bishop's head was tilted back and his eyes darted about the rafters with a fearful look on his face, Falkirk wasn't to sure if the Bishop thought it was God who was speaking to him. Spiteful as he was, the old alpha didn't give an impression of being all there now a days.

Quickly and very deliberately the various groups around the abbey returned to what they were doing and the background noise grew to its previous level again.
G returned to his mark and glaring at the Arch Bishop. As good as an order, “Where were we!”

Falkirk stood and like the others returned to their positions. He gave a comforting brush to Arthur's back as the omega passed him to take his place one pace in front and two to the left of Falkirk. Beside Arthur was G then Corbett, G’s best man who was parallel to Falkirk on the far left.

Standing in front of the pair, The Arch bishop picked up from the vows. With a sour look on his face and glare to Falkirk, “Who does offers this Omega in union?”

Taking a diagonal step closer to Arthur Falkirk replied and stepped back. The Arch bishop glared at the lesser used response.

“Your Majesty, Do you accept the union?” The archbishop called.

“I do,” G responded and in doing so the Alpha also publicly acknowledging he was subordinate to a pack Alpha.

As tradition dictated Arthur himself got no say only his current Alpha and his new Alpha. He just stood there demurely while the Alphas made the decisions for him.

The Arch Bishop called for another run through from the beginning. Falkirk and Arthur returning to the door, so they could practice the timed walk down the aisle. This time the bishop was able to put on a show of public acceptance during the service and even managed a smile when Falkirk spoke his line. After the second run through was complete Falkirk walked back up the aisle to sit near the door.

“How sweet,” Selene whispered with a teasing tone and indicated back towards the alter.

G held Arthur close and was rubbing against his neck. The Omega looked like his knees were about to give out as he rubbed his cheek against the blond hair of his upcoming bond mate. The gesture between G and Arthur had gone beyond a familiar nuzzle and was quickly approaching a mounting session.

“Mr Pendragon!” Falkirk called, G wasn't the only one who could make his voice reverberate down the cavernous Abbey. The two sprang apart with guilty looks.

Arthur ducked his head and came down the aisle to Falkirk's side. “Sorry...”

Shaking his head. Falkirk indicating the Bishop who'd also been watching, “Not me, him. He may look feeble and grandfather like but he is no less dangerous than your godfather before I hobbled him.”

“What could he do?” Arthur asked off handedly as they walked to the car.

“If you stood before him a bound Omega. No mater to whom you were bound. I have no doubt he would denounce you and call it off,” Falkirk informed and Arthur's face dropped. “There is no end to the people who will want to tear you down. There will be hundreds of reasons some will be justified most will not. You must ensure the justified ones are as few as possible because they will be the hardest to defend against.”

Falkirk opened the door for Arthur and followed him into the car. Falkirk was giving some advice for the impending union, concentrating on lighter topics. He noticed while they talked, Andrew
wasn't so engrossed in his phone and the game he was playing. Falkirk smiled when Arthur started pop-corning, making that exited bouncy gesture omegas tended to do at times.

When Hudson opened the door. Falkirk took an exaggerated inhale and said to Arthur, “The scent of your Alpha and home is the most grounding and welcoming thing you will ever experience and you will never tire of it.”

Headed into the lounge Falkirk collapsing on the couch. He rested his head in James' lap. Andrew squeezing on too. Opening his arms for Rupert, the young Alpha settled beside Falkirk. Falkirk saw the wistful look Arthur had as he watched the family pile with James squashed under everyone.

“Soon,” Falkirk reminded the other omega, and shifted his legs. They weren't his Family by blood but Arthur took the invitation for some human contact.

--

Tanner knocked on Falkirk's office door and entered.

“M, I've had a request from building services. Double O Seven has set up camp in a conference room.”

“And they want me to evict him?” Falkirk said, standing up. He had something to discus with James anyway. “The little omega will go stand up to the big mean Alpha for them.”

Tanner gave a polite chuckle in response.

A couple floors below E-branch, Analytics, where data was processed, and leads investigated. Falkirk spotted a guard, the whole floor was guarded but one of the rooms had a dedicated sentry.

The guard smiled and gave a nod in greeting to M. Returning the gesture Falkirk breezed in finding James, with his reading glasses on! In MI6! That was a state secret unto itself. They were whipped off in a moment and held in James' lap under the desk.

“Oh, it's you? Did you bring coffee?”

“No, James,” Falkirk said glancing over what James was doing. He stopped at a board, Blofeld, at the top of a pyramid with many villains of legend to MI6. 'Dr. No', 'Goldfinger', a little woman that reminded Falkirk of Mrs Hudson who was a Spectre spy in the KGB. “James I think this is out of date.”

“If it's a tribute act we're dealing with, I need to know about the original,” James said with a smirk.

Falkirk shrugged and stepped up behind James, to lay his hands on the Alpha's shoulders. James leaned back into him and sighed in contentment. Falkirk's fingers skimmed over onto the white shirt, feeling the warmth beneath and taking a smell of his Alpha. Falkirk saw the twitching cheek of a suppressed smile.

“Isn't this sexual harassment, M?”

“No, not when you want it. Anyway, I've come to tell you, your personal leave has been granted.”
James opened his eyes and turned to look at Falkirk, “Leave?”

“It was requested by your omega.”

“That interfering little shit,” James purred. Falkirk tutted, “You think you have it bad. I’ve got this right insensitive dickhead of an Alpha.”

“We should run away together.”

“I quite agree,” Falkirk kissed the top of his Alpha's head. “We will take the yacht from Istanbul to Daniel's island. You'll go out a week before to see to everything.”

James swivelled the chair around. Looking up at Falkirk, “Is this a 'confronting your fears' sort of thing.”

Falkirk nodded. He reached down and plucked the dark framed glasses from James’ hands and settled them on the Alpha's face. Giving a kiss to the Alpha's nose when he was finished.

“Oh, and James. By request of Building Services, and direct order of M, you are formally evicted.”

“Well M, if you're going to be like that, I'll go back to my little shit of an Omega,” James turned away and got back to work.

“So, same time next week?” Falkirk called heading for the door.

“Bring coffee!”

“I'm not a waitress Double O Seven!”

--

“Papa, they gave me shorts,” Andrew’s arm poked out from behind the changing room curtain with the long off white shorts in his hand.

Arthur was the one to answer, “They're breeches.”

“But I'm not fencing?”

Over on the sofa in the corner, Keading and Darren were sniggering to themselves, while sipping champagne. Standing on a stool so the tailor could pin the morning suit's tailed coat. Falkirk said to his son, “In olden days people wore breeches all the time. Now it's just for special occasions.”

“Okay,” Andrew said with a note of caution in his voice. He pulled his arm back in. Andrew came out a moment later in just the knee length breeches and high collared shirt. “Why can't I dress like the rest of you?”

Arthur went down on one knee in front of Andrew, to fix the collar and shirt. “Because you are doing something special and you need to be dressed very fancy for it.”

“Okay,” Andrew said. While Arthur told Andrew about having to carry a cushion with the two rings on it, he brought over a black coat, not that you could see much of the base material it was covered in ornate embroidery of gold threading. Arthur then put the frilly lace cravat around
Andrew's neck. Then closed up the jacket.

The two then stood in front of the long mirror in the private fitting room of the tailor's.

Falkirk was waiting for it, but Andrew's anger didn't materialise. He watched his son straighten himself to to his full hight. Andrew twisted one way then the other, looking at himself in the mirror. Fascinated by the long tails of the short jacket that stopped just under his ribs, but the tails reached to his knees. He still needed the long socks and the buckled shoes.

“Aww, He's so pretty.” Darren cooed. Keading thumped the other omega in the arm and glared. Darren hissed at the omega beside him, “Bitch!”

“Not pretty!” Andrew demanded. His eyes shimmering with angry tears.

Falkirk saw his son's conflicting nature and emotions. Quickly he said, “There will be other pageboys dressed like you. Alphas included.”

“Rupert, Cody?” Andrew asked.

“Why not,” Arthur said. “They can all be pretty together.”

“I don't think Rupert will mind being pretty,” Falkirk mused, trying to play this coolly. While watching Andrew who had gone back to looking at himself in the mirror. He felt for his son. Andrew so didn't like the terms used for omegas, like being called pretty, but he also liked it in a way which led him to being conflicted. He wasn't the only one, Falkirk had seen other omegas who denied what they thought made them look weak to appear strong. He hoped it wouldn't stop Andrew being happy as he grew up, like Falkirk suspected it had made others.
Falkirk stood in Arthur's room. Both dressed in matching dark grey formal morning suits, cream waistcoats, cravats.

“Something old,” Falkirk confirmed looking over the antique cuff links G had gifted his future mate.

“Something new,” Falkirk said looking at the pocket watch he had bought the Omega for the day. The one James bought Falkirk in its place on Falkirk's waistcoat.

“Something borrowed,” Falkirk said pulling the diamond pin from his own cravat and sliding it into Arthur's.

“Something blue. You said you had covered,” Falkirk said and the other Omega blushed to the tips of his ears.


Falkirk rolled his eyes and told Arthur to wait a moment. Leaving the room, on the landing Falkirk could see the black haired woman pacing the foyer below. With a ready Hudson at his back, Falkirk came down the stairs.

“Miss Kew, today is not the best time.”

The woman rounded on him. “MY MOTHER THINKS I'M A TERRORIST OR SOMETHING!”

“Unfortunate,” Falkirk conceded. “However, interviewing your parents was necessary. I and the United Kingdom cannot allow an elite operative to act so out of character as you have done without explanation.”

“FINE!” Suzi Kew shouted waving her arms. “My Grandmother! Had a stroke! I was the only one there! She... she talked about a future, about me having a family. She died while mum and dad were still en route to Tokyo. While I waited for them, I started thinking about what she said! Happy!”

“That this is they way I found out, no. That I have an explanation, yes.” Falkirk said. He thought about reaching out to the slumping woman, but she was still rather angry even if she was deflated for the moment. She was a Double O in spirit, if not in fact now.

“I will end the investigation. I hope you find the happiness you seek,” Falkirk said. Even when he didn't think it would come to pass. Kew was a good agent and operative, not many could give up
the life she had, most carried on until the life they craved like a drug broke them.

Falkirk opened the door for Kew and she walked out without a word. Hudson relaxed, Falkirk's eyes then travelled up to Arthur on the landing. Suddenly the omega went green and raced into his room. Falkirk bounded up, he found the other omega in the bathroom. Arthur's nerves getting the better of him, and bringing up his breakfast. Falkirk just stood there rubbing Arthur's back until there was nothing left to come up.

When Arthur was upright again and brushing his teeth for the third time that day. Falkirk stood behind Arthur, meeting the omega's pale blue eyes in the mirror. He said, "I breath in, I calm my mind. I breath out, I calm my body. I am balanced. I am at peace."

Arthur breathed in through his nose and out through his mouth repeating in time with Falkirk the mantra Falkirk used to help his anxiety when flying. When ready, Arthur nodded and took a step towards the door. He stopped and held his tummy for a moment before deciding he wasn't going to be sick again.

Hudson gave the two Omegas a final brush down and fixed the simple gold pin Falkirk had given him earlier, now Arthur was using the diamond pin. He then gave Falkirk his top hat and gloves which matched his suit. Arthur went without a hat or gloves.

Arthur then took Falkirk's arm and they came out of the room. Down the stairs, they passed Brayan and Mrs Bridges at the entrance to the kitchen. Arthur gave them a smile as he passed.

On the street there were photographers, reporters and a crowd being held back by a police cordon. The car waiting at the bottom of the steps was not Falkirk's usual armoured Jaguar. It was a classic Rolls Royce with high clear windows so people could see in. A policeman in dress uniform and white gloves stood holding the door open for them.

Arthur clung to Falkirk with one arm, while waving to the crowd with the other. Falkirk started to repeat his mantra again when he saw the already pale omega getting paler by the second.

At the end of the road the crowds disappeared, that didn't help Arthur though. Getting closer to their destination, the crowds steadily grew more dense until they arrived at the steps of the Abbey. Stepping out of the car Arthur froze while Falkirk steadfastly ignored the vast hoard of people across the road, or he would do the same. Falkirk gave the other omega a nudge to get them moving. They climbed the steps, Arthur giving a hesitant look about him as he ducked his head.

It wasn't much better inside Westminster Abbey in Falkirk's opinion. However, Arthur's distressed anxious que intensified as he fixed his eyes on the Alpha at the far end of the aisle. The bond alpha very handsome in naval dress uniform.

Falkirk whispered, "Head up, back straight, and you can fool the world."

Moving down the aisle, their steps in unison and in time to the organ. Passing the congregation, Falkirk's eyes flicked to James, Mycroft, Selene and Keading, Darren and Mallory, Daniel and Alec and Mary beside her Grandson beaming at the grandeur of the occasion. Closer to the alter but still far from the front was G's father, the disgraced ex-monarch who lived in exile. He was only permitted back for the union ceremony and would be returning to Australia the day after.

In front of the Alter Falkirk looked to his son in a coat of gold embroidery jacket, breeches and long white stockings. Andrew stood beside the best man holding a small pillow with two rings
sitting on it.

Falkirk released his charge and took up their respective positions. Falkirk then glanced to the page boys off to the side, Rupert looked rather handsome with his black hair slicked back and in a royal blue tailed coat and breeches. Cody looked like he'd swallowed a fly and tugged at the collar with frilly cravat constantly.

Knowing this was the greatest moment of his career the Arch Bishop added ten minuets to his sermons. Falkirk almost missed his cue but gave the same response as in the rehearsals. G accepted, publicly he had to join Falkirk's pack for the union to commence, which caused a ripple of mutters in the congregation.

The Arch Bishop went on and on. Falkirk like many others zoned out. A deliberate cough was given by the bishop to wake up more than just Falkirk. Everyone was looking round to see what was going on.

“NOW,” the Arch Bishop said with a disapproving frown. “The rings!”

Andrew still had glazed eyes and was looking off to the side. G's best man nudged Andrew in the shoulder, he stumbled forward and looked around wondering what was going on. A ripple of laughter went through the abbey.

Falkirk glared at his son and jerked his head towards the Arch Bishop in silent instruction. Jumping into action, Andrew stepped forward and lifted the pillow for the Bishop to bless the rings.

Falkirk pulled out his watch and opened the dust cover of the hunter. His eyes bugging, they were a good fifty minutes behind schedule. With watch still in hand, Falkirk gave the posturing Arch Bishop a hard stare. The old man in the tall hat jumped when he met eyes with Falkirk. He couldn't look away and finished up the blessing of the rings very quickly.

After twenty minutes of a droning monotone, Andrew had zoned out again. He wasn't the only one, Arthur and G looked asleep on their feet. This time though the silence drew Andrew's attention, and he then took the pillow and held it out to the best man for him to take the smaller ring. He then brought the pillow to Falkirk for him to take the larger ring.

“With the exchanging of rings your bond is recognised before these witness and before God,” The Arch Bishop declared.

G took the ring from his best man then placed it on Arthur's left ring finger. Arthur then took the ring from Falkirk and placed it on the ring finger of G. It should have been Falkirk to offer the ring because an omega got no say in events, another break of tradition one of many.

Although not part of the official ceremony G leaned in and kissed his Omega then moved to give him a brief nuzzle.

Falkirk and the others stood back to let G and Arthur have a clear path down the aisle. Andrew tucking himself one side of Falkirk while Rupert came up to the the side to watch too.

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The great hall of Windsor castle, a vast vaulted room played host to the banquet. As the meal wound down, glasses of champagne were poured. A herald using a small gong tapped it several
times, “Your Majesties, lords, ladies and gentlemen, I pray silence for the Alpha of the bond.”

Falkirk stood. He was at the head table with four more going lengthwise down the hall. James was one side and Arthur the other. The rest of the pack were towards the head of a table to the far left.

When silence fell. Falkirk clasped his hands behind him, deciding he would look at no one to get through this.

“Being a man of deed, I have not honed the talent of speeches so this I can promise, this will be brief and to the point,” that got some polite chuckles. “Arthur, I have known you for a little over a year, and have welcomed you into my pack for just under a year now. His majesty I met on an official visit to MI6, a right little brat of fifteen years that needed knocked back more than once. Since meeting you, both of you, you have both grown so much. Remember Arthur, you are your own person even when bound to an alpha. G, I know you are able to be gentle, patient and compassionate so don't be the little brat I first met just because you have a bound omega, or so help me god there won't be a force strong enough to stop me from skelpin’ you. For I am and always will be Arthur's champion, the one to stand up to his Bound Alpha when he himself cannot.”

“Yes, M,” the king responded ducking his head. Arthur took his hand in comfort.

“Well this brings me almost to the end,” Falkirk continued. “The second last part. It is my privilege to confirm a change of the law. From this day forth, the line of succession will be based on order of birth. No matter if the child is born to a bound omega or a wife, it will be the first born who is first in line, this also excludes ranking based on sex or gender,” there were some annoyed grumbling from some sections of the grand room. “Boy or girl, alpha, beta or omega, the first born will be the first in line!”

One women near the rear of the room stormed to her feet and marched out. With poise and arrogance that indicated she was an Alpha, even when having a temper tantrum. A couple more following right after.

“My final words are for Arthur and G,” Falkirk looked to the two beside him. “I wish you luck for the hours that become days, the weeks that blend into months and the years that merge into decades. Treat each other with respect, let nothing come between you for you are a team, a bonded unit that must face the world as one. TO HIS MAJESTY AND ARTHUR!”

The guests raised their glasses. The best man, Corbett was called on next by the herald. The young man gave a few embarrassing anecdotes and wished G luck. Then it was G's turn, he stood and took the sated Arthur's hand as he spoke to the omega.

“I love you, from the the first time we met I knew it. From every time we met after it was confirmed,” Arthur swiped at his eyes while gazing up at the alpha. “I have been told many times to act traditionally. Take a wife and keep you as a bound omega. I say no. I say, you are my equal. I love you as an equal. You will be King consort...”

“Disgrace!”

Falkirk whipped his head towards the sound of the harsh whisper. He wasn't sure who at the table to the left had spoken, although he would bet on the white haired guy with a face as red as a rose. When he looked back, he noticed G had a line of tension at his eyes. Arthur it seemed hadn't noticed though. G finished by leaning down and kissing his mate and calling, “To my mate, Arthur King consort, HIS MAJESTY!”
Falkirk like most of the other guests raised their glasses and saluted Arthur while calling your Majesty.

From then the guests followed G and Arthur through to the ballroom. The couple had their first dance to the string quintet. Slowly the dance floor filled. James interlacing his fingers with Falkirk's to pull him out too.

Looking into the gently smiling face of his mate. Falkirk placed his hand on James' shoulder while the alpha put his on the omega's waist. With their other hands clasped they stepped in time to the music, stating with a simple box step and moved gently around the dance floor.

As they danced Falkirk got glimpses of people he knew. Selene and Keading were dancing. It still took Falkirk by surprise when he saw Selene in a dress, a long sapphire number. She looked good, but a bit uncomfortable preferring leathers or combat style clothing. Daniel and Alec, like Sherlock and John turned a few heads, to most two men when one wasn't an omega should be desecrate. That reminded Falkirk to find out who spoke out of turn, because they had 'a talk' coming.

Falkirk's heart clenched when he saw Andrew standing at the side, Cody and Yulian were near him but too oblivious to ask him to dance. Rupert was at the edge with Michelle, the girl in a pink dress and the two just spun. Luke was still a bit young, so with Rosie was under Miss Marple's care so John and Sherlock could be here.

James chuckled, and he turned so Falkirk could see. Lestrade stepped on his wife's toes often, and once they turned the wrong way and bumped into another couple. Mycroft appeared in Falkirk's eyeline and made a beckoning gesture.

Reluctantly Falkirk pulled away from James. He and James crossed the dance floor to Mycroft and silently the three headed out of the room. Mycroft opened a door in the long corridor. A large library contained the previous king standing at the fireplace. The old man with white hair and very red face was at the table in the centrer.

“His Grace, the Duke of Westminster,” Mycroft gestured to the fat alpha.

“Mr Disgusting....” Falkirk put on a fake look of remorse, “Oh, so sorry, not mister, Duke Disgusting.”

“A bitch, king consort! Able to bear the first in line!” The duke pointed a sausage like finger at Falkirk, “I see your hand in all this.”

“OF COURSE YOU DO!” Falkirk roared. Looking to Mycroft and the half dozen others, Falkirk asked, “Have I been trying to hide I've pushed for a change in the law?”

Getting a chorus of nos in answer. Falkirk looked at the old man, one of the richest in the land. The man who owned most of London.

Getting close, so the alpha would notice he didn't have a que of fear when confronting an alpha. Falkirk looked down on the slightly shorter man, he so liked being tall for an omega.

“You have gained my notice, that's either very good or very bad. Can you tell to which category you fall, your grace?” The alpha just glowered at him. Falkirk ordered, “Your night is over.”
Two of the alphas standing to the side of the library came over, grabbed the duke under and arm each and escorted him out whether he wanted to go or not.

G's father, still standing by the fire mused, “I had thought M, your threats to be a thing of legend?”

With a sideways glance to Mycroft Falkirk answered, “I prefer to know who I'm going up against, so I have something ready. I will have something ready the next time I meet the duke mark my words.”

Falkirk headed for the door and with James returned to the ballroom. The moment he was through the door, Darren and Keading were on him, both grinning from ear to ear. Keading beat the other omega to say, “Guess who's missing.”

“'I'll g' ya a clue,” Darren said with a mischievous twinkle in his hazel eyes. “They're blond, young and haven't been allowed ta touch for months.”

Falkirk laughed and headed out into the dance floor with James again. As they embraced and started to move as one, Falkirk caught a glimpse of two page boys, one in golden embroidered coat, the other in Royal blue. Rupert giving Andrew a dance, Rupert even letting Andrew lead.
Falkirk's skin prickled they moment they entered the cooler cave network. James, Alec and Selene were further up the winding path, followed by the kids. While Keading walked beside him bringing up the rear.

Falkirk glanced to the omega beside him, and sucked in his tummy. He still didn't know how Keading could remain so toned after two kids, but he was... perfect. A flat tummy, compared to the loose sag Falkirk had never been able to get rid off. Andrew and a work life where he sat and read, sat and ate, sat while having meetings, sat and did research, sat and hacked, and generally did most of his tasks while sitting wasn't conducive to a toned pert little body. With everyone dressed in tight swimwear there was nowhere to hide it.

"You suspended the hearings?" Keading whispered.

Falkirk nodded. "There's been some suspect testimony."

"Francis Urquhart?"

Falkirk heard the accusation. He caught the other omega's hand and pulled Keading to a stop, so there was a bit more space between them and the others. When they could speak a little more privately Falkirk said, "Yes I stopped the proceedings because they were naming Francis Urquhart."

"He was your friend."

"In a way, yes. I could only be friends with him because I was careful, like a man who handles cobras or rattlesnakes has to be careful. As warped as it was Francis Urquhart had a strict set of ethics. I think he was a murderer. I know he was a cruel manipulator, a blackmailer with no empathy or remorse. He was however loyal to his wife. His affair with Mattie Storin was a means to the end. To ensure her loyalty he got Miss Storin to love him, and I'm sure Francis loved her in his own way. Like a master loves a pet... he was not a good man, he was however predictable,” Falkirk sighed and rubbed his eyes, having conflicting emotions of the old Alpha. He saw elements of himself, Sherlock and Mycroft in Francis Urquhart. “Holding someone down as he raped them was not his style in anyway shape or form. This might not be easily understood he would find the act... improper. If he wanted to have sex or have power over someone he would make them want him rather than use outright force.”

Keading nodded unable to look Falkirk in the eye. Putting his arm around Keading Falkirk started them walking again. Whispering, "You have my word, the truth will come out. In this case I think the truth will be some people will be lying for notoriety or the compensation scheme that has been talked about. I don't want their poison to be a way to destroy the credibility of the inquiry.”
Keading nodded. Glancing up at Falkirk, “I do trust you.”

“You were worried I was protecting a friend, I get that. I'll tell you this. While I would go full psycho for James, Andrew, Rupert, Cody.... you. Francis is not in that place of my heart.”

Keading gave a weak smile. Falkirk added, “You're family.”

“WOULD YOU TWO STOP GABBING!” James shouted from the ledge above them.

Keading picked up the pace, pulling Falkirk along behind him up the winding path. They came out of the cave at cliff top. Alec and Selene were already at the alcove in the wall by the large dome shaped observatory.

Alec was standing on the ledge, “I'm going first. Remember, don't lose your shorts!”

“It happened once!” Keading shouted back, a touch of a whine in his voice while everyone else chuckled.

Alec stood proud. Another one with a flat tummy, more muscular than Keading. Sun-kissed skin and twinkling blue eyes. Wearing long skin tight shorts. He turned and with arms outstretched jumped.

The Kids rushed forward to see his dive. A splash sounded a moment later. Selene in her black one piece parted the kids, and just lunged through the alcove. Another splash came a moment later.

James stepped up onto the ledge, “Who wants to go first.”

Cody, Andrew and Yulian shoved each other to be first. James played favourites and called Andrew up. He spoke quietly with Andrew a moment then let him dive. The last of the kids, Rupert. He was a bit embarrassed by his shorts, like James' they were a bit short and he tugged at the hems. But when it came time to dive he went easily and gracefully.

James stood straight. Falkirk blushed at the proud image his alpha presented. He was in rather short shorts, a sexy sky blue pair that clung to his hips like a second skin.

“Stop ogling and get up here,” James teased.

With a bit of a blush Falkirk took his Alpha's hand to step up onto the ledge of the alcove cut into the cliff wall. The harbour cove stretched out before him, not that it was clear without his glasses. The yacht bobbed gently at the dock. Some moving dark blobs on the beach on the far side of the cove he assumed to be Daniel with Michelle and Luke. The clear water of the harbour was dotted with four boys, one man and one woman. All looking at him.

“You want a push,” James purred.

Falkirk nodded. A firm hand cupped his arse and over Falkirk went. The wind rushed passed, the water getting closer and closer. Falkirk managed to straighten his arms and he hit the water. He made sure not to take a breath on impact. It still took him by surprise how firm water was when you hit it going fast enough.

Kicking and pulling with his arms, Falkirk broke the surface. Whipping his head to get the hair out of his eyes.
“You did it! That was cool,” Andrew called, coming up to him. Falkirk splashed him, “I do the exciting stuff too.”

“Uncle Keading!” Andrew's eyes going up to the omega about to jump.

Treading water, Falkirk looked up. Keading had stepped up, James had given him some space. With Andrew beside him they watched Keading's dive, with a twist and somersault before he hit the water with barely a splash.

“That was awesome,” Andrew said with big eyes.

“Yes it was,” Falkirk said.

Keading broke the surface and was surrounded by Selene and Cody. They cleared the landing area for James who did a basic dive, even if he looked great doing it.

Andrew ducked under the water and swam under it to reach James. Falkirk looked to the side, where the sound of splashing water drew his attention. Rupert approaching him using a crawl.

Rupert swept his long black hair out of his dark eyes. Falkirk asked, “How you doing?”

“Okay,” the boy answered quietly. Treading water beside Falkirk.

Andrew and Yulian had spoken of their anxiety of returning. Falkirk wondered if this was the moment Rupert would express his, but he just stayed close. Taking the initiative Falkirk spoke.

“It's okay to be scared. The most difficult thing is not letting that fear change you,” Falkirk said.

“I figured,” Rupert said quietly. “It's... selfish...”

Falkirk reached out to tip Rupert's chin up so they were looking at each other. “Talking helps.”

Barely a whisper, “I came so close to losing another family.”

It was awkward to give a hug while not drowning, but Falkirk tried.

“You didn't lose us,” Falkirk reminded. “And you're a big brother now, with more experience than Andrew. He needs you more than he realises.”

Rupert gave a nod, Falkirk suspecting emotion was building inside his adopted son. So hugged him tighter.

A loud splash sounded behind them, then warm wet arms came round them both. James looked from one to the other with a tender smile on his face. Not one to be left out, Andrew squirmed between Falkirk and Rupert. As a knot they sank, so separated and broke the surface again.

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All in all, the two weeks away had gone well. It had been tough for everyone to go back and Cody had asked some awkward questions, his curiosity about the attack he wasn't there to see had made him a bit insensitive. But he had also been the one without fear so dragged the other kids out and
about. The kids coming back at the end of the days with the expected scrapes and bruises they积
culated when outside of parental supervision.

Falkirk had a sun-kissed glow to him as he entered E-Branch. His post holiday relaxed state
vanishing the second he saw the area outside his office, one Double O, one Chief of Staff and one
Head of Medical, all waiting for him. They all looked at him like a pack of predators scenting prey.
What was worse was the devilish smirk Darren wore, he was sitting in the centre of the chaos and
enjoying it far too much.

With back straight, Falkirk breezed passed the group and entered his office. Managing a good
morning, and pointedly closing the door before Tanner could follow him in. It was a signal that
Falkirk wanted a few moments before he had to deal with anything.

Taking his time removing his coat and hanging it in his private bathroom. Then settling in at his
desk. He had waisted as much time as was polite. Pressing the intercom button, “Darren, the first
guest please.”

Syed Masood, 004 entered first. The handsome Pakistani Alpha took the seat when invited to.
Falkirk braced when from his inside pocket Masood pulled out an envelope. Taking it, Falkirk
suspected what he would find inside and wasn't wrong.

“I know the problem you had with Suzie,” Masood said. “Christian, you know my partner, his
Theatre company has been working with disadvantage kids. He’s been talking about orphans for a
few months now, gearing up to ask me about adopting. I don't think assassin will go down well
on the application form.”

Falkirk sat back. “Sounds nice. Have you thought about what you're going to do?”

Shaking his head, Masood said, “Don't know... Leaving School with nothing, joining the SAS,
MI6, Double O, what does that qualify me for? I suppose I'll have to find out.”

“Well,” Falkirk hesitated, most turned their backs completely on MI6. He offered, “If there's
something I can do, you need only tell me. I cannot under emphasise the good you have done for
this country and your exemplarily conduct. I must say on a personal note it has been and honour
and privilege working with you. I meant what I said, you need only tell me and any aid I can give
in your new life you will have. I wish you the best of luck for your endeavours to come.”

The Double O acknowledged with a quiet M. Falkirk gave a soft smile, “I'm glad our parting is on
better terms than Miss Kew's. I do understand when people desire to be more than they are.”

Falkirk stood and offered his hand which the Double O shook. Falkirk wished Masood well again
as the Alpha left. Sitting down, Falkirk called in the next guest. Tanner and Dean almost wedging
themselves in the doorway to be the first in.

“So?” Falkirk snapped. To remind them M's patience was not limitless.

“Double O candidates for 001,” Tanner put down a stack of personnel files. Taking a breath and
looking to the woman nearer the door, “M, Dr Dean has found something in the Autopsy of Suzie
Kew's grandmother. Mrs Kew was given I high dose of a drug likely to cause a stroke.”

“It wasn't on her chart, nor was there a medical reason for her to be prescribed it in the first place,”
Dr Dean said. Looking to M she said, “We are at least looking at a case of medical negligence,
maybe Mrs Kew mistakenly received the medication for a different patient. I doubt it though given the dose and the warning signs that had to be missed, it's my opinion we're looking at a deliberate act. Murder.”

Falkirk rubbed his eyes. “Tanner, what is the chances this in a coincidence?”

“Quite high, M. Murdering Kew's grandmother, to get her to resign! How would the murderer assure the grandmother's last words were poignant enough to effect Kew. Mrs Kew could have died before speaking to Double O One. Mrs Kew might not have been able to talk at all. Too many chances for this to be a plan to get Double O One to resign.”

Falkirk could think of one way round those problems, have someone like a quiet caring nurse whisper in Suzie Kew's ear while her grandmother was dying. Looked to Dr Dean. The Alpha woman shrugged, “I don't know M, the murder might have nothing to do with Kew but I don't doubt it was murder. I wanted your advice before alerting the Japanese authorities to my findings.”

Falkirk opened the top file of the Double O candidates. “I will inform my Japanese counterpart we are investigating Mrs Kew's murder. Have this Eugene Choi conduct the investigation. Find the person who administered these drugs. Find out if it was murder for their own motives or an assassination.”

Both acknowledged. Dr Dean looking vindicated and set a smirk to Tanner. Falkirk however was looking through the window to Masood.

“Dr Dean, you're dismissed. Please send Mr Masood back in on your way out.” Falkirk looked to Tanner, “Remain a moment.”

The alpha woman exited and soon Masood returned.

“I can't sugar coat this, Double O Four,” Falkirk said indicating the chair the retiring Double O had vacated not even five minutes ago. “We've had some concerning news to do with Double O One. Is there any chance someone is manipulating you?”

“Just Christian, can't resist his smile. But he's no agent.”

“We would like to make some subtle enquiries,” Falkirk said. “We will try to be desecrate.”

“Into Christian?”

“No, I don't think so. I looked into him a few years ago,” Falkirk said. “We're being paranoid but we're paid to be paranoid.”

“I suppose,” Masood said. Not too happy about it but accepting. “Please, be discrete.”

Falkirk assured the Double O they would be. When Masood left, Tanner looked Falkirk and in that careful voice said, “M, are you reading something into this?”

“Do you remember Magnussen? One of his most dangerous skills was indirect control. Masood listens to Christian. Christian listens to...? Who? Kew listened to her Grandmother. Did someone whisper in Mrs Kew's ear? Or a nurse's? Or a Doctor's? I have a bad feeling Tanner, I would prefer to do something and be proven wrong than do nothing and be proven right.”
Tanner nodded. Holding the file in his hand, “I'll issue Mr Choi the mission brief. And start compiling any Double O candidates with middle eastern experience.”

“Not strictly necessary, Mr Dawes has proven himself capable.”

Tanner pointed to the pile of folders on Falkirk’s desk, “Well M, there are a few in there that might suffice. Closer to the bottom. They have more generalised experience.”

“Then I better get reading. And tell me when you are contacting Mr Choi, I want to listen in.”

Tanner acknowledged and headed out.
Arriving back at E-Branch from a meeting with his boss, the Foreign Secretary. Darren smirked at him, “You've got a three o'clock appointment with Double O Seven. Conference room.”

Falkirk nodded and took his other messages. Including the actual, formal and through-the-proper-channels request for a meeting from Double O Seven. For a few hours Falkirk worked, then had lunch and at three he stood. Coming out of his office he saw Daniel arriving and Tanner leaving his own office. All heading for the conference room.

Falkirk entered the long room and sat at the head of the table, with Daniel to his right and Tanner to his left. At the far end, James was looming over one of the poor little IT guys. The Techie nodded to James, eventually.

“Welcome,” James started formally while images started appearing on the wall behind him. He came up to the top end of the table where he placed down three 'Eyes Only' folders. “As you know, since I found the gun with the SPECTRE icon I have been investigating.”

“You found? Wasn't it the janitor?” Daniel raised a sceptical eyebrow.

Falkirk flipped open the folder and started reading the background material. While glancing to James who was doing what Falkirk considered a 'weatherman routine' that consisted of standing in front of a screen and pointing to things while speaking. Tanner was an expert at it, James was quite good too.

“My next step is this man. Herman Klaus,” James said ignoring Daniel while pointing to a blond man on screen, dressed in a good suit, getting into a car and with a neon sign in the background written in Chinese characters. “He needs to be eliminated.”

“Why?” Daniel asked.

James had the IT guy zoom in on the hand braced on the limo's door and the ring on the target's right hand. “We have been seeing these rings appearing on persons of interest all over the world. We want to see if someone is uniting these previously independent operations. I believe these to be SPECTRE signet rings issued to the upper most echelon of the organisation.”

Tanner said, “If you assassinate him, this 'SPECTRE' will be tipped off to MI6's investigation.”

James gave a charming smile, “That's why I picked Klaus. There's seven separate contracts for his life... one by his wife, another by his mistress. They really hate him. I've made contact posing as a
freelance hit-man. I just need M's approval.”

Daniel scratched his beard and leaned back in his chair, “Well James, that was concise logical and reasoned.”

“M,” Tanner said. “I see the merits of this operation.”

“I must agree,” Falkirk said looking at his Alpha. “I must ask a question though. Who are you and what have you done with James Bond?”

James scowled at him while Daniel laughed and Tanner gave a polite smile at his boss' joke. Falkirk then mused, “I would prefer someone less well known than you going, and we have two empty Double O spots that need filled. But your operation is approved Double O Seven.”

“With me going?” James demanded.

Falkirk nodded.

“M,” James acknowledged.

“Good speed, Double O Seven,” Falkirk stood and left. Tanner following him while Daniel, James' handler remained to discuss the mission to Hong Kong in more specific terms.

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Arriving home, knowing James was going to be late. Like every day, Hudson opened the door for him just as Falkirk reached the top step. He missed the days when Keading looked after the kids here, but they were all growing up and didn't need the constant supervision they once did. So there was no one to meet him but the butler.

“Sir,” Hudson said and looked to Falkirk's library.

Going through, he found a guest. Sitting in an open nest of Falkirk's fur throw, surrounded by cushions and with two cats in his lap, Arthur. With the wedding, holiday, it had been about four weeks since he saw the other omega.

“Sorry for intruding,” Arthur said quietly.

“You're not,” Falkirk assured. Getting closer he scented the ques. Arthur's scent had changed, A note that indicated he was bound, and with G's stronger Alpha scent covering him. There was stress and fatigue too.

Falkirk sat in the open nest with the other omega and hugged him gently. “I'm honoured in fact. You feel this is your home.”


“But,” Falkirk said softly. “Alphas, their IQ half just after bonding and go to about zero around a heat. I swear, when another alpha was around James turned into a caveman. Tugging at me, pulling me one way then the other, growling like a bear. Alec was the only one he let close. He was the only one James left me alone with too.”
Arthur pulled up a sleeve to look at some of the bruises. It was common for Alphas to keep newly bound omegas close and they forgot about their strength.

“Does G know where you are?” Falkirk asked. So long as G knew his Omega had gone home he would be controlled. If Arthur just vanished, G could go quite wild.

Nodding, Arthur added, “Hudson gave him the bum's rush. I heard him shouting a while ago, telling G to take Andrew and Rupert for an ice cream. I even heard his swearing... 'Yr Majesty, you've kindly bugerrr off!'”

They chuckled, Falkirk mostly at how ell Arthur could roll his Rs. G must have been a real nuisance if Hudson was reduced to swearing. Taking the kids out was a good idea to focus and distract the Alpha for a while.

“G will learn to control his territorial instincts. At the moment he's going on a hormone roller-coaster that tells him to protect his mate, and defend you from all the other alphas in the world.”

Arthur just nodded against Falkirk's chest. Falkirk pulled out his phone and dialled G's number.

“Can I come back!” Demanded the posh voice that answered.

“No. You can take the kids for Pizza and a movie. You're not to be back before eight.”

“But-”

Falkirk hung up. He'd given his order and expected to be obeyed.

Arthur curled up with his head resting on Falkirk's lap. Gently Falkirk started stroking his fingers through the long blond strand of hair. He had a tender smile when he brushed some locks behind Arthur's ear and exposed the livid bruise on the side of the omega's neck. Falkirk touched his own neck, pushing his finger under the collar of his shirt. He felt the tenderness of his own bond mark, that James had renewed that morning. He remembered Keading when they were on holiday, Selene liked to mark his left side. Where G and James went for the right. It was barbaric but getting his neck mauled did give him a rush and it reminded him he had an alpha even when James was apart from him.

Falkirk whispered, “Are you staying tonight?”

Arthur shook his head. “Just needed a bit of space.”

They had take away too, Hudson brought the bags in, and one fork. Arthur used the supplied chopsticks. They ate right out of the foil containers. Arthur sat up to eat, but stayed pressed to Falkirk. The Chinese food going down well.

Hudson knocked the door, and stuck his head in, “His Majesty has returned.”

Falkirk patted Arthur and told him to stay. He then got up and went to the lounge, closing the library door behind him. At the threshold, he saw G trying to engage in the conversation about the latest Avengers movie with Andrew. The young Alpha's heart wasn't into it though.

“You two better get to your homework,” Falkirk said to announce his presence and send Andrew and Rupert out without having to tell them outright to go. Both boys thanked G before going.
The young man looked to Falkirk. His baby blue eyes worried. “Am I in trouble?”

Falkirk shook his head and sat down beside G. He took G's hands, “I know... well I don't I'm not an Alpha. I know what it's like from Arthur's perspective. A new bond can be overwhelming. If you'll listen to your Alpha, force yourself to leave Arthur's presence for a while each day, just a couple of hours is enough.”

“This feels so bad,” G whined. “I want to run through there, breaking down the door and drag Arthur away. I tried to beat that butler to a bloody pulp.”

Falkirk chuckled. “Hudson's tougher than he looks. As your bond matures you'll be able to control yourself more easily. For now you have to work at that control. Stop trying to beat up any Alphas. Give Arthur some space, he's not going to run off or be stolen away.”

G nodded and looked down. Falkirk said, “Now, slowly stand up. Slowly walk to the library. Slowly enter. Offer Arthur your hand and hold his gently! Walk with him, slowly. Open the car door for him, and let him get in on his own. Then take him home. Gently, slowly, careful, that is the mantra for your interactions with him.”

“Yes, M.”

“Good. I so don't want to set James on you. Because he didn't really start to check his behaviour until he went too far and Daniel beat seven shades of shit out of him for me.”

G's eyes wet huge in terror. The young man nodded frantically, “I'll try... I'll do it. Gently! Carefully! Slowly!”

“Good,” Falkirk jerked his head in dismissal. He watched the young man stand, he took two quick steps before slowing himself down. Falkirk stood too and watched G enter the library. A moment or two later, with hands clasped G and Arthur passed through the foyer. At the door Falkirk wished them well and watched them get into the silver Range Lover G drove. It was clear G was trying to marshal his instincts, he was quite stiff in his movements.

Hearing some steps coming from the side corridor, then feeling a presence at his back and such a comforting scent wash over him. The sound of mastication by his ear was not so comforting. James swallowed, “What's up with them?”

The car pulled away. Falkirk closed the door and turned to his Alpha, with a plate in one hand and fork in the other. Eating the left over Chinese take-away.

“Just the ups and downs of a new bond,” Falkirk pushing the arm with the plate to the side so he could lean in and kiss James' cheek.
Hay guys, I'm back. Sorry. This was meant to be out Monday/Tuesday but I ended up having to drop everything and drive up north on Sunday. Knowing I wouldn't have much time I didn't take my laptop or anything. And only got back today. Oh well, thanks for your patience and hope you enjoy.

“...Thank you, Mr Choi.” Tanner said looking at his screen, showing the operative of Korean heritage dressed in bespoke grey suite.

“Wait,” came the voice from the speakers either side of the desktop computer's monitor. “I heard Frederick Wardner got Double O One.”

“Yes, he did,” Tanner answered. Careful not to look at M sitting over by the door where he couldn't be seen during the video call.

Falkirk again just sat out of the way to listen to the conversation going on while reading over the report.

“So while I was playing 'P.C. Plod' searching for some deranged nurse bumping off little old ladies, someone else got my promotion!”

“M's decision was not taken lightly,” Tanner said with a deeper tone of warning in his voice. “Wardner is known to M, and since joining MI6 his conduct has been exemplary.”

“What about me? I served my time. Did my duty. I deserved that promotion, you said so yourself.”


“I want to speak to him.”

“An Operative, doesn't make that sort of demand of M,” Tanner tensed as M came round to stand behind him. With a quick tap of the keys, M had the camera switching to a wider angle view so he could be seen by the operative on the other side of the world.

Falkirk knew how these things worked. He didn't look to the image of the handsome Asian Alpha. He fixed his stare on the lens of the small camera clipped to the top of the monitor.

“Mr Choi,” M said without emotion. Only able to see the screen in his peripheral vision because he wanted to make sure his own image appeared to be looking directly to at the operative, and not doing that off the the side look you got in most video calls when people looked at the screen instead of the camera.

“Be under no illusion Mr. Choi. My reputation for omnipresence may be exaggerated but not completely unearned. Whether I choose to let you know I'm looking over your shoulder, is my
decision and my decision alone to make. Now! Is your investigation complete?”

The Operative's handsome face hadn't even flinch at M's appearance, he would be a good poker player. “Yes, M. It's complete.”

Falkirk untucked the folder from under his arm and opened it, “In your interrogation of Mr Liwanag, you got him to admit to the serial murders of ten residents of the care home where he worked. Excellent work, Mr Choi. I did notice in the transcript he mentioned someone, a 'Lee', a 'Very pretty girl', who was 'like, so in to me.'. Where is she?”

The eyes above a strong cheekbone winced. The operative said, “Still working at the care home?”

“There we have the problem, Mr Choi. If Miss Lee truly existed I would know everything about her by now,” M said coolly.

“Liwanag was lying?”

The operative saw Tanner close his eyes and brace. The looming M staring straight at him had a neutral look that made the hairs at the back of his neck stand.

“Was Liwanag lying?” Falkirk said. “I found a name, ID Number, accreditations and employment history in the care home's electronic records. Yet in all other government databases, before five mounts ago, Miss Lee did not exist. We have reached the limit of my omnipresence so I need a good little operative to run around a city, physically investigate and maybe if he's a very good operative and impresses me a lot, gets to shoots them too.”

“I'll find her, M.”

“I would appreciate it,” Falkirk gave another quick tap of Tanner's keyboard to disconnect the video chat. Looking to Tanner, “He seems fun.”

“Eugene and I are friendly, he is normally more professional.”

“Professional,” Falkirk scoffed while heading for the doors. “I've not met a single Double O who isn't a prima-donna.”

Exiting Tanner's office. At the front of E-Branch, where Falkirk's office was Thomas was talking to Darren while waiting. Reaching them, Falkirk said, “Darren, can you arrange a meeting with Suzie Kew and her parents. It's time they're informed of our findings. I want to be the one to go to them, not the other way round.”

Darren sobered from whatever light hearted gossip he and the Double O had been talking about. “Sure, I'll get on it. He's y'r next appointment.”

“Ah, yes, Mr Thomas.” Falkirk said with his patented M tone of world weary exasperation. The Double O following him into his office. “So, Double O Six I must ask...WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU THINKING WHEN YOU DECIDED TO STEAL AN F-35B.”

With a casual shrug, “It was only an air show demonstration model. Not even armed.”

“IT DIDN'T NEED TO BE ARMED. YOU EJECTED AND LET IT CRASH INTO A HIGHWAY!”
“No not the highway, the truck. Safely neutralizing the mobile bioweapons lab I might add. I risk assessed the situation and decided a fireball was the safest way to deal with the threat.”

“Risk assessed!” Falkirk was genuinely stunned. “Risk assessed? You mean you didn't say to yourself: 'Humm? There's a cool, expensive fighter jet. I wonder if I could knick it and get away with giving M some tall tale?' then jumping in, your pretty baby blues just lighting up, 'Oh, this baby has vertical take off. That's so cool!' Whoosh! You're up in the air. 'Oh-oh, no guns. Oh well the divine wind cometh!' Boom!”

Shaking his head, Thomas said, “Not once was my personal enjoyment considered.”

“The only reason I am being so nice,” Falkirk pointing a threatening finger at the unrepentant Double O, “No one recognised you! So I've not had a bill from Lockheed Martin, the air show, or had to apologise to the Saudi authorities.”

A sharp rap at the door made Falkirk look away from the smirking Double O. Alec pushed open the door and stuck his head in, “Just a head's up M. A request from James, I've to extract the Bon... A person of interest. I'm off to Hong Kong.”

Despite the anger of moments before, genuine cold anger entered Falkirk's voice when he spoke.

“Don't worry Alec. Double O Six will be more than happy to take over your Training and Assessment duties while away.”

“Delighted to,” Thomas said ducking his head a bit. Thomas and Alec exchanged a glance. The atmosphere rather tense all of a sudden. Alec closed the door and ran through E-Branch.

“M?” Thomas said carefully. “You okay?”

“Fine. Dismissed!”

Thomas looked at his watch. “These things usually take a bit longer.”

“I'm not in the mood to shout any more. Go!” Falkirk jerked his head for the operative to go. Falkirk turned to his computer, labelling Thomas' operation to thwart the manufacture of bioweapons as Accomplished. Not noticing the operative stop at Darren's desk or after Thomas left Darren getting up and coming back with a tray.

Only as Falkirk's door open did he look up. Noticing his teapot and bone china cup, while beside it was Darren's mug of milky tea made by putting the bag in the mug.

“I'm alright,” Falkirk said. Darren put down the tray, took his own mug and sat. Just sat there with a look on his face like he was willing to wait forever. Falkirk stalled by poring out his own tea and sitting back. “I like to pretend it doesn't happen. It's the only way I can cope.”

“Doesn't help when dumb gits say Bond-Girl to your face.”

“Sometimes I really want to punch you.”

Darren smirked wide, “Go ahead. You owe me one.”
“Only one?” Falkirk tried to tease back. “I just wish I could have all of James. But that's not him, he's still the lone wolf at heart. I see it, the strain in his eyes when he's still too long.”

“He's an Alpha that means he's a self centred dickhead,” Darren said. “Take your friend's advice, blow off work, find the nearest cocktail bar and with a few more friends get waisted on drinks that look like toxic waist and taste like petrol mixed with fruit juice.”

Darren thought about it. “In fact that's what is going to happen. I'll tell Selene and Gareth they're babysitting. You, me, Kead... oh and Phily-boy.”

“Feels like ages since I've seen him.” Falkirk said, sitting back. It had been a while since he saw Darren's cousin. “How is he?”

“You can ask him y'rself tonight,” Darren stood. Picking up the tray he said, “You can knock off after speaking the the Kews. They're expecting you at three.”

Falkirk looked at the clock. He had a few hours before he had to go.

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Falkirk's car pulled to a stop at an older detached house in Kent. One of the post war ones, with dull pebble-dash exterior, a sweeping roof gave it a lopsided appearance at the front. The front garden was done in grey slate chips with a tall ornamental piece of white stone in the centre.

Meeting an attaché from the Japanese embassy under the low eave that swept up to the apex of the two story building. Falkirk rang the bell. A moment later the door was opened by a short round faced beta woman.

“Suzi,” Falkirk greeted stiffly.

“Sir Thomas,” she returned just as stiffly and indicated the first door on the right.

Falkirk entered the living/dinning area that stretched the depth of the house. A short bald man and little woman with shoulder length white hair waited to greet them in the simply decorated room. Falkirk had to be careful to avoid the pleasant small talk, and had to show there was grave news by the slump of his shoulders and the tone of his voice. He had to give the subtle warnings before he broke the news.

Falkirk introduced himself and Mr Nakamura from the embassy, not that he was strictly necessary but it was always done to have two people delivering this sort of news.

“Please,” Mrs Kew said indicating the L shaped sofa and sitting down on it, while Suzi stood over by the fireplace and Mr Kew perched on a chair.

“I have been working with Mr Nakamura and the Japanese authorities, and the Embassy allowed me to be the one deliver this news,” Falkirk said softly. The three were leaning forward and had a look of concentration. Falkirk had successfully conveyed something was wrong and they were preparing. “When an employee leaves unexpectedly like Suzie did, we are required to investigate. I believe Mr and Mrs Kew, you were interviewed as part of this process. We also looked at recent events in Suzie's life. The death of her grand mother to be exact. It is my solemn duty to inform you while we were investigating we came across something.”
“About my grandmother?” Suzie demanded.

Falkirk nodded, “An anomaly in her toxicology report. She was given high doses of an unprescribed drug that would likely cause a stroke. We have the perpetrator, a nurse at Mrs Kew’s care home. We’ve also identified at least ten other victims.”

Mrs Kew stood and joined her husband, sitting on the rounded arm rest so she could hug him. Mr Kew was at that stage of not believing his ears. He just sat there blinking, and looking to everyone in turn. It would be a few moments before it hit him.

“You've got the guy,” Suzie asked. Falkirk nodded. She added, “Was he working alone?”

That was what made Suzie Kew a good Double O, she thought, her intuition made her look for the all the dots that connected to make a picture. Falkirk shook his head.

Suzie pushed off the mantelpiece and jerked her head for Falkirk to follow. Suzie closing the hall door then going out front. Under the sloping roof porch at the front of the house, Suzie asked, “Was it because I'm a British Operative.”

“Possibly,” Falkirk admitted. “You're the second Double O to resign. I believe one other might be targeted, possibly two. Did a Nurse Lee talk to you. A young woman, early to mid twenties, long hair...”

“I remember her,” Suzie said. “Yes she talked to me, all the things my grand mother said. She seemed friendly. She killed my grandmother?”

Falkirk shook his head. “Liwanag was the murderer. Nurse Lee's part we're speculating over. We think she grew close to Liwanag and guided him to choose your grandmother as one of his victims.”

“I remember him, a fat creepy guy,” Suzie staring off into the distance with glazed eyes.

Falkirk knew that look, “You're not a Double O, Ms Kew. Your Licence to Kill has been allocated to someone else.”

“Do you think I care.”

“Well you better hurry if you want to get to Ms Lee, before Eugene Choi gets to her. One request though, if you meet up with Ms Lee ask her who she's working for.”

“No promises,” Suzie said still with that strange glazed look in her eyes.

From his inside pocket, Falkirk pulled out a passport with a ticket between the pages. Suzie took it and read the false name on the information page.

“Good speed, Ms Kew. That is as far as I can help you. If you're caught you're on your own,” Falkirk said headed for his car.

Suzie looked briefly to her first class ticket to Tokyo. When she looked up again, M was gone. Going inside the revelation had hit her dad. His eyes were glistening, he wouldn't dare cry in front of a stranger though. Her mother was giving gentle strokes to her dad's shoulder constantly. All the while Mr Nakamura was explaining to the procedure.
“Sir Thomas has arranged for me to go to Japan immediately,” Suzie said. “I'll talk to the police and prosecutors out there.”

“We will follow in a few days,” Suzie's mother said. “We have some calls to make.”

“I'll see you out there.”

--

Falkirk took Darren's advice, so being naughty he didn't return to Vauxhall Cross. Falkirk's bodyguard followed him in to the long cocktail bar, the only Alpha in the room drawing a lot of looks. Andre, pointed to a spot at the far end of the long narrow room, at the end of the glass bar, where he could have a clear view of Falkirk and the room and said he'd wait there.

With the bodyguard propping up the bar and using the mirrored back to help him watch the room. Falkirk ordered a round of sweet and alcoholic drinks of the barman's choice. He took the four glasses on the little tray to the small and high table staked out by Darren, Keading and Philip.

“Hay, Falkie-boy,” Darren beamed. Keading was giggling a bit, and hiding behind his tall narrow glass of pink stuff. Darren adding, “Philly's got this cool video!”

Jumping up onto the tall stool Falkirk wondered what the Irish bastard was up to, and Keading was not looking him in the eye y hiding behind his drink. In good humour Falkirk took the other omega's mobile and watched the YouTube video taken from a dash-cam. A fighter jet going over the car and crashing way down the desert road and huge fireball going up.

“I hope no one was hurt,” Falkirk said handing back the mobile.

“These Air shows are dangerous,” Philip tutted. Darren nodded sagely, “Too right they are.”

Falkirk kicked Darren under the table to get him to drop the subject of problematic evidence of British espionage activity in a foreign country. Then looking to Philip, changing the subject, “How have you been?”

“Me, good.” the omega then going a bit sombre. “Been talking to some of the other omegas caught up during the troubles. None are willing to talk openly, a few anonymously. Chevy says we need a few more willing to go public. We're doing it as a book rather then an article.”

Darren shouldered his cousin, “So you and your journalist friend are getting on?” Philip blushed and shouldered his cousin back.

It was a good night, that helped Falkirk forget about Double Os and what they did when entering those dark places to keep people safe.
Letting out a scream, the Japanese woman dressed in short black dress, and pigtails crawled across the broken glass. Deafening bangs were going off all around. Bottles and glasses exploding as they were caught in the crossfire. Crawling under a booth, panting hard she cowered in the small space. She had to make a choice, they were here for her after all. She couldn't stay if she wanted to survive. The front door of the club was near but might as well be a million miles across the open area at the front of the club.

At least the two with guns were focusing on each other. Deciding now was her time the Japanese woman started to move forward. Before leaving her hiding place, the frosted glass doors pushed open and a European man entered the club. In English the man shouted.

“WHAT THE BLOODY HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING!”

The Englishman's presence and voice caused a quiet to fall. Pushing back as far as she could, praying it was over and she would be forgotten about. From her place hiding under the table she saw that handsome man who came in earlier approached the new man, while doing something with the gun he held then slipping it under his jacket. Then that woman who came in second and started shooting first went to the Englishman. The Asian man and woman stood in front of the European, both looking like naughty children as the willowy man spoke quietly to them.

The Englishman looked around, spotting her he came over. He crouched down and held out his hand, “Miss Lee, Hello. I'm M. I'd like a word if I may?”

Trembling and bloody, she latched on to the hand of the gently smiling man. The harmless Omega helped her up.

Amongst the upturned furniture and glass covered floor, the handsome Alpha man righted a couple chairs and set them at a table. She was gently pushed into the chair with the Asian man behind her and the English omega beside her.

Lee glanced to the third, the short, round faced, woman. She stood over by the gunshot scarred bar. Suddenly Lee remembered who the beta woman was and had an sinking suspicion why all this was happening.

“Miss Lee,” Falkirk said. From his pocket he placed down a couple photos, one of a nice kindly old white haired woman, and the other of the nurse she was to seduce Liwanag. “We know you put up Liwanag to killing Mrs Kew. Why?”

The Japanese woman with bloodied hands and knees babbled, “No, I don't know.”

Kew lazily levelled her large Glock at the other woman. She said, “I'm not interested in your lies.”
“Your survival depends on your cooperation,” Falkirk said. “Your real name is Mako Mori, you've been an escort for the past six years. Last month, you converted fifty bit coins into approximately $600,000 US Dollars.”

“Want my lawyer,” the young woman known as Lee demanded. Her terrified eyes bouncing between the three others in the room.

Falkirk scoffed, waving between Choi and Kew, “Since these two started competing and wrecking down town Tokyo I've had to call in quite a few favours and give some big promises. There isn't a police officer for a half mile radius. We are quite alone.”

The woman gulped, looking to the scary man standing right behind her and the other woman over by the bar still with the white metal pistol in hand. Looking to Falkirk, “I didn't know what I was doing!”

Very cold, Falkirk spoke, “You were being paid to manipulate a serial killer into murdering an old lady. SO DON'T ACT INNOCENT WITH ME!”

Lee yelped and tried to run, Choi forced her back into the chair. More calmly Falkirk continued, “No, Miss Lee, Miss Mori, whatever you want to call yourself. You thought you would get a pay-off without being caught. You were wrong! Now speak! Don't lie! And I don't want to hear what you don't know!”

The terrified beta woman nodded, still with the Alpha man's hand clamped on her shoulder. Falkirk so dislike not being able to pick up on ques, they hinted at so much. He was left with only the fear he could see in the woman's eyes.

“Who hired you?” Falkirk demanded.

“Marcus Brutus,” The woman squeaked.

Falkirk rolled his eyes at the name. Quickly Lee said, “That's the name he gave me. He English businessman, tall, black eyes...”

While the woman babbled Falkirk took note of one point. The first meeting. Using his mobile he pulled up the hotel's system. He'd had access to the Hilton's IT system for years. It was only a matter of moments before he found the CCTV records, and found nothing in them. No Lee arriving at the time she said the meeting occurred. No meeting of a European Alpha in the lounge Bar. The woman was either lying or the camera logs were altered, which Falkirk's intuition said was happening given the finesse of the operation and how the terrified woman was just spewing everything in a rush.

Falkirk glanced to Kew, “I think I have what I need.”

Falkirk and Choi headed for the frosted doors of the once stylish club. Most of the lights had been shot out, the bar riddled with bullet holes and many tables and chairs upended in the stampede of the customers to get out.

The street outside the club was eerily quiet, the animated neon lights blinked and flashed away to no crowds. Only the occasional man dressed in black suit and shades stood guard, no police officers to be seen. Down the street, an older man leaned against a black car while smoking a
“Mister Tanaka,” Falkirk greeted again, giving a bow.

“Is it over!” The Head of the Japanese Secret Service asked.

A pop, the sound of a gunshot heard from across a street and through a wall drew their attention. Falkirk said, “Yes, I believe so.”

“Remember our bargain, M.”

“I will speak with Director Lin, persuade her to stall North Korea's missile program.”

Tanaka grunted an acknowledgement and turned away. Falkirk knew well how tiresome it was when a foreign ally caused trouble. The Japanese man whistled and made a waving motion, and all his men in black suits just seemed to vanish into the alleyways and cars.

Turning round, Falkirk saw Kew coming out of the club. She joined himself and Choi. She was quiet, following Falkirk to his own armoured Mercedes. Usually used by the ambassador, Falkirk's own bodyguard and driver had requisitioned it.

In the back of the long car, with Choi across from him and Kew beside him. Falkirk said, “Mr Choi...”

“You want me to check out the Hilton,” the Operative said.

‘He's learning,’ Falkirk thought. “Yes, Mr Choi. You find a lead and follow it to the next. The CCTV doesn't show Miss Lee there or this Englishman she mentioned. I will confirm my theory that the CCTV had been altered. You-”

“Will do the physical investigation. I'll interrogate the staff. As subtly as I can.”

Falkirk reached up to the intercom on the roof and told the driver to stop. Falkirk had to get out, so Choi could exit the car. They were outside the police half-mile cordon around the club where it all kicked off. All the gawkers pointing their phones the wrong way, into the cordoned off area, so took no notice of the ominous car letting off an operative.

Getting back in, Falkirk found the beta swiping at the tears leaking from her eyes. Reaching over, Falkirk pulled Kew against him. Now Falkirk believed Kew was ready for retirement, she had reached the point where the life of a Double O was too high to pay.

“Suzie, I am so sorry this happened, and you have my deepest condolences for your loss. I cannot under emphasise the value of the work you have done for the United Kingdom. It has been a privilege working with you.”

“How can you keep going?” came the soft voice.

“You know, you were there, you brought the Red Mercury device to Japan,” Falkirk's voice deepened and darkened a bit as he continued, “I give in to that little voice, the one that has no morality, no ethics, no boundaries, no humanity. I threaten to burn the whole world if anyone goes for my family again... And I never regret what I do.”
“I feel empty.”

“Revenge always does. It takes away a piece of your soul whenever you give in to it. It’s already taken several pieces of mine, I feel it in the quiet moments when I have nothing to distract me.”

They travelled the rest of the way in silence.

The car pulled up to a nice house outside of the city, belonging to a relative of Kew’s. Slightly raised, and made of dark wood. Kew’s mother had been pacing on the porch. She trotted down the wooden stairs quickly when she saw the car pull up.

Kew handed him the murder weapon, which Falkirk made safe by ejecting the magazine and the chambered round. She then got out and embraced her mother. Falkirk used the intercom to order the driver to take him to Universal Exports: Tokyo.

Falkirk watched mother hugging daughter in the driveway. He wondered if he would see Suzie Kew again, he doubted it.

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“So, Geoffrey?” said the silver haired man leaning back in his green leather chair.

“So, Geoffrey?” said the silver haired man leaning back in his green leather chair.

“Sir James,” the man with rectangular face said with a smirk. Taking the guest chair across from the large oak desk, he said, “We’re two down. Dawes is our next target followed by the new Double O Wardner. We’re still working on Thomas. There’s problems with Evans, Maloney and Addison they’re too loyal or have no exploitable pressure point. Bond we are leaving for the final blow. When M cannot keep a Double O it will look like he’s lost control and will have to be removed.”

Sir James smiled, and nodded. “Very good work...”

A knock from the door interrupted them.

“Come in, Mycroft!” Sir James called.

The oak panel door pushed open. A small man, with black beady eyes and rat like smile came in, “Not Mycroft, Sir James.”

Geoffrey rolled his eyes at the GCHQ Director's arrival. Denbigh looked far too pleased with himself.

“Not going well, Geoffrey old boy,” Denbigh preened. Sir James demanded to know what that meant. Still standing, Denbigh rocked on his hells as he said, “Oh, well, you know. Just had an alert. Lucky I covered the good old Geoffrey’s tracks. M knows about Lee, and how she met our contact at the Hilton Tokyo. So lucky I substituted the CCTV recordings at the hotel. Apparently M has also taken a sudden interest with the arts, theatre to be precise. He knows Masood’s boyfriend was the pressure point. That charity to get disadvantaged children into acting is now being inspected under a very fine microscope. Let us hope he doesn't learn the Charity was set up by Eli David, that would make a problematic link.”

The silver haired man sitting behind the desk blasted, “YOU WERE WARNED TO BE CAREFUL!”
“I was- AM! I am being careful,” Geoffrey argued. Pointing to Denbigh, “That cretin is just wanting a gold star for doing his job. We all knew the risks. Are you going to bottle it Sir James? Cower and hope M, his inquiry or this new investigation doesn't lead you? ”

The silver haired old man glowered at the younger across from him. From the traditional office door there came three sharp raps. All three jumped and looked to it. Sir James recovered and put on a pleasant smile on his face, “That you Mycroft? Do come in old boy!”

“Yes, just me,” Mycroft said pleasantly pushing the door open. Sir James indicated the empty guest chair for Mycroft to take while he said, “Denbigh, be a good chap. There's sherry in that cabinet.”

Mycroft perked, he did so like a good fino sherry. The short dark haired man went to the cabinet at the side of the room and pulled down the door to find several decanters and a range of glasses.

Geoffrey sat forward in his chair to look at the man beside him, “So what can the unofficial SIS do for Mycroft Holmes? I thought you could just ask M.”

Mycroft chuckled politely, and accepted the fino from the Director of GCHQ. He said, “M, he has his uses. He is so formidable the United Kingdom is being taken seriously, in a way that hasn't happened since the days of the empire. Others know when they push, M will push back so much harder,” Mycroft perception picked up on a flinch Sir James gave, how Geoffrey Dromgoole became guarded and how Denbigh preened. Mycroft continued, “Anyway. M has an ethics of sorts. Show him a vulnerable individual, or a person doing what is right and he will side with them even against national interest.”

Geoffrey said, “So what do you need of SIS, in the national Interest.”

“Oh, we have been giving arms to a... let's call them freedom fighters, that made some mistakes in targeting western interests. They however, are currently keeping a local government and its forces occupied, so the British can exploit some natural resources that would otherwise be denied to us. A journalist has found out what is happening, and in the national interest he needs to be... sidelined.”

Sir James smiled and said, “I thought you were going to ask something difficult, Mycroft.”

Geoffrey assured Mycroft silencing a journalist was a simple matter. The four made some more small talk while they finished their sherry. Mycroft then left. The atmosphere changed the moment he was gone.

“Such a shame,” Sir James mused. “He used to be a good sort. Then he joined that bitch's pack.”

Denbigh said, “Really? You are aware they are brothers. That is why M protected him from Urquhart. Why he protected him with the Masons.”

Sir James sneers, “M, he does so like to play the hero, the all powerful protector. I do wonder, will M have it in him to protect Yakup. We will continue as planned.”

“I'm so glad to have your support,” Geoffrey said. Sir James glowered at the man.

When Geoffrey left, Sir James looked to Denbigh, “Make sure we're covered. I don't want anything getting back to me... or Elbaz.”
“All in hand,” Denbigh said and took his leave.
It took all of Falkirk's will not to give in to his instincts and jump in with nail and tooth as his weapons. To watch his son being pinned ignited such a fire inside him. Across the room, Daniel had Andrew face down against the hardwood floor. For all his might, Andrew couldn't compete, he struggled though. Falkirk's fingers curled, ready for when he would lunged and slashed the Alpha across the face. Darren's gently grasp on his arm the only thing keeping him grounded and remembering there was a reason for this and it was by Andrew's choice.

Suddenly Daniel growled viciously and pulled his hand back like he'd been burned. Andrew scrambled up and away, making for the nest with Falkirk, Keading and Darren.

Falkirk held his panting and trembling son. The younger omega being surrounded by the three older. Falkirk saw Daniel sitting back, looking at his own hand with three deep scratches on the back of it.

“The little laddie's improving,” Daniel said, pulling out a hanky from his pocket and pressing it to the wounds. “Could barely hold him that time.”

It was the first time Andrew had been able to escape. Falkirk looked at Andrew, tipping his son's face up. The dark blue eyes were almost black with the blown pupils, and he was panting and fidgeting a lot. Frightened and alert, while on a huge adrenalin rush.

“You're safe, be calm, you're safe,” Falkirk whispered pulling his son close. Giving long strokes to his back.

Daniel quietly said he needed to clean his wounds, and silently left them.

The four omegas sat there for a while. The sound of the other kids could be heard outside. Selene shouting at someone, Cody most likely with Sherlock the next the face her wrath. Mallory was giving instructions like a Drill Sergeant, in short clipped orders.

“Papa,” Andrew said beginning to push away. “Can we go outside.”

“Yes,” Falkirk said. Andrew was still a bit off, but the recovery time was getting less and less after each session.

Like always, Rupert was waiting. The teen sitting in the living room. He came up beside Andrew, just brushing shoulders with him while walking side by side.

Out on the terrace, Mycroft sat having tea and a dainty cake. Falkirk sat at the small bistro table with his brother. Daniel had joined the others down on the lawn with his bandaged right hand. Keading and Darren followed Rupert and Andrew to go to the others.
“You look troubled,” Mycroft said.

“Just James, he's dropped off the grid,” Falkirk said. “Once he assassinated his target, he stirred up a hornet's nest. Whoever this new SPECTRE is they are pulling out all the stops to find out who killed one of their agents.”

“So they don't know it was James or MI6?”

Falkirk shook his head. “Even Alec has disappeared, he's helping to lay false trails. SPECTRE got the Bond Girl, the wife too and the few others who put a contact out for Herman Klaus.”

“No international incidents though,” Mycroft said with a tight smile.

“Small mercies,” Falkirk said, thinking his brother was actually trying to see the good. Even if it didn't comfort on a personal level.

Falkirk watched Andrew for a bit. He was with Rupert, Michelle, Rosie and Luke. Andrew, not one to usually play with the younger but still recovering. Rupert sent Yulian packing when the young Alpha tried to get the one closest to himself in age to come play. It left the three alpha boys, Cody, Yulian and Colum in a game of laser tag with Daniel, Mallory Sherlock and John. While Andrew's group played football with Selene and the adult omegas.

“Falkirk?”

Turning and smiling at hearing Arthur's voice. The omega standing at the French doors was looking down and hiding under the fall of his long hair. Falkirk's worry was alleviated by the smile tugging at the blushing omega's lips.

“Long time, no see,” Falkirk said standing. Following Arthur back into the living room, where G was waiting and looking very uncomfortable. The newly bonded pair stood side by side, clasping hands. Falkirk caught the scent and being so mean he decided he was going to make them say it, “So how have you two been?”

G blinked and looked around. Arthur blushed a bit deeper. The omega stuttered a bit, “We, well, my, our first heat together.”

“Oh, and was G a gentleman after? James was a bit grabby from what I remember,” Falkirk said, acting oblivious. “I snuggled up to Sherlock and hid if I remember right.... Yes, I remember. Mycroft came to visit because Sherlock was detoxing at the time.”

“Well, ah...” G said. Looking to Arthur. Falkirk just looked on them with open curiosity.

“We're,” Arthur continued, “Well me, I'm pregnant.”

“Really!” Falkirk smiled and closed the distance. Cupping Arthur's face, he leaned in for a nuzzle. “Oh, yes, so you are. Congratulations.”

G was beaming now, almost preening with pride. In Falkirk's arms, Arthur was bouncing slightly in an omega excitement gesture, pop-corning. He started to babble, “We want you to be godfather, Keading, Darren and Andrew too.”
“Selene, James and Alec... and I was thinking Mycroft as well,” G added. Mycroft a bit of a sore point with the Alpha, but having come round to him when in the same pack.

“So many,” Falkirk said with excitement.

G shrugged, “I have nine god parents, for all they were worth.”

“Not in this pack,” Falkirk said sternly. “We take our duty very seriously. Can you handle all those mother hens.”

The two nodded. Standing between them, Falkirk took the arms of the alpha and omega and walked them out onto the balcony terrace that ran the width of the house.

“Go spread the word,” Falkirk said and sent them off. G going to Mycroft first, while Arthur headed down the stone stairs to the long lawn where the others were. Falkirk watched as Arthur told the group of omegas, and be swamped by Keading, Darren and Andrew.

A gentle voice cleared behind him. Hudson stood there, with a try of champagne flutes in one hand and an ice bucket in the other. “I took the liberty, sir.”

“How did you know, you're an Alpha?”

“A good butler knows everything, sir,” Hudson said passing by him to place the tray on the bistro table. Passing back, Hudson said, “I shall get the orange juice. And If I may, can I have a word later.”

Falkirk nodded in answer. The rest of the afternoon was spent in celebration. Making a fuss of the expectant omega, who blushed throughout.

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Going downstairs that evening. Falkirk heard the sound of a TV on low. Hudson mused, “That thing has you well trained.”

“I like it,” came Brayan's response.

While still on the stairs into the basement kitchen Falkirk announced himself. He cross the kitchen to the small seating area with dinning table. Hudson had his own living room up in his apartment, and Brayan had one in his apartment above the garage. But both tended to spend their evenings here though.

“Ah, sir,” Hudson said getting up.

Falkirk watched Brayan with the white long cat in his lap, gently combing out the long hair with a brush. A soft smile on the handsome man's face as he did the slow methodical task of keeping the long hair tangle free. Falkirk said, “That's meant to be Andrew and Rupert's job.”

“I like doing it,” Brayan said looking at him.

Falkirk patted the Alpha on his strong shoulder and turned away from Brayan. Returning to the kitchen area at the foot of the stairs, Falkirk filled the kettle and set it on the stand. After flicking the power switch he turned to Hudson who was taking the tea caddy from a cupboard along with
the small glass teapot.

“

“You wished to see me?” Falkirk said. While preparing a tray with a cup and saucer. Knowing he shouldn't he looked for some chocolate biscuits too.

“Yes, sir,” Hudson leant back to make sure Brayan was still occupied. Looking back to Falkirk he spoke quietly, “It's about Mrs Bridges, I think it's time we should consider reducing her hours.”

“We will need a new cook?” Falkirk said.

“One was thinking more along the lines of an assistant,” Hudson said.

Falkirk chuckled, even the Alpha wasn't brave enough to tell Mrs Bridges it was time to retire. He looked at Hudson, he always thought of him as old, but as Falkirk aged he realised that was the perception of youth. At one time thirty seemed old. Suddenly he wished he knew Hudson's age, maybe late fifties he guessed at.

“I'll leave it in your hands,” Falkirk said finishing making his tea and putting the pot on the tray beside the cup and saucer. “And on your head be it.”

“Yes, sir. Evie starts next week.” Hudson said. “She has had a colourful career. Excellent references, positively glowing without a spot on them.”

“That's a bad sign.”

Hudson nodded and said, “After checking I found her to be talented, but a little clumsy shall we say. She burned down the first restaurant where she started her apprenticeship. She accidentally stabbed her second employer.”

Falkirk's eyebrows raised into his hairline. “She's your choice?”

Hudson nodded, “Mrs Bridges will have her hands so full, she won't even consider ulterior motives.”

“What a devious fellow you are, sure you're not a spy,” Falkirk teased and headed for the stairs. The one time undercover agent in the Holmes household gave a polite laugh at the joke.

A cat hissing made them stop and look to the rear of the kitchen. Hudson gently placing his hand at the opening for his suite jacket. Brayan marched to the back door and looked out to the dark garden.

“Bond,” Brayan said unlocking the door. He leaned down to pick up the disgruntled cat which had gone from getting a nice brushing to being dumped on the floor. It forgave Brayan soon enough when it got a scratch between the ears.

Falkirk waited, while Hudson went to the fridge and pulled out some bacon and eggs to start a fry-up. James swanned in a moment later, a bruise on the side of his face, a swollen eye and a cut on his hair line.

“There's such a thing as first aid,” Falkirk said.

The Alpha just came close and placed a wire mesh box on the tray Falkirk held. Looking close,
Falkirk saw a ring inside, wedding-band in shape with an octopus engraved on it, one with eyes and eight pointed legs.

“James, why is it in a Faraday cage?”

James gave smirk, “That's how they were tracking me. There's a homing device in it or something.”

“Then why didn't you take it to MI6, Double O Seven.” M demanded.

“Because I'm hungry,” James said, taking the fry-up from the butler. Breezing passed Falkirk and up the stairs, grumbling all the way, “I bust my hump getting home and nag nag nag. It's like I'm not appreciated.”

“There are times James Bond, there are times,” Falkirk grumbled too, following the Alpha.
Falkirk stepped off the lift, the long tunnel of Q-Branch ahead of him. A familiar man was making a fuss at the security checkpoint. M used his privilege to jump the queue, and walk passed the scanners without being stopped. He turned back and waved to Alec, getting two fingers in response from the man being held up.

It always felt like coming back to a childhood home when he came to Q-Branch. First on the left was door to the armoury where he had been Daniel's apprentice. On the right was mechanics where he first outfitted and then rebuilt James' Aston Martin. The second door on the left he passed was for Cyber Division, where he was made a manager for the first time. At the very end was Administration and Operation Support, where he had been Q.

The automatic doors at the end of the long corridor opened onto a double story room. Private offices including Falkirk's old office were the balcony at the back. A row of suites on the ground floor, some with their glass walls clear, in the ones handling sensitive operations the glass was opaque. The floor area was filled with dozens of desks, for the people who kept the Branch ticking over. Ms Underwood prowling the area with her nose in the air and scowling through her horn rimmed glasses.

In one of the larger suites to the left, Falkirk saw the ones he was looking for. Daniel, Peter and James. He headed for the glass fronted room with a tall bench in the centre. Unusually used for the assignment or inspection of field equipment. Today it as being used to report on the forensic analyses of the ring James found.

“Just waiting for Alec,” James said as Falkirk entered.

“He was pissing off the security guys,” Falkirk answered. “They'll probably insist of a full cavity search.”

Daniel started grumbling under his breath and storming out. They watched through the wall as the big Alpha went to the main door of Administration and bellowed, “WE'RE WAITING!”

A few moments later Alec entered Administration and made a beeline for them. Entering the suite, Alec pointed at Falkirk then drew his finger across his own throat. Falkirk just waved off the threat.

“Can we get down to business!”

Everyone looked to James, and his stern voice.

“Who got your knickers in a twist?” Daniel said following Alec in.
James just glared at the bigger alpha then looked to the younger blond one. Everyone looked to Peter, R of Q-Branch. The Tech specialist first turned the glass wall and door opaque so none outside could see the screen at the back of the room.

“We have started the analyses on the ring Double O Seven returned with,” Peter said bringing up some x-ray scans of the ring. “Firstly, it wasn't made of metal. It was made of glass, like the case of modern mobile phones. This was so it could house complex circuitry inside. Including the tracker Double O Seven suspected. Interesting thing, it uses Kinetic energy to power it like an automatic watch. As far as we can tell the ring acts like a key, it has an RFID tag and what we think is in an encryption key…”

While Peter gave some examples of phones needing the ring to decrypt messages, or using it as a key card for a door lock, Falkirk was looking at the actual ring. It looked like a thick wedding band, of dark grey material with an engraved octopus with eyes on it.

“Peter,” Falkirk interrupted the explanation. While there was nothing new in the technology, the size was surprising though. “I can't think of many who could produce this?”

“Right you are, M,” the Blond alpha said. “Excluding countries. The Carrington Institute…”

“You got me Laddie, I'm number one,” Daniel teased. “I'm the evil genius, with a dolly-bird at my side ready for James to seduce.”

Alec punched his mate on the arm for the description. James said, “M, permission to terminate hostile.”

“Like you could,” Daniel taunted. James stepped up to the taller Alpha, “Wanna dance!”

“Alec?” Falkirk said over the arguing alphas. “Want your Double O status back? I've got a couple annoyances you can start with.”

Alec looked from James moving to stand beside him, while glaring at him. Daniel, suddenly at his other side looking down at him calmly. “No thanks, M, I'm good.”

The two Alphas patted Alec on the back and beamed at Falkirk. The Omega rolled his eyes, “No loyalty.”

A now rather uncomfortable Peter continued through the domestic bantering to list the other companies and institutions that could produce a ring with the miniaturised electronics he was talking about. Stark, Hammer, Waylen, there was no one on the list unexpected.

Falkirk looked to James. Speaking as M he said, “So, Double O Seven, what's next?”

James froze. His bright blue eyes darting about, landing on each person in the room before settling on his omega. Falkirk teased, “Not so easy being in charge is it?”

James asked, “What would you do?”

“Stop treating this like an operation,” Falkirk said. He started to pace, as an excuse not to look at his alpha in the eye while he talked. It still knotted his insides when he truly had to be the one in charge where his Alpha was concerned. “I would suggest you look at organisations and people recruited by this SPECTRE. Find a small criminal organisation or gang that SPECTRE would be
interested in and insert a deep cover Agent before they are recruited, then have that agent work his way from the small gang into SPECTRE.”

“That takes years,” James said.

“They have been forming for years, they have remained unnoticed because they grew so slowly,” Falkirk said, still slowly walking back and forth along the side of the high table in the middle of the room. “Do you have an alternative?”

“I take the ring. I let the GPS signal get out, and capture whoever follows it,” James said.

Falkirk nodded. “Very well Double O Seven, you have the lead in this.”

Falkirk headed for the door, and pulled it open with a hiss of the hinges, that swung it shut behind him. James looked to Daniel and Alec, “Was there an attitude?”

“You're a moron,” Daniel said heading for the door. Peter said he wanted a coffee and ran, so it was only James and Alec in the room.

“He's indulging you, ya utter pillock!” Alec said and headed for the door.

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Arriving back in E-Branch, Falkirk saw a handsome man introducing himself to Darren. Falkirk was given a smile when he was noticed, that made the Operative's black eyes twinkle.

“Yes, Mr Choi, we all know how cute you are. It doesn't work on me however,” Falkirk dismissed, breezing passed the Alpha. “What I do want to know is why you're here!”

The Asian man followed him into his office. “You were right, your powers do have a limit. A security guard was paid to switch the security footage. I have the original.”

Falkirk took the memory stick from the man and rounded his desk to sit. Plugging in the stick to the port on the monitor he said, “If this is a USB killer, I'm going to be very mad.”

“No, sir. Wouldn't think of blowing up your computer.”

Falkirk glared at the man, “You see pips on my shoulder, or bands around my cuffs?”

“No, si... M!”

“Better. Remember we're civilian organisation,” Falkirk said. On his screen he saw the young woman dressed in a typical 'little black dress' enter the lobby of the Tokyo Hilton. She met a much taller man, who seemed to be aware of the camera. None of the dozen images from in and around the lobby got more than the side of his face from a rear angle. Looking up at the operative, “Is this it?”

“No, M,” the Operative smirked. “At the Hotel he used the alias Frank Randall. For his Emirates flight to Heathrow, via Dubai, he used the name Richard Pembroke. The boys downstairs are combing the CCTV as we speak for a clean shot of his face and where he went after leaving Heathrow.”
“You continue to improve by leaps and bounds, Mr Choi. Keep up the good work.”

“M,” the Alpha was a bit nervous for the first time. “About Double O status.”

“We are still conducting your interview. Dismissed Mr Choi!”

“M,” the Operative acknowledged and exited the office.

Falkirk's intercom beeped. He glanced to Darren when his PA didn't say anything. Choi was giving a nervous laugh that the intercom was just able to pick up. Choi asked Darren, “So is M always so... so...”

“Pissy? A bug up his ass?” Darren said helpfully.

“Yes. I suppose...”

Falkirk interrupted, “Darren! You've got your elbow in the intercom again!”

“Oh, sorry M.”

“Sure you are!” Falkirk glared at his PA. Darren just smiled back. Choi slunk away, pretending to be invisible. “Stop tormenting the baby operatives, it's cruel.”

“Fun as hell though,” the unrepentant omega said and lifted his hand form the talk button.

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Winding down, Falkirk was getting ready to go home at the end of the day when there came a knock on his door. Looking up he saw James, so waved him in.

James nodded when Falkirk held up the decanter. While Falkirk poured the two drinks, James said, “I've been thinking.”

Falkirk bit his tongue, a cheeky joke about fire alarms wanting to tumble out. Now was not the time to tease James on his intelligence. Handing James one glass he said, “Oh, what about?”

“That you were right. About the Agent.”

Falkirk hesitated. He sent James a wavering smile, which put the Alpha on alert. “I might be willing to admit we were both right.”

“Might?” James smirked at him.

“Might!” Falkirk confirmed. “Have you heard of a David Haller?”

James frowned, thinking hard. In the end he shook his head no.

Falkirk said, “I shouldn't have thought so but you have a knack of knowing the strangest things, James. He's an agent we have in the Army. He has experience as an Agent, and could be an Operative. What is interesting, he has a physical description similar to you.”

“You want to lure SPECTRE in and have this Haller take credit for the hit I did.”
Falkirk shook his head. “I want to lure SPECTRE in. We capture whoever comes for you. Get the information we need from them. Then send in Haller, with him taking credit for the loss of dozens of SPECTRE personnel.”

“They could kill him,” James said.

“They could recruit him, they'll know how good he is. An asset like we are proposing isn't something you just ignore.”

James smirked, “And SPECTRE kills him when they figure out he isn't as good as he's pretending to be.”

“Please James! This isn't the Air Force Regiment or Metropolitan Police,” Falkirk rolled his eyes. The Met and Air Force Regiment not known for their discerning recruitment. “I'm more worried about him going the other way, he's a clinical psychopath... sociopath? That always confuses me. He has a brother in an institution that he loves unconditionally and dotes on, everyone else is nothing to him.”

James raised an eyebrow at that. “And the brother will be M's leash of loyalty?”

Falkirk nodded.
“Thank you,” Falkirk said to the old man at the witness table directly across from him. The retired Youth Offender guard stood on shaking legs, need to use a walking stick when heading back up the aisle of the public gallery.

The next witness entered at the rear of the room. Silver haired, dressed in a suite that cost thousands and lifting his nose in the air like there was a bad smell in the room. A detached air surrounded him, like nothing truly mattered.

“Sir James,” Falkirk said a bit tartly. “Welcome back.”

“A pleasure,” the silver haired man answered just at curtly.

The Judge beside Falkirk reminded Sir James he was still under oath. After the formalities, Falkirk spoke

“We have just heard testimony from staff and inmates from various Young Offenders Institutions from a time period ranging from the mid-seventies to early eighties. A time which the late Harold Earle was Prison's minister and you were the Permanent Secretary to the Prisons Minister.”

“I believe so.”

That riled Falkirk. He snapped, “You believe! We are still dealing with the irrefutable facts, Sir James. You were a civil servant, the permanent secretary to a minister of state. The correct response is: Yes that is correct!”

The two glared at each other for several long moments. Sir Humphrey to Falkirk's right cleared his throat and said, “Sir James, were you ever aware of concerns about Harold Earle's conduct during his inspections of Young Offenders Institutes?”

“Not to the best of my knowledge,” Sir James answered.

Humphrey asked, “You received no letters or phone calls from guards or governors? Or that one governor refused the minister entry into his institution.”

“No, not to best of my recollection.”

“Sir James,” Falkirk snapped. “Do you suffer from any malady? Dementia? Brain tumour or injury? Something that will account from the swaths of time and events that have slipped your mind?”
“I do not quite follow, Sir Thomas,” the bastard dared to smirk at him.

How Falkirk hated Due Process, if he could release just a portion of what he knew about Sir James, the prick wouldn't dare smirk at him.

“Time and time again. Firstly your time associated with the Intelligence community, now while working for the government, Sir James. I find your testimony to this inquiry has been omissive! Every fact, obfuscated! Every response rehearsed and approved by legal council. Truth and justice are the furthest thing from your concerns...” Falkirk had built up a full head of steam. He watched Sir James' face going very red and his lips pinched. Falkirk ended by saying, “If it was in my power to hold you in contempt for your evasiveness, I would.”

Falkirk sat back in the large chair. The judge to his left and the Senior civil Servant to his other side continued to ask questions of the witness. Falkirk doodled on a piece of paper, writing out a grid of key words and phrases. About twenty minutes into the testimony, like a demented parrot Sir James repeated one of his key phrases, “Not to the best of my recollection.”

Falkirk held up the paper and shouted, “HOUSE!”

One of the journalist, got a picture of Falkirk holding up the paper with the key phrases scored off with a pink highlighter like a bingo card.

Falkirk leaned forward on the elevated bench he sat behind to glower down at Sir James. “For the love of all things good, can we expect anything honourable from you?”

“You impugn me!”

“You need honour to impugn in the first place,” Falkirk snapped. Almost begging he added, “It's clear you can't be honest with yourself, let alone us. I see no point in continuing your testimony, it will add nothing to this inquiry. You are dismissed, Sir James.”

The press got pictures of Sir James storming out of the old fashioned wood panel room. His face quite red. Falkirk pulled out his pocket watch and opened the dust cover, “I will adjourn at this point. We will reconvene Thursday at nine am, where we will hear the first testimony from the Our Lady of the Assumption Church and orphanage.”

Falkirk banged his gavel to single the end of the session. He stood, and the two men either side followed his lead. They turned to the right where there was a private door at the side of the room. In the rabbit warren of narrow corridors of the courthouse, Falkirk found his office. He shared it was a judge he’d only met the one time, an omega woman. Their schedules meaning they never saw each other in the courthouse.

Selene was waiting in the office with Tanner, Darren and Falkirk's bodyguard. The other omega was getting his hair styled by Selene. While Falkirk's hair took that style almost on it's own, it was with some effort Selene straighten out Darren's wiry hair and got it to have a voluminous upstanding sweep.

“Wha' d' ya think?” Darren asked. He was dressed in a chocolate brown three piece suite, just like the one Falkirk was wearing. He slipped on the square frame glasses and smiled brightly at Falkirk.

“I suppose you'll do,” Falkirk teased, heading for the attached private bathroom. Calling over his shoulder, “So long as you don't talk.”
“Hay! I'm helping out!” Darren shouted back. “And if I get shot at again, I'm gonna be fecking pissed!”

“They missed and it only happened once,” Falkirk called back stripping out of his own suite and pulling on the slim cut black jeans and an oversized hoodie. “I don't think I have anyone hell bent on revenge against me, for the moment at least.”

“See ya later, off to destroy the world.”

Falkirk stuck his head out of the wash room. To see Darren heading for the door with a John Wane swagger to his stride. Falkirk called, “I don't walk like that... James does, but I don't.”

Darren didn't answer, he and Tanner had gone. Selene gave a final warning to Falkirk's bodyguard, Andre before taking Falkirk's holdall with her and following the others.

With just Falkirk, dressed in his hoodie and Andre in a sweatshirt and well worn jeans. The two headed through the narrow private corridors. They passed Sir Humphrey, the short Alpha with curly grey hair just put his nose up and asked of they were lost. Andre answered no, and the Civil Servant just watched them with a suspicious look on his face.

They walked through the ornate building, with it's marble floors, wood panel walls and laurel pattern plasterwork around the lights on the ceiling. They came down the steps at the front of the building, in time to see the black jaguar racing by with its police escort. Darren had his face tilted and almost buried in a manilla folder. A few paparazzi took photos of 'Sir Thomas' leaving.

Falkirk turned right and with the handsome sandy haired Alpha at his side walked along the streets of London. He mused, “I miss this. I felt so free the first time I realised I could leave the house, get on the tube and go anywhere I wanted.”

“M,” the bodyguard acknowledged professionally.

“Yes, I'm back to not being able to do that again. M can't potter about London all on his own. Someone might blow his head off. Or hell just mug him. What message will that send if M gets mugged on his own streets.”

“Sorry, M.” Andre answered just as formally as before. Falkirk fell silent, he had never developed much of a relationship with Andre. Unlike Selene, or Brayan.

They got to the tube station and boarded the next train to arrive. Falkirk quite liking the crush, the stink, the anonymity of everyone being grumpy and ignoring everything around them. It was nice how the old routes returned to Falkirk's mind, the journey occurring almost on instinct.

The two casually dressed men, were drawing more notice than Falkirk expected. Looking round he realised why, so as they entered the National Gallery Falkirk took his bodyguard's arm.

“M, that's not wise.”

“We are drawing more attention with you a pace behind me, like a mugger waiting to strike,” Falkirk responded. “Now we look like we're on a date or something.”

Andre was a bit uncomfortable being arm-in-arm with his boss and protective charge. Although M
was right, the glances that had been putting him on edge had stopped.

They walked the halls and rooms of the gallery. Falkirk making a point to indicate some paintings and talk about them, like they were just tourists. Andre asked, “When do we meet Mr Haller?”

Falkirk pulled out his mobile to look at the time. Noticing a message from Mycroft 'congratulating' him on tearing down the United Kingdom's most senior Civil Servants. Ignoring the message Falkirk said, “We've got about an hour. We left a bit earlier than I was expecting.”

Falkirk still arm-in-arm with Andre entered the room where the meeting was taking place. They moved from painting to painting. Studying each intently to waist time without looking out of place.

“He's here,” Andre whispered. Falkirk left it a few moments before pulling his arm from his bodyguard's.

His trainers made almost no noise as Falkirk neared the centre of the room. He glanced at the Turner painting, he really didn't care for it, yet the Fighting Temeraire was now an ingrained part of his history. Sitting on the bench beside the blond man, Falkirk just looked at the painting waiting to see how long it would take for Haller to notice him.

“I'm waiting for someone.”

Well he'd been noticed, too bad not recognised. Falkirk looked to the man beside him. His face was not as round as he expected. The hair was more yellow blond than the platinum of James', and worn longer. When the Alpha looked at him, the eyes though, they were a crystal blue so like James'.

After a few moments of just looking at each other. Haller leaned towards him a bit, with a frown wrinkling his forehead.

“Come now Mr Haller, an agent should be accustomed to a person presenting to the world what they wish to be seen.”

“M?” the crystal blue eyes going wide and scanning Falkirk up and down.

“Finally, Mr Haller,” Falkirk said formally. “I was growing worried.”

“Well, I wasn't expecting you personally when this meeting was arranged.” there was a bit more of an upper class note to the Alpha's voice.

Falkirk raised an eyebrow, “Well, you're going to see more of me. You're being reassigned.”

“An Operative? Double O?” the man sent a hopeful half smile.

“No, and definitely not. You will be going in under cover into a criminal organisation, more than that I can't say.” Falkirk answered. “Once you resign from the Office of the Chief of General Staff you will be briefed on your new duties. You will be given a new handler but know this, you will fall under the auspices of M.”

“Sounds fun,” Haller said.

Falkirk stood, so he could look down on the Alpha. Haller was the type that just knew how
handsome he was and the way his cheeks dimpled when he smiled, and his eyes twinkling. Falkirk was a bit crisp when he said, “This is not a game, Mr Haller. And that look will never work with me.”

The Alpha just smirked watching the Omega dressed in a grunge fashion walking away. M wasn't as he expected.

Falkirk and Andre left the gallery. Then by way of public transport headed for Kensington. Arriving at the department store with the famous dome, white facade and long row of flags. They entered Harrods.

A line of men in black suits blocked off access to one of the departments. Seeing Selene standing by a door with 'Staff Only' on it, Falkirk nodded to her and entered. Falkirk then entered the sealed off department by the staff's utility passageways. Entering the maternity department, Darren came over. They headed for the changing rooms, where Falkirk returned to his brown three piece suit and Darren dressed in casual trousers and a gun-metal grey shirt. When the two omegas stepped out of the cubical, Andre had changed too, into his normal dark blue suit.

“So?” Darren asked, guiding them back through maternity clothes.

“Don't think anyone saw me,” Falkirk responded. “So what did you do while playing M.”

“Had Addison assassinate that bitch teacher that was mean to me in Primary five. Declared Wimbledon a terrorist organisation....”

“Wimbledon? The place? The common? The Tennis?” Falkirk was smiling.

“Tennis! Never again will Gareth bullshit me! 'Oh it's almost over, just one more point', then, FECKING HOURS later they're still hitting that fecking-bastarding ball! Dear god, if I ever get sent to hell it'll be court side seats to a fecking Wimbledon final! They never fecking end...” Darren ending with a glassy eyed look of horror.

Falkirk was laughing now. Suddenly Falkirk was pulled to a stop and Darren looked at him seriously, “Don't mention Morgen. She did one of those stupid interviews, how her brother was stolen from her.”

“You were M for a couple hours, couldn't you have dealt with it,” Falkirk said.

Darren shouldered him and said, “God, she's such a cow.”

“You don't know the half of it, it would make your hair curl if you did.”

Darren rubbed his hair, breaking it out of the style Falkirk usually wore. “It is curly!”

They entered the baby section. Spotting the blond and black haired omegas. Falkirk and Darren joined them. Falkirk smiling at Arthur, “You're starting to show!”

Arthur blushed and nodded, while putting a hand on the slight round in the cardigan he wore. With Keadig, Darren and Falkirk, they spent a good few hours in the cordoned off section of Harrods. Leaving the department store, there was some waiting paparazzi. Falkirk made sure he was beside Arthur, just in case. He wanted some pictures from him at the Inquiry then ones of him here, so fewer would suspect he disappeared for a few hours in the time between the two events.
“Let's get some drinks,” Darren said.

Falkirk didn't see a point going to the office, it was nearly five anyway. They ended up all getting into Falkirk's car and going to a bar, where Arthur was introduced to a range of non-alcoholic cocktails, all disgusting. Then they went out for a meal. All having a good time.
The blond man turned the corner, bounced off the wall, and ran left. All the walls were all of a dull concrete colour. Like a maze they stopped before touching the ceiling high above the warren of paths. From a side corridor, an older man emerged with gun raised. A bang, an impact, and a klaxon sounded.

“FUCK!” Haller shouted.

Still with gun in hand, Alec laughing his arse off gasping out, “Not so easy is it.”

From the maze of concrete corridors, James stormed round the corner. Alec jumped out of the Double O's way and Haller found himself slammed against the wall. Double O Seven coming so close their noses almost touched.

“You think this is a game!” James growled, while glaring at point blank range. Swiping a finger through the green paint on the younger Alpha's chest, he held his finger right in front of Haller's eye, “THIS MEANS YOU'RE DEAD! DO YOU GET THAT!”

Haller brought his arms up to dislodge the Double O's hold on him. “YES I GET IT!”

Alec leaning against the wall casually, mused, “I think he went soft, getting some general's cup of tea every day. Polishing knobs, boot licking... Is it true he made you go buy a little dolly for his grand daughter's birthday? Was it a Barbie?”

Alec smirked. Haller lunged for the head of training, James caught him though, and Haller's swing missed Alec's face by an inch.

BANG! BANG!

The three brawling men stopped. They looked to the omega at the other end of the concrete corridor. Falkirk holding a gun still aimed at them.

James looked down. On his black body armour, on his side was a round green patch of paint.

Alec shouted, “YOU SHOT ME!” Touching the patch on his chest.

“Really,” Falkirk said while coming closer. “And I thought being a Double O was hard. I killed two of the best... really quiet easily.”

James crossed his arms and glared at his mate. Alec defended, “We were distracted.”

“Best time to shoot someone,” Falkirk said and then looked to the third of the group, “Mr Haller,
you are meant to be the predator. You're letting these two herd you like a good little sheep.”

“M,” the Alpha growled in acknowledgement.

Looking to James and Alec, M ordered, “The fun is over, Bond! Trevelyan! Train him! Or next time it won't be paint rounds.”

M turned on his heels and walked away. Alec sticking his tongue out at the departing man, while James just glared.

A few moments later, having returned to the control room, Falkirk's voice echoed from the roof above the maze of walls.

“Reset! Everyone to start positions!”

Haller waited in his place near the centre of the maze. He heard M's voice in his earpiece, “Hostiles on approach. Haller you are a go! This time, hunt!”

There were six targets in the exercise. Moving through the corridors of the training course, Haller was able to pick off the easy four first. Each of the men giving up when they were hit by the training rounds of green paint. One gave Haller a mocking wave. Haller gave him the middle finger in return.

Only the Current Double O Seven and the ex-Double O Six were a problem. From the first round Haller had figured those two ignored the rest of the team. The problem came from Bond and Trevelyan sometimes working together, other times they worked alone. Only during his MI6 training had he faced a Double O, and like back then he was still outclassed even by a retired Double O.

Spotting Alec crossing the corridor up ahead, from left to right. Haller made his foot falls as quiet as he could while running after the Ex-Double O.

In Haller's earpiece M was very exasperated, “Your back!”

Acting right away, Haller turned to the doorway Alec had came out off to cross the corridor. James came round the corner, Haller fired first hitting the Double O in the chest, at the same time feeling an impact on his own back.

The Klaxon sounded the end of the round.

Haller standing between two open doorways, one man either side of him. M's voice came over the earpiece again, “It didn't matter what way you went, your back was going to be exposed to one of them.”

“Request, reset,” Haller called.

M's voice came over the tannoy calling for everyone to take their places again. Trevelyan blowing him a kiss as he returned to the start point. Haller flipped him off too.

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While it had been interesting watching the training, Falkirk couldn't devote all his time to it.
Double O Nine was doing an infiltration mission this evening, Falkirk was able to observe so it was going to be a late night for M. Double O Six was due to check in this afternoon. And any day now he was expecting an irate President of France to be calling him, because one infuriating Double O well and truly used the President's daughter to sneak into the Presidential Palace to steal some documents.

“Bloody Addison!” Falkirk hissed. He just hoped Addison had proof the French were selling arms illegally, so he would have a stick to fight back with.

Darren's voice came over the intercom, “That traitorous twat to the Irish cause, line one!”

Falkirk pressed the speaker button so he could still work while he spoke. “Yes, Mr Denbigh? What can MI6 do for you?”

“One of your operatives is causing a nuisance!” the head of the UK’s Cyber Security Centre demanded.

“That description covers almost all of my operatives, specifics please.”

“Eugene Choi!” came the annoyed voice from the phone. “He is harassing my staff. I have told him we will get to his request in due course.”

Falkirk looked at the phone and raised an impressed eyebrow. It felt like a while since he'd heard from Choi, and this wasn't the worst way he could hear about him.

“And what is Mr Choi looking for?” Falkirk asked.

“CCTV files. He cannot prove an immediate threat, but has enough for a warrant, so we need a court order to actually begin examining the footage,” Denbigh said. “We must do this legally, to protect the privacy of innocents potentially caught up in events.”

Privacy! Falkirk sat looking at the phone agog. “Excuse me, I don't think I heard you right?”

“This is not funny, M! I have privacy rights watch breathing down my neck.”

“Oh, wait-wait, I know this one... Isn't the answer to that one, everything is covered by the Official Secrets Act? You know in order to protect our nation from criminal prosecution.”

“Not funny, M. Are you going to tell your operative to back off!” demanded the man on the other end of the phone.

“Are you going to aid his investigation?”

“In due course!”

“Then I'll call off Choi, in due course.” Falkirk disconnected the call. Then pulling out his mobile found Choi's number and called it.

“M?” the other man answered with.

“Just had Denbigh on the phone. I want to tell you a joke: A boy goes to confession and says, 'All my friends got new bikes Father, so I prayed for one. But god didn't give me one.' The Priest
chastises him, 'God does not grant wishes, my son, especially ones based on greed and envy.' So the boy says, 'I know god doesn't work like that, Father. So I stole one, I'm here for forgiveness.'"

"M? Are you saying I should break into GCHQ?"

"Absolutely NOT! I am M, I cannot tell you that GCHQ, the Army and a whole host of institutions are run by pricks with egos that make them think they're gods,” Falkirk shouted. “I share with you a perfectly good joke Mr Choi, and you take it as an order. Now get to it!"

Falkirk hung up before the operative could acknowledge. Assaulting the 'Doughnut' would be a test worthy of any Double O.

Tanner arrived an hour or so later. On the internal wall of Falkirk's office they got Thomas' report. It was nothing major, the bread and butter work of MI6. After getting a time frame of about a week for Thomas to find the leader of a Drugs operation that was funding terrorists Double O Six signed off. Tanner then took his leave.

A while later James entered. With a winning smile and twinkling eyes, the Alpha said, “I know you're going to be late. So do you want to catch an early dinner?"

Falkirk didn't need asked twice. He grabbed his coat from the wash room.

"Booked somewhere?" Falkirk asked, coming up to James' side. The Alpha just gave that infuriating smile that meant he wasn't going to tell. It was nice to be beside his Alpha. They left in James' Aston without the full three ring circus of bodyguards, police escorts and official cars.

"James, is that a McDonald's!" Falkirk unimpressed when they pulled into the car park around one of the free standing restaurants. One of those square buildings, made mostly of glass with wide overhanging roof, that looked like hundreds of others up and down the country. Inside it was very loud and rather full, lots of kids mostly teens in their school uniforms still, a few families though with younger kids.

"Big Mac, no pickle?" James confirmed going up to the counter. Falkirk nodded and went to get the last free table.

When James arrived with the tray, Falkirk mused the kids would have liked coming. He only got that infuriating smile in response.

"James, if I was a paranoid person this is when I would be calling Selene,” Falkirk said opening the bun of his Big Mac to make sure there weren't any lurking pickles inside.

"Relax,” James said, sitting in the chair beside him at the small table. Giving Falkirk a gentle shoulder bump.

It was so nice being beside his Alpha. The two in constant contact. James stealing a fry from Falkirk's box. Falkirk stealing a sip of James' shake, and pulling a face when he remembering James liked Banana. Falkirk used his chocolate shake to get rid of the taste of chemical banana from his tongue. They acted more like some of the teens, bumping, playing and even sharing a kiss.

James took his hand when they stood. They walked out into the evening, the lights of London coming on. James led them to the classic car. The Alpha pulled out his key, the car pre-dating
central or remote locking. James frowned and ran his finger over the round lock, and the crusty materiel it was covered in.

“Is that superglue?” Falkirk frowned looking at the lock. “OW!”

James ducked down, dragging Falkirk with him. They were using the car for cover, while James quietly swore about his car being vandalised.

Looking down at what stung him, there was a round green patch on Falkirk's chest. He whipped his head to James, “Was I a target in an assassination exercise?”

“Corpses don't talk.” James gave him a kiss to the forehead. Pulling back he had a wild eyed excitement and there was something alert in the Alpha's smell, “Got a baddy to go hunt.”

The Alpha ducked out from behind the car, keeping low.

“James, you rat bastard!”

“Nothing personal, just revenge for earlier,” the bastard shouted back from another row.

Falkirk stood, and pulled out his phone now needing to arrange a pick up. He saw James breaking cover at a shadowy spot near the edge of the car park, always heading for the direction the shot came from.

“You're enjoying this far too much James,” Falkirk speaking to himself. Haller must have been quite far way, because there had been no sound of the shot.

“M,” said a new voice. Haller coming over, very nonchalant and puffing out his chest.

“Out witting Double O Seven, that's sort of impressive,” Falkirk mused while leaning against the silver car and looking at his lapel, with the green stain, that spread to his white shirt. “I thought you were over that way.”

Haller looked at the direction James had gone. Shaking his head, “Well I had to make him think it was a long distance shot, I don't want him to find me after supergluing all his locks. Want a lift back?”

Falkirk nodded. “Least you can do after ruining one of my suits.”

Haller took him to a rather normal and unimpressive Volvo. The V40 Hatchback was not what Falkirk had come to expect from an Alpha, or operative. “No wonder James didn't notice you tailing us?”

“It does me,” Haller said, unlocking the car with a press of a button and getting in.

They returned to Vauxhall Cross, where Haller turned into the underground car park. He pulled up at the cordoned off section, with the guarded doors to the building.

“M, I know this isn't a game,” the Alpha said. When Falkirk looked to him, Haller was aiming a gun at him. “I'm sorry, I really, really am.”

BANG! BANG! BANG!
Pumped his legs hard, James crossed Vauxhall Bridge, dodging the pedestrians in his way. An emergency text had summoned him back from the training exercise. Reaching the far bank with MI6 on his left, James had to pass along the side of the building in order to get to the main entrance on the street side. In a rush he pushed through the doors, then passed the reception. After taking a left at the memorial wall he had an impatient time waiting for the lift. Eventually the car arrived and the doors opened for him.

Now he just needed to wait for the four story trip up to E-Branch. With a ping the doors started to open, and a fist was coming through the gap towards him. His head whipped back when the fist smashed into James' jaw and he crashed to the ground. Groaning while on the floor he got a good view of black boots, with a two inch square heel. They pivoted, truing their owner around and he got a good look of Selene marching away.

“What the hell?”

Selene turned into E-branch without answering him. With a ping the doors closes, squashing James' middle. Growling with the effort he pulled his legs out of the elevator car so the lift could go. Rolling he got his hands under him to push himself up to his feet.

Working his aching jaw, James could feel it going puffy. Soon there would be a helluva bruise. He was still pressing his jaw with his fingers while gingerly opening and closing his mouth, as he entered E-Branch. He came to a grinding halt. Daniel stood in his way. The bigger alpha leaned in, “See you soon, Double O Seven.”


“Haller!” James growled at the younger Alpha. “Hiding behind Mother's apron.”

Darren started giggling. The bastard of an Alpha just smirked.

“James,” Falkirk called, he was sanding at the door of his office. James frowned, he remembered the paint round hitting his mate on the back, there were now three on his stomach. Falkirk held his arm out, inviting James into the office.

Entering, James made a beeline for the decanter. He wasn't driving tonight anyway.
“James,” Falkirk said, standing at the internal glass wall. In an unusual posture, Falkirk had his hands in his waistcoat pockets, almost emphasising the three spots of green pain on his torso. There was a video playing on the wall.

James just watched the hatchback car arrive and pull up along side the entrance in the underground car park. The angle changed from a side view to one that was looking directly at the car's front windscreen. James watched Haller pull out a gun and Falkirk jump and flinch as he was shot three times at point blank range.

“Oh,” James said, carefully putting his untouched glass down.

“Oh, yes James, Oh! Haller is ready,” Falkirk said slipping in behind his desk and sitting.

“I still think he is too green...” James just trailed off. His omega was in his 'M' persona. There wasn't a discussion happening here, this was Commanding officer and subordinate.

Falkirk said, “I got a very good look, a front row seat you could say. Haller pulled the trigger on me, three times, at point blank range. Yes, they were training rounds but could he do it for real? Yes. You will begin preparations for Mr Haller's deployment.”

“M,” James acknowledged.

“Now, I have an operation to supervise,” Falkirk stood and headed for the door. He made his way through the communal desks of E-Branch.

James exited the office a moment later. Apart from Falkirk disappearing through the door at the back of the room, the whole office was empty. Then from behind the desks of the communal office a dozen stood. Daniel, Selene, Darren, Haller, even Alec the traitor and the latest recruits. James just had a moment to protect his eyes before he was hit by dozens of the training rounds.

When it was over and it felt like he'd been punched dozens of times all over his chest, James lowered his arm from his face. He heard Haller and Darren were laughing and saying how much fun that was. Alec was giving his recruits a bollocking, because a single round hit the glass wall and not James.

Selene came up grabbed him by the tie, and pulled it tight.

“Put M in danger again, and you'll see why I was made a Double O.” Selene said quietly. Shoving James back, she turned on her heels and walked away.

When James turned away from the image of the woman, he came nose to chest with a taller alpha. Closing his eyes, he presented his bruised side of his face, “Come on get it over with.”

The hit came, an open hand slap to the back of his head. Daniel said, “You're an idiot Bond, Really!”

That was better then he expected. Carefully opening his eyes he watched the big alpha walking away, while Haller at Darren's desk laughed and pointing at James. Only James saw the bigger alpha double back, dong that thing where his hard soled shoes were silent. The first Haller knew of Daniel was when his head was slammed and pinned against the desk. Darren got out of the conflict zone pretty quick.
James was too far to hear what Daniel whispered in Haller's ear. The younger Alpha's arms flailed, not able to reach the Alpha pinning him. Haller growled as more pressure was applied to his skull, Daniel threatened, “... and I'll crush it like an egg.”

The bigger alpha pushed from the desk, giving a growl as he did so. James went up when Daniel had left, to offer his hand to Haller.

“I think he hates you more then me,” James said pulling the younger man to his feet. A red mark on Haller's face, a hand print one side and some pressure marks from where his temple had been pressed against the wood on the other.

“Bond,” Haller said, “Just so you know, it wasn't personal.”

“It never should be,” James said. “We need to get organised. Because despite what you think, you're not ready.”

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Pulling in the sporty BMW he'd 'borrowed' from Q-branch, James parked in the garage. After closing the outer door, he exited the normal door at the side of the garage block. He made his way along the dark garden and entered via the kitchen, like he usually did. Hudson and Brayan were in the seating area, they knew James didn't want any help so stayed where they were watching a documentary.

Stopping at the American Style Fridge-freezer, James took out the frozen peas to press to his face. It was belated, but hopefully it would help with the swelling.

Upstairs he found Andrew in the lounge, watching an action movie. Rupert was there too but was working on his laptop, with earphones on. With a groan, James eased into the couch.

“Cool!” Andrew said noticing him and more importantly James' bruise and swollen face, and his suite spattered in dozens of green marks.

“Oh, it was,” James said. Andrew climbed up beside him, with bright eager eyes. James said, “There were a hundred bad guys. Twenty-five came at me from behind. Another twenty-five from the left, twenty-five from the right, and twenty-five ahead. I ran into the ones ahead of me, grabbing a parking meter for a weapon...”

Andrew was bouncing with excitement. James caught Rupert looking at him and rolling his dark eyes.

“You don't believe me,” James accused his adopted son.

“Did you jump up and fly away,” Rupert said.

“How did you know!” James looking genuinely shocked.

Andrew huffed and crossed his arms, “You're talking about the fight in the Matrix.”

James hugged his younger son an pulled him down against him. “I was just making the story more exciting. I was playing, Papa was there and I got distracted leaving him in the middle of London so Aunt Selene punched me.”
Andrew looked shocked, “You wouldn't lose to Aunt Selene.”

“You can lose to anyone,” James said. They settled in, even Rupert put away his laptop to finish watching a bunch of old action stars come together as a group to defeat the bad guy.

When the end credits started, James patted the boys either side of him. “Off to bed.”

Andrew kissed James’ cheek and pulled himself from the couch. Rupert though, he looked at James, “Papa isn't back.”

“He'll be late,” James said, pushing Rupert off the seat for him to stand. Rupert waited until Andrew had left then asked, “Papa is alright?”

James realised Rupert was good, only now Andrew was gone was he showing how worried he was.

“Papa's important, I shouldn't have left him alone. That is all that happened. Selene made sure I wouldn't do it again,” James said reaching up to cup the boy's face. “No need to worry. You'll see papa at breakfast.”

Rupert wished him goodnight and headed out, taking his laptop with him. James frowned a bit as the boy left. He was far more aware than James would have thought and better at hiding what he was actually thinking than James realised.

He was thinking of Rupert still when he heard the crack of heels against the tiled floor. It was Hudson. Then the dull click of the front door being opened followed, along with the butler welcoming Falkirk home.

James switched off the TV and lights, and met his mate in the foyer. James handed the butler the now thawed peas and taking Falkirk's hand they headed upstairs.

“Have you come up with a plan for Haller,” Falkirk asked as they entered their room.

“All sorted and ready to go,” James said, skimming his hands over his mate. Especially the three dried crusty patches of paint on the waistcoat. A gentle hand cupped his swollen face in return.

“How are you?” James asked, while slowly peeling off the waistcoat Falkirk wore.

“Fine, love getting three point blank gut shots form a pretty-boy twit!”

James parted the white shirt, seeing the three dark bruises on his mate's torso. Kneeling down James was eye-level with his mate's pale stomach. Leaning in, James brushed his lips over the upper bruise just under Falkirk's ribs, then moved on to the two just above Falkirk's belly button. He heard his mate sigh and lean into his touch. The Alpha smelling the change in the omega's scent, one to call to his Alpha base instincts. He gripping Falkirk's hips, James leaned in sealing his lips at the ticklish spot on his mate's side.

“James...” Falkirk sighed, “Don't I have enough bruises without you adding more.”

James pulled off with a pop, a small love-bite left behind. His nimble fingers tugged at his mat's belt to slide down Falkirk's trousers. Returning to his feet, James wound his arm around Falkirk's
They just gazed at each other for a few moments. James saw the fatigue lines around his mates normally sparkling eyes. It was late, they needed this though to affirm their bond. Leaning in James sealed his lips over his omega's. Feeling the slender body mould to his.

James grew uncomfortable, almost painful with his own arousal trapped still, while the omega's pressing to him. They tumbled into bed, where James' clothes became a problem. Soon they were naked, and exchanging kisses as they rubbed against each other. The omega wrapped his legs around James so they could join, their bodies building up to a frantic pace that pushed them both towards the edge. At his peak, the Alpha leaned in to mark his omega, renewing the bruise on the side of the omega's neck as he came. Falkirk gasping out and pulling them close, digging his nails into James' back for leverage.

James rolled, so he wasn't crushing his omega while they were tied. When Falkirk nestled into his neck, rubbing his nose over where the pheromones were strongest, James turned to kiss his stated mate.

“I was in idiot,” James whispered.

“Yes!” Falkirk replied, his voice heavy with sleep.

“I shouldn't have left you alone.”

“Nope!”

“I just want to say...”

“I'm trying to sleep James, and my pillows doing a hell of a lot of talking,” Falkirk interrupted, wanting to let James keep his pride. “I understand the rough play. It's necessary, even for me, to keep us all ready and on alert. There was really no genuine threat with Haller.”

James mused. “You sure about that?”

“Yes,” Falkirk insisted, “Haller has one pressure point. He will never endanger his brother. I promised to protect the brother, so Haller won't be a threat to me. From his recruitment he has been trained by some of MI6's best. I am certain he is ready.”

“Now who's doing all the talking,” James whispered. “Night, my omega.”

“My alpha,” Falkirk responded. Relaxing. In a strange way finding comfort in his alpha still inside him. His body tensing, to squeeze the erection and knot that tied them together.

Chapter End Notes

There is a point I'd like to touch on. Given the gun play in the previous chapter and this one, I felt a bit uncomfortable given recent events. I don't making light of such tragedies. I draw a line between fantasy and reality. This is a work of fantasy. In reality, guns are a weapon and should at all times be treated with the utmost respect by
all.

My thoughts are with all victims touched by recent events.
Geoffrey pulled to a stop when he opened his office door. He managed not to roll his eyes seeing a rather trying man was on the other side, with fist raised ready to knock. With a bit of annoyance Geoffrey said, “I'm busy Director. On my way out in fact.”

“We had a break in,” Denbigh mused while walking beside the taller man. “MI6 knew what flight you took coming back from Japan. They knew the name you travelled under too. They wanted the CCTV recordings, to find your image.”

“I hope you did your job,” Geoffrey said.

Denbigh nodded, “Choi only got the edited videos.”

“Good, then there is no other point for your visit.” Geoffrey said sending the man beside him a sideways glance.

“Mr Choi is getting closer, so that means M is getting closer.”

Having exited the river side building. Across the Thames and just a bit further down stream, was the home of M. What Geoffrey Dromgoole did for the country was little different to M, but he was a bit more amenable to some of the more controversial actions than the ones who held dominion in that iconic and rather intimidating pyramid shaped building.

Standing at the open back door of his car, Geoffrey looked at the Director of GCHQ, “Sir James believes we have reached the limit of what we can do as Phase 1. We're moving on to Phase 2.”


“A necessary risk,” Geoffrey said and got in to his car. Unlike the official M, he didn't get police outrider, or back up. After his car pulled away, leaving Denbigh on the pavement Geoffrey ordered his driver, “Diogenes Club.”

With traffic, it was about twenty minutes to arrive at the ornate building, clad in white marble. He wasn't a member, so at reception Geoffrey was presented with a card of the rules, and had to be escorted through the building. In the private library, Mycroft was perusing the books on the shelves. The escorting footman left them, closing the door behind him. With the door closed and just them, Geoffrey could speak.

“Quid pro quo, old boy!”

Mycroft gave one of his grimacing smiles, “What could I possibly do for you?”
Gravesend, three bodies were found in the Thames. Each body was put inside a sleeping bag, then filled with concrete and dumped in the water. Earliest body, was about six months ago, the latest was about two weeks old. The M.O. is worryingly familiar and we thought dealt with. We are hoping for an independent investigation to confirm or deny our suspicions, and your brother’s name was floated.”

Mycroft gave another tight smile. His piercing eyes taking in the nuances and tells. Trying to dissuade Geoffrey he said, “I'm not sure Sherlock would be interested.”

“I'm sure the case will be interesting enough,” Geoffrey said. “And... I don't want to be so vulgar to say you owe us after that journalist thing we fixed for you, but I will.”


“A serial killer, possible a copycat or the original returning.” The man's black eyes twinkling in excitement. He suddenly sobered, “Mycroft, if you're uncomfortable I can try and retain Sherlock's services myself.”

“No, no need,” Mycroft said, knowing Geoffrey was trying to play him. “I shall talk to Sherlock myself.”

“Then I'll leave it in your hands. Good afternoon, Mycroft. A pleasure as always,” Geoffrey said pleasantly and turning away headed out.

Mycroft pulled out his mobile, because he was heading for the door and intending to leave, so needed to text rather than speak while making his way through the club. By the time he reached the front steps, his car was waiting and he had Sherlock's location.

Arriving on Baker street, Mycroft opened the door. Dr Watson's surgery was immanently to the right. A few in the waiting room looked at him. Going up the stairs Mycroft could hear squealing from beyond the door to the flat.

Mycroft gave three precise raps with the knuckle of his index finger. When no one answered and still able to hear sounds from the other side of the door. Mycroft tried the handle and the door swung in. Sherlock lunged over a chair for Rosie, the girl made break for it and came to a grinding halt in front of Mycroft. She just looked up at him with mouth open and in her small hand was a test-tube.

“Rosie, give that back to daddy,” Sherlock said, crawling closer and closer. “He needs it to prove a bad woman poisoned her mother for the inheritance.”

“NO! Play!” the girl chirped in a high oblivious voice and ran off. She round the corner with Sherlock chasing after her.

“If I'm interrupting,” Mycroft mused watching Sherlock chase the girl round and round the kitchen table. Sherlock lunged again, ending up face first on the linoleum floor. Rosie doing a taunting little dance of victory.

“I have a job for you, Sherlock. I will need you to keep me in the loop while you investigate.”

Sherlock glanced at him from the floor, a frown coming to his long face. “You're worried.”
Mycroft gave a tight smile, one that meant Sherlock was correct. Mycroft said, “I believe Someone is trying to tell me something, and you are the way he has chosen to tell me. He wants me to hear the evidence from someone I cannot dispute.”

Sherlock shifted, still sitting on the floor he leaned his back against a cabinet. Rosie, knowing play time was over went to her daddy and sat on his lap, where Sherlock took the test tube from her grip.

Still cuddling Rosie, Sherlock mused, “I'm listening.”

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Falkirk sat in the theatre like room at the back of E-branch. The large screen on the rear of the room showed dozens of images from cameras set up around a large house outside of Paris. The operation was coming to its grand finale. One by one, the SPECTRE assassination squad had been picked off, from the weakest first to leave only the leader alive. Haller had help from James to achieve the impressive feat. Double O Seven had to stay out of sight though, it had to appear Haller was the only one there.

In the ballroom of the once impressive house, the lone leader crashed through the doors. The man in black combat gear skidded over the dirty parquet floor. His ammunition was spent, all he had was a combat knife in his right hand. He was a hardened professional, ready for the fight to the death.

“I was right,” Haller's calm voice came from the speakers. He was not yet in range of a camera, only the leader backing up indicated where Haller stood in the doorway. “I took the ring as a souvenir.”

Haller appeared, and was holding his left hand up with the ring held in his fingers. The other hand held his gun, aimed at the leader. He said, “This is how you were tracking me. You and your organisation is good, but I'm better. I must admit the only reason you are alive is this is getting quite boring. You send someone after me, I kill them, you send someone else, I kill them, on and on just because I took a contract for minor thug who was stupid enough pissed off his wife and mistress.”

“What do you want,” there was a softness to the leader's accent. It wasn't French, but close.

“A truce. Hell, you know how good I am. I've killed ten of your people, wait no, elven including the first one. For peace, I'm willing to open negotiation with your organisation.”

“You'll let me go?” said the leader.

Haller lowered his gun and pointed to the side of the room, “That door will take you out to the garden. Come back here when you want to talk.”

In front of the SPECTRE agent, Haller opened a small mesh box and dropped in the ring. With the ring safely inside the Faraday Cage, Haller smirked at the other man, “Can't have you following me.”

The man dressed in all black combat gear cautiously edged towards the doors. Opening them he ran out into the gardens and forest beyond. Haller, slowly and languidly followed to the French doors and pulled them closed.
Over the speakers, another voice came, “Double O Seven to M. Phase 1: Accomplished.”

“Very good, Double O Seven,” Falkirk said standing. “Stay on station until Haller has been recruited.”

“M,” James acknowledged.

At the door of the room, Falkirk looked over Tanner and the others there to support an operation M was supervising.

“Goodnight everyone. Have a great weekend, and don't dare call me for anything less than world war three.”

“M,” Tanner acknowledged for everyone.

Falkirk headed across the communal office space. Reaching Darren's desk he said, “I'm knocking off early. It'll be good to get back home before the kids.”

“I'm free,” Darren cried, grabbing his coat from the back of his chair and packing up. In a shrill voice that carries very far he shouted, “SELENE! M'S BUNKING OFF!”

“Very professional,” Falkirk dead-panned, heading for his own office. By the time Falkirk had grabbed his own coat, Darren was gone and Selene was waiting for him.

Arriving home, it was nice to see it in daylight. Usually it was dark by the time Falkirk got home. He wished Selene a goodnight and headed up the steps. The car with Selene still waited until Hudson opened the door.

Stepping inside, Falkirk took off his coat and handed it over to the butler. Noticing a bandage on the older Alpha's hand, Falkirk asked about it. Giving an awkward clearing of his throat Hudson said, “The new kitchen maid, is a bit more accident prone than I would have imagined.”

Falkirk gave a small laugh and said, “You're the one who hired her.”

It was a nice evening, a bit quieter without James winding up Andrew. Rupert spent most of his time with earphones on and his laptop out. He was coming up to his GCSEs. He was taking the stress of the upcoming exams well, so long as someone didn't bug him like little brothers tended to do.

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Enjoying the quiet Saturday, mostly down to his mobile being placed in his desk drawer and left there. If something important happened everyone knew other ways to get in touch with him. Falkirk stood at his Library window, watching the two boys down on the lawn. Rupert had been told to take a break from his studying, he and Andrew were now having a kick about.

Hearing a soft knock, Falkirk called for whoever it was to come in. The shaggy-blond Alpha stuck his head in.

“Brush...” Brayan closed his eyes a moment searching for the cat's name.
“Yes,” Falkirk said lifting the white long haired cat from the deep cushion covered window sill. It should be Rupert or Andrew, but the methodical repetitive task was something Brayan had come to enjoy.

The cat was fairly content to go to Brayan. While they were close, Falkirk noticed a set of scratch marks on the Alpha’s neck, ones too broad to have come from a cat, but something else known to scratch when scared. An Omega's scratch mark to the face, neck and hands of an alpha acted as a warning and it did put Falkirk on guard.

“Did you hurt yourself?” Falkirk asked, indicating Brayan's neck.

“Eh...” with his free hand, Brayan touched his neck. A frown came to his handsome face, “Yes, something happened...”

Brayan had been perfectly gentle with himself and Andrew even at his most frustrated. Falkirk said, “Don't worry about it, it doesn't look bad.”

Brayan nodded and went to sit on the stairs, where he began brushing out the long white hair. Falkirk continued on, passed Brayan and into the corridor that would take him to the kitchen stairs.

Falkirk's paranoia wanted an explanation to Brayan's scratches, but didn't want to press the Alpha when he had problems with his short term memory. Reaching the bottom of the stairs into the kitchen, he saw a young woman standing on top of bar stool with one of the big cast iron pots held out to the side, very far. The stool wobble, the woman tried to keep hold of the pot and began to over balance. Falkirk dashed across the kitchen. The woman screamed as she started to fall. The pot crashed to the stone floor as Falkirk caught the falling woman, or more precisely he became a the cushion for her to land on. Both crashing to the floor.

In a posh voice, the dark haired Omega was apologising while squirming on top of him. Before Falkirk could ask her to get off, Mrs Bridges stormed out of the pantry, “WHAT'S GOING ON!”

“Oh, Sir? EVY! Up Girl!” Mrs Bridges said in a flap, seeing the tangle of two bodies, a tipped over stool and a pot which had cracked a tile. The older alpha pulled the younger off Falkirk.

Falkirk reassured the floor bore the brunt of the damage. Although he thought he would have a new bruise from the Maid's elbow, to replace the ones from the training rounds which had finally faded.

“I told you, no steps. Leave that to Brayan or Mr Hudson. What use are you with your head dashed across the floor,” Mrs Bridges snapped at the cowering maid.

Dusting himself off, Falkirk could stand. Without thought and very embarrassed, and while apologising the Maid started to brush Falkirk's front down with her hands. He jumped back when she got a bit more intimately close than Falkirk wished.

“Please, no need!” Falkirk said backing up from the omega's help.

Evy continued to apologise until Mrs Bridges snapped, “Kettle, girl!”

“Oh, yes, right away,” Evy said heading for the kettle, while Falkirk picked up the stool at his feet.

The old and rather round Omega rolled her eyes, and she apologised to Falkirk too. Letting out a sigh Mrs Bridges went to the fallen pot and with the oddest motion of keeping legs and back
straight, pivoting only at the hips she picked it up before Falkirk could even offer to.

“Stop, let me” Falkirk said anyway and picked up the lid.

“Most kind Sir,” Mrs Bridges said. Setting the heavy pot on the counter, with Falkirk putting the lid back on. He then lifted the pot up to the high shelf, without the need to climb on stool or ladder.

The boiling kettle clicked off, and a sudden crash sounded. Falkirk could see a long suffering look pass over the old cook's face. Evy apologised again, and grabbed some paper towels.

“The water's hot girl!” Mrs bridges snapped as Evy moved to wipe up the water over the counter and dripping onto the floor. “Use that towel girl!”

Evy took up the cotton dish towel and used it to wipe up the steaming water.

Tapping Mrs Bridge's shoulder and gesturing to Hudson's pantry Falkirk walked towards it. Falkirk recognised the weeks dinner charts laid out on the desk.

“How's she working out?” Falkirk asked, now they had some privacy in the small office.

“She'll be fine,” Mrs Bridges reassured, “The silly girl just needed to learn to think things through more.”

“Brayan had some scratches?” Falkirk asked and Mrs Bridges shook her head.

“The silly girl was trying to get a cobweb,” Mrs Bridges said with exasperated scorn then her face lit up, and with tender pride, “You should 'ave seen it sir, Brayan rushed across the room and caught her, held her like a new bride over the threshold.”

“Got those scratches for his trouble,” Mrs Bridges added, her voice again tinged with scorn. “There was the courtyard stairs before that. Trying to talk to Mr Hudson she was. She turned to say something, and nearly went down backward. Oh Mr Hudson managed to grab her he did, he gots some scratches too, sir.”

Falkirk shook his head, “Why do I feel I'm not carrying enough insurance. I know Omegas don't have the best reputation when it comes to clumsiness.”

“She'll grow out of it, sir,” Mrs Bridges said. Sitting at the desk to go over the menu for the week and the shopping list.

Falkirk stepped out of the pantry to see Evy starting to climb up the stool again.

“Evelyn Carnahan!” Falkirk called and the Omega froze at the authority in his voice. “Please refrain from climbing! I do not want your brains decorating my floors!”

The nervous young woman said, “But it's not far, and I don't like disturbing Mr Hudson or Brayan.”

“Please, Evy, disturb them,” Falkirk said. And pointedly took the stool away from the shelves and put it back by the bar that ran along the rear of the kitchen.

“Perhaps she will listen to you. She hasn't listened to anyone else,” Mrs Bridges snapped from
behind him.

Falkirk took the tray Evy had prepared for him. A pot of tea, a single cup and a small plate with dainty cake on it. The cake looked strange, not from Falkirk's favourite patisserie, it was diamond shaped, covered in glossy black icing, and a dried and candied orange segment.

Meeting Hudson in the hall attached to the main foyer, the butler was winding the grandfather clock. Falkirk said, “Evy seems determined to get herself injured.”

“She's quite talented though,” Hudson mused. Looking to the tray, “Her orange and dark chocolate cake is quite delectable.”

“Just as long as she doesn’t kill herself,” Falkirk said.

Taking the tray out the back, he sat at the bistro table to watch Andrew and Rupert playing with Brayan. The blond backed up against the garage as a makeshift goal, while the two boys took turns trying to score penalties.

“Sir,” Hudson called rushing out with the cordless phone in hand. “Mr Mallory, Darren.”

Taking the phone, Falkirk put it to his ear. Rather subdued, Darren said, “Meet me at St Bart's!”
Falkirk turned the corner at the end of the short corridor from the lifts. Up ahead, congregated outside one of the rooms he saw a police officer on guard duty and two women. It looked like the small round nurse and tall and slender older woman were in an argument. Getting closer he heard the nurse as she wagged a finger at the older woman, “Madam! This is a no smoking area!”

Leaning down, the old woman enunciate in a very posh voice, “I said, fuck off!”

The nurse looked to a uniformed police officer standing by a door and demanded, “Why don't you do anything, she's breaking the law.”

The officer shook his head, “I'm here to stand guard.”

The sound of Falkirk and Selene approaching must have drawn the older woman's attention because she looked to them. Her scowl deepened, “The great Sir Thomas. M! What could you possibly be doing here.”

“Visiting a friend,” Falkirk replied.

“So you're how Philip got my number,” The woman accused.

“No, Ms Eiffel,” Falkirk said, glancing the woman up and down. Dressed in comfortable jeans, casual blouse and a stretched out cardigan with some holes in it that she wore open. Between index and middle finger the cigarette releasing a snaking curl of smoke and her other hand held her mobile phone almost out of sight. Falkirk was sure that phone would be recording every word said, she was a journalist by trade after all even when she looked like she had thrown any old thing on.

Turning to the door, the officer blocked Falkirk's way. The officer said, “Sorry, sir. Can't let you in.”

Eiffel gave a cultured chuckle. Before Falkirk could stop the worst possible words tumbled out his mouth.

“Do you know who I am!”

“No, sir.”

“Find out.” Falkirk said with as much dignity as he could muster. “Thomas McLair, look it up!”
The officer tapped on the door and pushed it open a bit, while keeping Falkirk and Selene in view. Softly the officer announced who was at the door. Then jumped back when Darren ripped it open all the way. The other omega grabbed Falkirk and pulled him in by his cardigan. The journalist tried to enter again and was held back by the officer and Selene.

A single bed took up most of the space inside the private room. There weren't any monitors Falkirk could see. Only as he stood beside the bed could he see Philip. The normally pale omega somehow looked even more so, except for the black eye which was swollen shut. The concerning thing was the raised bedding over the unconscious omega's lower half.

Darren noticing what Falkirk was looking at said, “The bastard Kneecapped him. Broke his legs from ankle all the way up to hip.”

Mallory reached out to his mate, Darren barely noticing the touch. Darren looked to Falkirk, “So when do we deal with the bastard.”

Falkirk glanced to the door. The woman on the other side could be a problem. Falkirk had given Philip her contact because she was hard as nails, tenacious and desperate for a follow up to the book she wrote about the rescued Afghani Dancing Boy.

“When are we gonna shove a bomb up John-boy's arse!” Darren demanded when Falkirk didn't answer.

Taking Philip's hand, Falkirk looked down to his bruised and swollen face. “When I'm sure people with too big noses don't stick them where they don't belong.”

Looking to Darren who was being held by Mallory. Falkirk asked, “Why is Karen Eiffel here?”

Darren shrugged. “She was here when we arrived.”

Gently Falkirk brushed Philip's long black hair from his face. He turned away and headed for the door. Pulling it open, the silver haired woman was pacing up and down, puffing away like a steam train. Selene still blocked the door along with the officer.

Under the smell of burning tobacco, the omega picked up on the ques of hyper alertness from the Alpha woman. Sherlock would be so proud when he deduced the reason Eiffel was smoking was to hide how her hands shook. Her phone in the other hand, held in a white knuckled grip so it was occupied. Apparently there was something that frightened Karen Eiffel.

Falkirk asked the woman, “Why are you here?”

“I found Philip,” Eiffel said out the side of her mouth without stopping her pacing. “I got a visitor, he told me my phone was about to ring and left. It did! A call from Philip's mobile, he didn't say anything, so I called the police and went round to Philip's. When he didn't answer the door the police forced entry.”

The slim woman took Falkirk's arm and started walking him away from the officer. She glanced back to Selene keeping pace but she spoke.

“We were talking to someone, James Maguire, a friend of Philip's from Northern Ireland. He tried to leave and was hiding with Philip, but wasn't there when we found Philip,” Eiffel switched to a quiet whisper. “I know you M. Parekh was a disappointed you had any mention of yourself
redacted from the book. What were you back then? Deputy director? What are you now!”

“I don’t know what you're talking about,” Falkirk said.

“Bullshit! What you do might not get reported, but you're far from subtle. What are you going to do?” the scared woman demanded.

Falkirk smelled the fear in the Alpha's scent. Her hands trembled as she took out another cigarette to continue her chain smoking. The problem for Falkirk was she might be terrified but it didn't stop her being a journalist and he was sure her mobile was recording them.

“We will have to trust the police to do their duty,” Falkirk said.

Falkirk and Selene pulled away, Eiffel intending to pace the corridor for a while more. Unwilling to go home for the time being, and Falkirk would bet it had more to do with her fear then concern for Philip.

When in Selene's jaguar, she asked Falkirk, “What are you going to do?”

“Find that James, Eiffel mentioned,” Falkirk said and pulled out his mobile. He started tapping away. John-boy Power was someone Falkirk had been keeping tabs on.

Selene dropped him off at home. She asked, “Will you be needing me?”

“Not right away,” Falkirk said and thanked her for the lift. He then wished her a good evening and headed inside.

The boys were having burgers for their dinner. Falkirk asked Hudson for a tray in the library, because he had research to do.

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“I'm sure M is working on something,” Mallory said, placing a comforting hand on his mate's shoulder.

“Please!” Darren spat with an eye roll. “You know Falkirk! When he gets mad he goes charging off! He buried some fecking prince in concrete to save some anonymous woman! He threatened to nuke the world! What did he do this time? Strolled away like...”

Darren trailed off just looking at his cousin in the bed. Mallory hugged Darren from behind. Darren whispered, “I thought he cared about Philly.”

“I'm sure he does,” Mallory answered. “I for one am quite grateful M's thinking rather than acting. Leaping in with both feet is rather trying for those of us who have to cover up his tracks.”

“Suck it up! That's why Falkirk got you your job,” Darren said.

A nurse came in. After checking on Philip she said, “You can go home. He's stable and will be kept sedated until tomorrow morning.”

Mallory tightened his hug, “Let's go get some rest.”
Darren shook his head. Gareth turned his omega round to look him in the eye. The Alpha insisting, "We're going home Darren, and we'll come back in the morning."

The exhausted omega only nodded, where Mallory would usually get a punch for trying to order him around.

Hand in hand they walked to the door, Darren giving a last concerned look to the bed before leaving the room. Out in the corridor, the silver haired woman was still there. Slumped and sprawling, she had fallen asleep in one of the chairs lining the corridor.

In the car park they approached Mallory's pride and joy, a 70s Jaguar. A low, wide an very long car of traditional British Racing Green. Being chivalrous, Mallory opened the passenger door for his omega, but Darren was looking off. A woman was approaching them. A mousy woman, that Mallory assumed to be an omega. Petit, with brown hair and dressed in an over sized sweat shirt.

Darren tilted his head to the side, “Alice?”

The woman nodded, “We've been waiting for you.”

To Mallory's surprise she pulled open the back door and got in. Looking to his omega, finding him in the car, the door pulled from Mallory's hand and slammed closed. Darren knocked the window and gestured for Mallory to move his arse.

Rounding the front of the car, Mallory got in. The strange omega behind him. Looking to Darren, “What's going on?”

Alice interrupted, “Dagenham Dock.”

“Who is she!” Demanded Mallory, reversing out of the parking space anyway.

Darren said, “Oh, you remember Alice, she came to the barbecue. Alec made the ribs with the chillies Alice grows.”

“SHE'S THE TORTURER!” Mallory remembered Alec's cooking and the horror stories of the woman who supplied him with the ingredients that made a cloud of toxic fumes that left them all choking.

“Yeah,” Darren said with a bobbing head. “Knew Falkirk would be up to something.”

From the back, Alice said, “We found Philip's friend. Mr Powers was in the end, very cooperative.”

“I bet,” Mallory said under his breath.

It was rather late and the streets quiet for London. It still took some time to get across London, to the industrial area out east. They passed the power station heading towards the docks on the river.

The headlights of the car hit something, Mallory said, “Is Bond here?”

Alice said no, while Mallory pulled in beside the Aston Martin.

The two omegas jumped out the second he stopped the car. Without locking the car and almost
leaving his keys, Mallory feeling he was playing catch up all the time he ran after the two. Alec was waiting for them, he led them through the industrial yard where pylons stretching out from the power plant, then the container storage closer to the dock. Patchy flood lights meant there were large patches of pitch black amongst the stacked shipping containers.

They came out from between a row of shipping containers. A lone figure sat on a metal bollard used to secure ships, his face illuminated from the glow of a phone. Falkirk looked up at them when they neared.

“Sorry Darren, no bombs inserted into intimate places,” Falkirk said. He nodded to a pier that reached out into the deeper centre of where the Thames widened.

Darren headed for the pier and walked along it. Mallory again having to catch up to his Omega on the whirlwind of events. The Alpha whispered, “We shouldn't be here.”

“I want to see the prick die,” a coldness in Darren's voice. “It is the arsehole who shut me in a cellar with you just as I was going into heat. Then left us there to make sure we bonded.”

That was like a gut punch to the Alpha. He said, “I know our start wasn't the best, but I've come to care deeply for you, love you.”

“I know,” Darren stopped to look at his Alpha. “I love you too. But John-boy needs to pay. Not just for me, my Pa, Philly, and more than I can name.”

“There are legal means,” Mallory said.

“Stop being so... honourable!” Darren blasted. “This is how the IRA works, how MI6 works, how criminals work.”

Darren let his hand slip from his Alpha's, “You don't have to come.”

“I will!” Mallory insisted and took Darren's hand again. “For you.”

Reaching the end of the pier. They found a slim omega with wavy blond hair. That one Mallory recognised, Double O Six.

“Is he alive?” Darren asked going up to the man bound in duck tape.

Stuart Thomas said, “Yes, but Alice did a number on him.”

'A number! Mallory thought. The naked man was covered in wounds. Nothing like the slimy arrogant fuck with too big smile Mallory vaguely remembered from all those years ago.

The Double O whipped out a sleeping bag, and starting at the IRA Enforcer's feet pulling it up under his body right up and over the head. He then dragged the bag with body on it to the very edge of the pier.

While Thomas backed off, Darren just looked at the guy who struck fear into so many. People like John-boy loved their job, they liked people being terrified of them and more so liked hurting them. Darren thought about kicking the bastard, but there was no point if he wasn't awake to feel it.

Thomas went to the Ford Ranger where he hefted a sack onto his shoulder. Darren and Mallory
stood aside so the Double O could put the concrete mix beside the sleeping bag. He slit the top so he could pour the dry mix over the body. He added two more bags before he zipped up the sleeping bag.

When Double O six returned for a fourth time, he was dragging a hose which he slipped into the bag from the open top. Then gathering the material, he closed the top, using zip-ties and ducktape to seal it best he could. Going back to his truck, he climbed onto the flat bed, and using a hand crank pumped water from the water butt, along the hose and into the sleeping bag.

Mallory and Darren watched the sleeping bag fill out like sausage. There were a few leaks but not enough to let the thickening sludge escape. Thomas joined them, then slowly so did Falkirk and Alec. Every so often, Double O six poked the bag to judge the setting concrete.

“Interesting technique,” Alec mused.

Double O six shrugged, “Less chance of him being ID'd than the traditional 'concrete boots'."

Mallory, while still holding his omega said, “And I thought I saw some horrors in Northern Ireland.”

Falkirk said, “Ten clubs in London alone, four of which are outright brothels. Drugs and Protection rackets. This is not yet over.”

“You could have called the police,” Mallory accused.

Falkirk raised an eyebrow, “Yes, I could have. Lawyers get involved. Technicalities mean cases collapse. Witnesses and their families are threatened and intimidated if not killed outright. If I'm going to get my hands dirty, it will be to make the lives of the most vulnerable safer.”

“What does that mean?” Mallory demanded.

Darren said, “You're going to take over John-boy's network.”

Falkirk nodded. Then frowned, “Not personally.”

While they talked the concrete had hardened. It needed Stuart Thomas, Alec and Mallory to roll the encased John-Boy Powers into the Thames where he sank like the stone he now was.

Falkirk said, “Now we have a power vacuum, I need to go talk to a succubus about filling it.”

Mallory watched Falkirk walking away. They heard the purring roar of the classic Aston, then the deeper roar sound of Alec's motorbike.

“James won't be happy with Falkirk driving his car,” Darren mused.

With the dawn fast approaching, The Double O tidied away his equipment and jumped into his pick-up and drove off.

When it was just him and Darren who was looking into the brown murky water. Mallory said, “What is M doing?”

“Falkirk runs brothels, in Washington, New York, here, Paris. He took them out of the hands of the
criminal gangs. He's adding John-boys to it.”

“That will be a turf war,” Mallory said. “Gang wars across London!”

“Not the way Falkirk does it,” Darren heading away. Mallory running to catch up again.
“Well, what have we going on here?” Purred a sultry voice. The crack of heels on the ground accompanying the woman’s approach.

Falkirk turned from the large internal window to ‘The Woman’ being escorted into the industrial, red brick office by Selene. “Ms Adler, I have a job for you.”

The dark haired woman came up to Falkirk. Extending a hand she laid it on Falkirk's collar bone, and dragged her fingers round his chest, shoulder and back as she circled him.

While still circling round Falkirk, she leaned in to whisper, “How is the Virgin?”

“A father,” Falkirk said, not at all taken in by her sultry intimidation.

“Well I can look him up now,” Irene Adler whispered in Falkirk's other ear. “We could all meet up.”

Falkirk pulled out several photos from his inside pocket and held them out, “My friend here needs a successor.”

Adler flipped through the photos starting with a dark haired man being grabbed by some men in balaclavas, then being bundled into a van, being beaten, being tied up with masking tape and being stuffed inside a sleeping bag and finally being tossed into the Thames.

“And what did this naughty boy do?” Adler asked pressing to his side.

“None of your concern,” Falkirk said crisply without looking to the woman pressing her heaving chest to his shoulder while drawing patterns on his chest with a manicured red nail. “What is your concern is the ten clubs he owned, and those he has exploited. Stop the drugs and protection rackets...”

“Bla-bla-bla,” Adler responded then leaned in so her lips brushed Falkirk's ear, “I know the routine. Save the poor little people. Give them a way out of their situation. Give them real opportunity. Clean them up.”

“Yes, Ms Adler,” Falkirk stepped forward. The dingy, dark and elevated office of the old factory looked down on the almost empty production floor. Only three people were there, one gagged and tied to a chair. “Nidge there, was John-Boy's right hand man. With careful persuasion he is now willing to work with us. But you should know much of the organisation is ex-IRA.”

The Woman froze at that. Falkirk just gazed at her.
“You bastard!” she pushed away from Falkirk and glowered at him.

“Have I not always had your back,” Falkirk said with a winning smile. “You'll find all of Mr Power's assets are now yours... As a society we really shouldn't be so reliant on electronic records. They are so easily changed. And I'll keep some of the more problematic elements of Mr Power's organisation occupied.”

Adler had only ever seen that smile once before, on a different and equally dangerous omega. She said, “If I die, I won't be happy.”


“You do like to spoil all my fun,” Adler purred and giving Falkirk's cheek a kiss said, “But I forgive you.”

“I leave Mr Powers' empire in your care, Ms Adler,” Falkirk said and headed off. Selene falling in step with him. Leaving Adler to deal with Nidge, with the assistance of Kew and Masood.

Opening the door, the bright light of the day was blinding after the shut up and condemned factory. The rickety external stairs creaked and clunked as the two walked down them. Falkirk's phone started ringing.

Noticing James' name on the caller ID. Falkirk answered with, “Shouldn't you be watching Haller's back?”

“He was black bagged. I followed him to a safe house, where he took a stroll around the gardens. Met some people. He seemed happy enough to get into the helicopter that arrived a day or so later.”

“So he's in,” Falkirk mused. While Selene opened the door of her car for him.

“I do have two points,” James said, the smugness radiating off his voice. “Firstly, someone with no future in spying let slip you used my car.”

“Andrew! That little blabber mouth,” Falkirk snapped, making Selene chuckle.

“Hay, I'm the one meant to be mad,” James shot. “Have you seen the way you drive! Fast and 'Oh my god I'm going to die!' are the only two speeds you know! Did Selene know, I'm sure your driving is more dangerous than leaving you in a car park with an assassin.”

“Oh, stop complaining. I didn't want to disturb Selene twice in one day, and I met up with Alec. And Mr James Bond, Double O Seven, I've not crashed once!”

Selene was sniggering to herself and sending Falkirk sideways glances. Rather enjoying the little spat between lovers going on beside her. Falkirk had pulled his phone away from his ear, and was making a opening and closing, 'nagging' gesture with his other hand while James defended his driving history and the multitude of crashes he'd had through his life.
“JAMES!” Falkirk snapped to stop James. “What was the other point?”

“Who's the stray hiding in the guest room?”

“His name is James, he's staying until Philip's out of hospital,” Falkirk said and filled his mate in on the events. He ended by saying, “James, try not to scare him too much.”

“No promises.”

Oh, Falkirk didn't like how his Alpha purred that.

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The Jaguar saloon pulled to a stop outside an ornate building. Geoffrey Dromgoole got out of the back and entered the wide glass doors of the Gentlemen's club. Being a member of this one, he signed himself in and moved passed the marble and gilt lobby. Turning left at the grand stairs he headed for the preferred lounge of the man he was looking for. He found who he was looking for at a small table with low chairs, by the large carved marble fireplace.

“Sir James,” Geoffrey greeted. Then looked to the other man sitting with Sir James, “Scotty.”

The taller Alpha, a veteran of espionage knew he shouldn't be here all of a sudden. Scotty excused himself, and Geoffrey took his still warm chair. Geoffrey sat the small cam-corder in his lap, and flipped out the screen at the side of the palm sized device. All the while complaining under his breath about not being able to use something more modern, but modern meant internet connectivity, which in turn meant hackable by one annoying omega. He finally got it set up and held it out to the other man.

Taking the camera from the younger man, Sir James asked, “What am I looking at?” His old piercing blue eyes squinting to see a screen less than two inches square.

“A problem, potentially. That is Double O Six, dumping a body.”

“Isn't that a good thing?” the older man frowning deeply trying to see the screen.

“Of an IRA Enforcer, now one of London's most dangerous gangsters. With M and C looking on. What if M condones Double O Six's actions!”

“Ah, I see,” Sir James said handing back the camera. “How far is Mr Holmes from discovering Double O Six?”

“A week, maybe two,” Geoffrey mused, while switching off the camera and tucking it away.

“Give me that,” Sir James demanded, holding out his hand for the camera again. “We might be able to use it against M and C if they make trouble.”

The older man began to smile to himself. A fox's grin.

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Falkirk glanced to the omega beside him. He wondered if James was related to Darren and Philip in some way, he fit their description. Maybe a little broader, and with brown eyes. Still rather delicate
with curly black hair. Attitude-wise, he didn't use his mouth to disguise his fear, like Darren and Philip did. He was rather quiet and nervous in fact, but that might be down to recent events or, and possible the other James on Falkirk's other side.

It was nice having his Alpha back. As they walked down the corridor, Falkirk reached out to entwine his fingers with James' rough thick ones. The pads of his soft thumb brushed over the slight rounded hard skin where the handle of a gun had built up a callus at the base of James' index finger.

“OH!” Falkirk squeaked. He turned around and back tracked along the corridor. “Sorry, I got distracted.”

The Alpha just sent him a private smile with a twinkle in his crystal blue eyes.

Falkirk knocked on the door he had walked right passed. He pushed it open and indicated the other omega to go in first.

James gave Falkirk a peck on the cheek, before following the other James into the room. Falkirk was left blushing in the corridor. He was the last in, and as the noise indicated the room was full.

Granda Joe, was over from Ireland, along with the matriarch Ma Mary. Darren was by the bed, while Gareth hid in the corner of the room. The author Eiffel was trying to shout down Ma Mary. Everyone was talking, and talk over each other, and shouting and shouting over each other. In the centre of it all was the bed, with Philip who was beckoning the omega James closer.

Falkirk gave the other omega a shove and the people started to part for them so they could reach the bedside.

“James, so good to see you,” Eiffel's posh, enunciated voice cut through the din. “Are you up to telling me what happened?”

“Would you give the lad a fecking break,” the old man with white beard blasted at the alpha woman. His Daughter, Ma Marry squared up to the other woman, “Who exactly are ya! And what the hell are you doing here anyway!”

James Bond, Double O Seven, fearless Alpha, backed up to the corner with Gareth. The two exchanging a nod of greeting in the loud room. Then crossing their arms and taking no part in the craziness.

Falkirk and Darren took up a place at one side of the bed, while James perched on the edge at the other side.

Ma opened a hamper and started laying out some lemonade, some fresh fruit, home made sandwiches, “...ya know that shite they serve in hospital is awful....”

Granda helping himself to a corned beef and being told off by his daughter for taking what was intended for Philip. Granda shouting back, “How many have ya got... ya made ten o' them! An' five o' the fish past! Here, I'll have one o' them too. My god woman, you could feed the five thousand!”

Philip was obviously tired, but had a soft smile on his wide lips while watching his grandfather and Aunt. He looked to the side, to the younger omega. “How are you?”
“Fine, considering,” Despite being Irish, James had been in England so long he had a northern lilt to his accent, making it softer then the London. “The police raided the house and found me.”

“John-boy?”

At that question, Falkirk laid a hand on Philip's shoulder. When the other omega looked to him, Falkirk said, “No need to worry about him.”

“An' what the feck does that mean!” blasted Granda, having heard. Eiffel perked at that, and for the first time quiet fell in the room.

With a creepy smile, one that was matched on Darren's face, Falkirk said, “I can neither confirm or deny, anything!”

Chapter End Notes

When you swipe characters from various fandomes, like I do. I fall into the problem of having too many called James. The latest one won't be portrayed beyond this chapter though, just mentioned once more and Philip a few more times.
“Oh Doctor, we're just heading out,” said the little old woman, dressed in tweed skirt suit and with round spectacles perched on the end of her nose.

Watson looked up and smiled, seeing Miss Marple and with Rosie's hand held in hers.

“We're just popping to the park. Doctor?” the old woman frowned and glance to the stairs briefly, “I think Mr Holmes might be a bit upset.”

Watson looked round the empty waiting room. The receptionist was away from the small corner desk, so it was lunch time. The second he showed the patient beside him out he could knock off for an hour too.

“I'll see to him,” Watson assured.

He showed out the old man with his recurrence of gout, no matter how much Watson recommended he wouldn't give up his excess of port, rich cheese and cured meats. Once the hobbling old man was out, Watson went down on one knee to give his daughter a kiss and wish her a good time.

Going upstairs, John found Sherlock pouting while sitting in his chair with arms crossed.

“What's up?” John asked going to the kitchen. Seeing the equipment and specimens on the table and counters, “We built you a lab remember! Why is this stuff up here?”

Sherlock let out an explosive sigh, which in 'Sherlock' meant he wanted some sympathy. John stopped rummaging for sandwich ingredients and looked over the fridge door to the man in the other room.

“I'm listening,” John said. Sherlock only pointed to the kitchen table in answer.

Turning around, John saw the open paper on the table. Firstly John flipped to the front page, confirming it to be the 'Australian', then returned to where it had been left open.

Cont. from Page 1. Police confirmed the two newest bodies found dumped in Sydney Harbour, were in the same condition as the previous two finds. The first being three bodies, and the second of four bodies, all encased in concrete...

“Isn't this good,” John asked looking to Sherlock.

“It was HER!” Sherlock jumped up to pace. “SHE'S HELPING ME! I DON'T NEED HELP!”
John tried not to laugh. But the nanny/housekeeper, wherever Sherlock's brother had gotten her she was a match for the great detective, in all ways.

“It might be coincidence,” John tried to appease.

Sherlock stormed over, closed the paper and pointed to the date, three years ago, “She ordered a reprint! Then just left it laying about for me to find.”

Sherlock then opened the paper to the page with the article and pointed to the ring of a coffee stain and in the exact centre was a name, of the Forensic Pathologist on the case, 'Dr. Lyle Fairly'

“I called him!” Sherlock blasted. “I asked if any of the victims had a relationship with Dr Daniel Harrow? He knew Harrow, he worked there! I then got a call from the Sydney police, they confirmed each of the victims were close to someone who died. In each of those death, the doctor who conducted the autopsy was one Doctor Daniel Harrow!”

Sherlock backed away, still fuming that the little old lady was a dozen steps ahead of him. He stopped in front of the wall that separated him from next door. The one Moran blew out, killing Mrs Hudson. It was decorated with his leads for his current case. All six victims found in London were the same. His eyes landed on a middle aged man, when alive he had shaved head and sagging squared chin. Then he looked at the entombed concrete covered body that was pulled out of the Thames. Rodger Corbit lost his thirteen year old son a year before he was murdered and one Doctor Daniel Harrow formally of the Sydney Medical Examiner's office was the one to conduct the son's autopsy. Of the six in London and the twelve so far from Sydney, Harrow was the only common link.

Grabbing his coat, Sherlock pulled it on and turned up the collar. Passing John taking a bite out of his sandwich, he grabbed the doctor and started pulling the beta along with him. Ignoring John's protest about patients and lunch because Sherlock was texting while he walked.

Whether John wanted to or not, he was dragged to St Bart's. It still caused a twinge in himself, and he could see how Sherlock braced before entering. Molly Hooper another victim from Moran's revenge, it felt so wrong to be here and she not.

“What am I doing here!” Demanded an Alpha woman waiting on them. Dressed in functional trouser suite, and a bit bored looking.

Sherlock offhandedly answered, “Well Lestrade thinks he's above helping me, just because he's Assistant Commissioner now.”

“So it's down to a lowly DI to heed your beck and call,” the woman smirked at him. “Do you even remember my name?”

“Deleted it!”

“You know you're using that term wrong,” DI Hopkins said following Sherlock. “Deleting means the information is still there.”

“Only until it's over written,” Sherlock responded. "It was!"

They continued on to the labs of the Pathology department. They found the man they were looking for in a lab Sherlock and John had been in many times. Once the domain of a mousy Omega, now
“Doctor Harrow,” Sherlock said. In a single breath he rattled off his deductions and the evidence he’d gathered. Times, dates, locations. How the Doctor was the only common link between the victims and in all cases met the victims through his work on a next of kin.

“One problem,” The tall dark haired Doctor smirked. “I wasn't even in the country when any of those people vanished.”

“It's enough for me,” DI Hopkins said, pulling out the cuffs from her belt. “Doctor Daniel Harrow, I'm arresting you on the suspicion of murder...”

While the officer read the man his rights, Sherlock noticed something. He approached the black coat hanging by the door. From the lapel he pulled off a three inch long golden-blond hair. A woman's? A man's, Sherlock deduced to be the more likely. Around 5' 10” tall given the placement of the strand, and Harrow being well over the 6’ mark. Leaning in he gave the coat a sniff, his Alpha physiology easily picking up the faint smell of an omega.

Looking to the doctor, with short black hair. Sherlock said, “You might have been out of the country but what about the omega, five-foot ten-inches tall, male, blond...”

Sherlock smiled seeing that slight widening of the brown eyes. He had Harrow's accomplice. Now he just needed to find him.

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“Sorry, M,” said the Asian man sitting in Falkirk's office. “The footage was a bust. I personally tracked down everyone on that plane. None are from the Tokyo Hilton.”

“Well Mr Choi, I can't fault you for your effort,” Falkirk said. “I absolutely praise you for your discretion, this time. Director Denbigh hasn't linked your burglary to us, which is a miracle.”

The handsome Alpha managed a weak smile for that.

“I think you have proven yourself, not with the traditional two kills,” Falkirk said. “You are dismissed, Double O Four.”

“M,” the alpha acknowledged and stood.

There was still the person targeting Double Os but until they found something new or whoever it was made their next move it was a waiting game, and not one Falkirk could expend a Double O's efforts on.

Falkirk got an hour of work done before he was interrupted again. Darren's voice came over the intercom, “The Trustees have summoned you.”

Falkirk rolled his eyes, what that bunch of gasbags wanted he didn't know or care truly. He better see them though. So he got ready, and for this out of the blue meeting he decided to take Selene along with his normal bodyguard.

He arrived at the Foreign Office, a white marble building that harked back to the days of Empire. It was suitably impressive and intimidating. The three had to go through a rigmarole to get in, Falkirk
was unarmed but Andre and Selene were and weren't willing to leave M undefended even in this government building. Eventually security agreed to let the two bodyguards in armed, because Falkirk was willing to leave if they were denied entry.

One of those anonymous men in grey suits, a civil servant that made the branches of government run escorted them to a conference room. There, Selene and Andre had to wait outside, while Falkirk entered.

It was bad, Falkirk knew. Standing to the right was the tall Foreign Secretary, Falkirk's boss. Beside him was another one of those men that Falkirk saw floating about but took little note of. An Alpha, tall and broad, with rectangular face, black eyes and hair, and looked down on everyone. Falkirk subtly pressed the pin at the edge of his glasses to activate the HUD. The camera scanned the Alpha's face and in Falkirk eyeline an image appeared, identifying the man as Geoffrey Dromgoole along with a summary of his history.

On the other side of the room was Sherlock who was looking anywhere but Falkirk. Beside him, Falkirk's glasses identified the woman of Asian appearance as DI Hopkins. They really shouldn't be here. Neither had security clearance to hear anything said in the room, unless they were the reason for the meeting.

Along the width of the table at the rear of the room was the Trustees of MI6. The ones entitled to know everything and decide if Falkirk was working in the country's interest. Chaired by the ex-Double O, Victoria Winslow. With Gerard Butler, an Ex-double O Seven who was also one of Falkirk's Deputies. At the very end, on the left was the Archivist, privy to the deepest darkest secrets of MI6. The other half dozen were minor annoyances to Falkirk at best.

“M,” Victoria said solemnly. “Two hours ago, Detective Inspector Hopkins arrested one Stuart Thomas on six counts of premeditated murder. Given his Double O status, we are now in a bind. Technically he cannot be charged with murder, due to his licence to kill...”

“He murdered six innocent people!” Hopkins blasted. Falkirk saw Sherlock cringe, meeting Falkirk's eye he nodded once to confirm the officer's accusation.

“What do you mean murdered?” Falkirk said, feeling floored and not sure if he spoke.

A nasty man, but that might be because he was a sexist and to Falkirk looked his father. Ifield said, “Did you know the bitch was bound?”

No he didn't, Falkirk knew there was an Alpha but not the depth of the relationship. He didn't say that out loud though. The Foreign Secretary, and the man who was one of the rivals to become M, they were here to see how he handled this.

“This is highly irregular and I'm not here to be interrogated,” Falkirk said then demanded, “I asked for an explanation, you will extend that courtesy.”

Victoria gestured to the Police officer. She pushed from the windowsill where she had been perching beside Sherlock. Coming up to him she said, “We believe Mr Thomas was convinced to commit the murders by his Alpha. Harrow had an alibi for the murders here in London which allowed him to divert suspicion from a series of murders in Australia following the same MO.”

“Where is he?” Falkirk said hollowly.
“In custody,” the officer said.

Falkirk turned on his heels, heading for the door he ordered Sherlock to follow.

“M!” called Victoria.

“You have made your accusation,” Falkirk interrupted. “MI6 is now investigating the validity of your claims.”

Out in the hall, Falkirk ordered his brother to tell him everything. He listened to how Mycroft gave Sherlock the case finishing up with how Sherlock found the blond omega at the apartment of Doctor Harrow. Pulling ahead of his brother, Falkirk took out his phone to text his other brother a summons to be in his office in two hours.

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At the MET, they didn't want to let Falkirk see the prisoner. He was however in no mood, and with a slight abuse of power and one or two threats he was shown into the custody suite.

The Uniformed Sargent opened the cell door, and Falkirk stepped in. A single bunk ran along the rear of the cell where sat the Double O. Dressed casually, Thomas rested his elbows on his thighs while leaning forward to stare at the concrete between his feet. His wavy blond hair he held in his fisted hands.

Falkirk sat on the blue plastic mattress beside the other omega. “You are a Double O...”

Thomas scoffed. “You know the truth?”

Falkirk nodded.

Thomas lifted a piece of paper from beside him. It was a low resolution head shot of a round faced man with bald head and some tufts of black hair at the sides.

“He lied to me,” Thomas said. Nodding to the picture he said, “I was told he had abused his daughter. Daniel told me she killed herself to escape it. That there was physical damage as proof, but not enough for a court. It was all lies! Six times I murdered an innocent just because my Alpha convinced me they were monsters when Daniel was the monster...”

Falkirk reached out and placed his hand on the omega's shoulder. This was bad, but it was the law, Falkirk said. “You have a licence to kill...”

“I don't want it!” The omega covered his face with his hands. “They deserve justice. I've made a deal, I plead guilty and give evidence against Daniel. He then gets extradited to Australia to face charges for the ones he murdered there.”

It was unjust, but when it came to some Falkirk so wanted to bend, hell, outright break the rules. Thomas though seemed resigned to his fate, even when there was a way to avoid it. For the last hour, Falkirk just sat with the omega. Only talking to ask if there was someone Thomas wanted to be contacted, like most Double O's the answer was no.

“I have to go,” Falkirk whispered, pulling his hand back from the other omega's shoulder. “I'll get my lawyer on your case, get you the best deal possible.” Falkirk wasn't taking arguments on that.
“I’ll see you soon.” Falkirk wasn’t going to take arguments on that either.

The blond omega just nodded in response and went back to staring at the floor between his feet.

He was going to be late, but Falkirk didn't mind letting Mycroft wait on him.

In his car, Selene looked to him. “M, you're getting that look.”

“Heaven have mercy on any who cross me today, I won't,” Falkirk responded softly. He had no one to focus his anger on, but maybe a doctor that he knew was in a cell just down from Stuart Thomas’.

Arriving at MI6. Falkirk's shock had fully morphed into anger. A coil of fire in his stomach that wanted released.

Mycroft stood when Falkirk entered his office. The Alpha took one look at him, bowed his head down and to the side in a submissive gesture of showing his neck, and took a back step.

“M,” Mycroft said formally. “I didn't know what was going on until it was too late. In retaining Sherlock's services I was repaying a debt to an associate.”

Falkirk's mobile phone beeped at the same time as Mycroft's and the desk phone started ringing. So few could connect to his desk phone without going through Darren. The clincher on a major event was Tanner bursting in.

“Emergency COBRA meeting,” Tanner announced. “A terrorist incident!”

Out of the corner of his eye, Falkirk saw his brother sag. Saved by the Bell, so to speak. Falkirk breezed passed his Chief of Staff. Tanner briefing him on the way to his car. There was little known at the moment, just an attack on the Army.

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Falkirk entered the dark conference room. Chaired by the Prime Minister. Everyone of note was here. Falkirk from MI6. Admiral Satie, the First Sea Lord. Mallory from MI5, Denbigh from GCHQ, The MET Commissioner. Along with them were their Political bosses. They were the official attendees, ones like Tanner, Mycroft and Geoffrey Dromgoole stood at the edges of the room.

Falkirk took the space reserved for MI6, down one side of the U shaped arrangement of desks. Across the gap from him was his own boss, the Foreign Secretary.

“Prime Minister,” blasted the fat bald man with sagging chin, dressed in the khaki uniform. General Sir Richard Broadchurch. He nodded to another officer who was controlling the screens at the bottom of the room, to Falkirk's right. Only the Prime Minister and his personal staff looked at the screens head on.

The first image that flashed up on screen took Falkirk's breath away.

“Captain David Haller, my Chief of Staff,” the head of the army identified the service photo of the blond man. “He was found dressed in his No.10 Mess Dress, placed on the steps of the Epitaph.
This is clearly a personal attack on the Chief of General Staff..."

“Do shut up!” Falkirk spoke rather softly and very deadly. “Listen to me you pompous overblown windbag with delusions of grandeur.”

“Sir Thomas!” warned Hodder

Falkirk stood to glare at the General, and ignored his boss's warning.

“David has been my agent for the past ten years, because I know you and your ilk's delusions of days long past. David has been telling me of every inept plan contrived for you to live out the glory days of empire. In most cases to give a fighting chance to the poor sods you're sending to their death. We have been weakening cells of Taliban, al-Qaeda and the rest, just to give our boys a chance with your hair brained schemes. David Haller resigned from your office three months ago because I needed him for another deployment. And he was a secretary, never your Chief of Staff, you bare faced liar! THIS ISN'T ABOUT YOU!”

“M,” Admiral Satie said, compassionately. One of only three who could speak to Falkirk when in a rage, and Mallory and Mycroft weren't going to. To the room she said, “If this man was one of M's it does change things.”

“This is MI6's jurisdiction, as of now,” Falkirk said. “Publicly the Army will still be in charge. But that is the extent of their involvement. MI6 will brief those who need to know in due course.” A glare from him to the General, conveyed Broadchurch would not be read into the situation no matter what.

Falkirk headed for the door, before being dismissed. Out in the dark corridor a familiar silver haired man was waiting on him. Sir James came up and with a look of concern said, “Something has come to my attention.”

Falkirk looked at the photo taken from across the Thames, of himself, Mallory, Darren and Thomas. Depicting the body dump of John-boy Powers.

“I know acts need to be done, but if this got out it would look bad, given recent... revelations,” Sir James purred.

“Yeah, yes it would,” Falkirk wasn't so far gone to not know he was being blackmailed. He smiled, “See you at the Inquiry, Sir James. Wednesday I believe you've been called to return.”

The silver haired man nodded.

Falkirk turned away, a very dark smile gracing his lips when Sir James couldn't see.
A woman, Alpha, dressed in the formal green uniform of the army escorted Falkirk into the morgue. Very crisp and dispassionately, Captain Dowers indicated the naked body on the slab. Falkirk could tell she expected him to balk at the prospect of a dead body. Unfortunately anger still coursed through Falkirk making him just as tart and forceful as the Alpha woman.

“How long has he been dead,” Falkirk demanded. Taken in by the lustre of the skin, and the healthy flush in the cheeks.

“How long has he been dead,” Falkirk demanded. Taken in by the lustre of the skin, and the healthy flush in the cheeks.

“Four days, approximately,” A sharp glance from Falkirk had her adding, “To use an improper word he has been 'Respectfully' treated. The wound cleaned. The body washed and made up. His hair styled. Then dressed. When found they thought he was sleeping.”

Falkirk circled the table the body of David Haller lay on.

“Unusual cause of death, well in a manner of speaking,” mused Captain Dowers going to the top of the table and pointing out a rather small inch long wound between Haller's shoulder and collar bone. “The wound is about eight inches deep. Brushing and clotting of the wound site indicate the victim was held stationary with the blade inside of him for some time. The assailant had to have missed every major vein and artery, and organ. I didn't know such precision was possible. Then just a slight twist as it was pulled out, and it pierced his lung, severed arteries and veins. Death would have been painful but very quick.”

Falkirk watched as the Operative pulled out a thin black blade about nine inches long with squared off tip from its black scabbard. Positioning the blade carefully. 009 slid it through Oso's shoulder.

“An Alpha's fear, Intoxicating” Falkirk said taking a deep inhale.

009's soft articulate tones informed, “If I twist the blade your arm will dislocate and if I then circle the blade your arm will be severed”

The memory hit like a lightning bolt. Looking to the stern Army Doctor, Falkirk demanded, “You said there was an infinity symbol?”

The captain went to Haller's right hand side, and pointed out the abrasion just below the hip on the outer thigh. Taking Haller's hand, and showing it reached the abrasion, “We believe it was self inflicted, likely through his pocket with a pen because we found some ink stained fibres embedded in the wound. We don't know what infinity means.”

Falkirk inspected what looked like a looping figure eight, he didn't see infinity.

“Thank you captain, that will be all,” Falkirk turned on his heels and marched out. Using his phone he arranged a meeting.

Arriving at MI6, Falkirk entered his office with everyone there he wanted. Going behind his desk he stopped before sitting down. From the sideboard behind his desk, where his scrabble 'M'
decanter sat, along with the 1st addition of the DC #66 'Crimes of two Face', he picked up one of the other items. About about a foot long in total length, he lifted the Tanto inspired sword. No guard to the hilt, in a black scabbard designed to protect from metal detectors and even x-ray. Pulling the sword from its scabbard, the blade was of a matt black and had a squared off tip.

“Laddie, should we be worried?” Daniel asked.

Falkirk cast his eyes over James, Alec, Tanner, Daniel and Selene.

“Haller had a wound, about 8” deep. Bruising indicated the blade that caused it was held impaling him for about fifteen minutes before it was pulled out killing him. And on his leg, he carved two rings, that the Army's M.E. assumed to be the symbol for infinity. I believe to be a set of Double Os.”

“Adrian Helmsley?” James mused to the room.

Tanner reminded, “We never found Double O Nine. He's still formally listed as Missing Presumed Dead.”

Daniel said, “I knew Helmsley for a long time, since he got his Double O designation in fact. He never seemed interested in Spectre. He never idolised Blofeld, Gloria Gaynor yes, Blofeld no.”

Falkirk got a flash of the photo he found in Helmsley's personal effects. A picture of Helmsley himself in afro wig, red sequin dress and a microphone in hand. Apparently dressing up and lip-syncing was how one of MI6's most deadly liked to blow off steam.

Gravely Tanner said, “We don't know what has been done to him after the Merovingian sold him on. The man we knew could be all but gone.”

“We don't know it's him,” Alec speculated. “It could just be coincidence.”

“Double O Seven,” Falkirk snapped, using James' service number so everyone knew this was an order. Still with the Tanto in hand he said, “You are back on the SPECTRE investigation. I'm giving you- heaven help me for saying this -extensive leeway. Dig something up! Find the next link in the chain! Do what you must!”

James nodded. Just nodded where Falkirk thought he would be jumping for joy, or what passed for jumping for joy for a man who was so aware of how suave he had to look all the time.

“Dismissed.” Falkirk ordered. Noticing an exchange of looks, Daniel looking at James, Selene looking at James, Alec looking at James.

Falkirk placed the short sword down and turned back to find James still here. The Alpha by the door. With a press of the button by the light switch James turned the glass wall clouded to give them privacy.

“James?”

James spoke while slowly stalking closer. “There's something more important. I know you, I know how you get. This morning you lost Stuart Thomas. This afternoon you lost Haller. That's your biggest weakness as M. You see the person, not an asset or tool. I bet your mind is racing. How to make things better for Thomas. How to take care of that brother of Haller's. How to rip apart
whoever set up Thomas. What you want to do to whoever killed Haller... now you've a ghost from the past, a traitor...”

The green eyes behind square spectacles flashed, a dark emotion, an impotent direction-less rage. Falkirk was pulled and held against his Alpha. His arms pinned to his side while held firm. Like pinning and scruffing had instinctive reactions, when an Alpha held their omega unmoving it forced them to relax.

“We're going home,” The Alpha ordered.

Into James' chest, Falkirk said, “I need...”

“You need, you need, you need,” James interrupted, tightening his hold of the omega. “You need to take a moment. Or you'll end up having a heart attack. We will start with going home, have a meal as a family, go to bed at a normal time and in the morning you're going to pull a sicky.”

“James...”

“No arguments, Alpha's orders,” James whispered and started manoeuvring them towards the door.

James opened it, with a strong arm still around his mate. Looking to the omega behind the desk, “Oh, Darren. Falkirk isn't feeling well, hold all his calls... or direct them to, me!”

“All calls, directed to Double O Seven,” Darren gave a little salute, “Gotcha!”

Out of E-branch, in the corridor to the lifts, Falkirk tried again. He called his Alpha's name, but the fight was leaving him even if inside he was still a furnace of churning anger. He tried a few more times, James shooting him down each time and taking control. It did ease something that he denied himself much of the time, giving in to that instinct to submit.

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Feeling a brush to his side, Falkirk looked into Rupert's dark eyes. He reached round to hug his son. At one time James could never stand a place like this, the loud noises, the sudden crashes and bangs, it would have sent his instincts haywire.

Now the Alpha was prancing, with arms in the air to celebrate his strike. The Alpha looking rather sexy in his faded jeans that cling to him like a second skin. The thin pastel blue jumper showing off his muscular body. Best of all, when the Alpha stopped his victory posturing, he sat down on Falkirk's other side to pull him close.

Andrew went up for his turn. Tall for an omega, making him a bit gangly, it looked like he had trouble with the ball but preferred them heavier. His shot ended with the dreaded seven-ten split. Choosing to go for only one pin on his second ball, he screamed when he guttered it.

Getting up, Falkirk kissed his fuming son on the forehead on his way to take his own turn. This was not one of Falkirk's better skills. He managed to hit the pins though. Then Rupert's turn, and back to the posturing master who was way out ahead of them all.

Afterwards they headed for Nando's. The meal starting with a round of Roulette Wings. Poor Andrew tried to be so macho, even as his face turned red and you could almost see the steam shooting out his ears. Falkirk got off easy with a mild spiced chicken wing, Rupert showing little
discomfort so could have gotten mild or hot. James, he finished off Andrew's extreme and the rest of the plater.

“Why must you two insist on these silly games,” Falkirk asked, watching Andrew chewing on an ice cube.

James purred, “It's fun.”

“It's moronic!” Falkirk shot back. Absently thanking the waiter who brought him his burger and fries. With Andrew putting up his hand for his quarter chicken(hot), Nando's seasoned fries and marinated corn cob, just like his dad's. Rupert going for the boneless thighs, in a medium spice.

“It's fun,” Andrew defended. Hesitating before picking at the leg joint and subtly scraping as much sauce off as possible before putting it in his mouth.

“See, Andrew agrees,” James said and tore into his extra hot chicken leg, with extra sauce and not even having the decency to gasp or choke like a normal person.

“At one time everyone agreed the world was flat, didn't mean they were right,” Falkirk muttered under his breath. He dug into his burger. Swallowing he added more loudly, “Food should be enjoyed. Not be a competition.”

James blew a raspberry at him.

Rupert said, “I like that guy that goes round the American restaurants. It finishes with an eating competition.”

“Yeah, Adam's cool,” Andrew said. Falkirk just rolled his eyes. He liked the first half where you learned of the little places with character and unique food, but wasn't keen on the second half where the presenter ate to bursting. Andrew added, “I liked the fiery-wings challenge. He wasn't even allowed to drink.”

“And no doubt melted his mouth, throat and stomach,” Falkirk said. James added, “Melts coming out too.” Falkirk kicked his Alpha under the table. That sort of humour was more Andrew and Rupert's era, he and James were meant to be grown ups.

They finished and headed home. Rupert headed for his room, running up the stairs he called over his shoulder about homework. Andrew wanted to watch a movie, Falkirk pulled him short and reminded him about his own homework. He stomped up the stairs in a huff.

The two parents headed for the living room, where Falkirk sank into the couch. A moment later his Alpha handed him a cut crystal glass, filled with the smokey bourbon.

As James slid in beside him, Falkirk asked, “Is my seclusion over?”

“O-Eight-thirty-hours, tomorrow,” James said pulling Falkirk to recline against him. “And don't think for a second I didn't see your laptop under the covers when I brought you breakfast in bed.”

“Purely personal,” Falkirk defended.

“Oh so you were watching YouTube, or Googling, or Snapbooking, or facechating...”
Falkirk turned to look at the man he was leaning against, “Snapbooking? Facechatting? What are you, an old codger?”

“How you listen here, ya whipper-snapper, ya can lecture me when you start to shave.”

“Omegas rarely grow facial hair, stubble at most if they try.” Falkirk said settling back to lean against his alpha.

“So whose demise were you orchestrating?”

“Someone with the gall to think I can be blackmailed.” Falkirk turned round so he was laying chest to chest with James.

James snorted. “For that you have to regret you actions, be ashamed of them or frightened of repercussions.”

“Too right, Mr Bond! That's not me.”
Using the poor reflection in the glass covering the the portrait of the King, the silver haired man straightened his tie. Self assured, smug he would even admit to being. With the lemon yellow tie straight he flicked the matching handkerchief in his breast pocket.

“SIR! JAMES!”

With a final nod to himself in the reflection, the silver haired man turned on his heels. His shoes giving a nice crack against the tiled floor. The clerk who called him held the door open so he could enter the large hearing room. With head held high and back straight, Sir James walked along the rear of the room to reach the central aisle, then turned to walked down it. Observers, press, public accusers all filled the public gallery he passed.

Reaching the table in front of the raised bench where Sir Thomas sat in the centre flanked by a round judge one side and an official the other. Sir James was reminded he was still under oath and was then invited to sit.

“Welcome back,” Sir Thomas said pleasantly, with a smile. Sir James gave one of his own smiles and answered, “Always a pleasure.”

“A document has come to light, to which you are being given the right of reply,” Sir Thomas said, lifting a single piece of paper to read. The clerk of the court gave Sir James him his own copy to read. This could be a problem, Sir James thought. It was a memo that contradicted some of what he had previously denied knowing.

Sir Thomas read out the letter.

“Addressed to: 'My good fellow'[David Halcroft, governor of HMYOI Slade.] The letter reads as follows: 'Regarding your recent correspondence I remind you the Minister is of impeccable standing while your hooligans are frankly just that, hooligans. I would not put it passed this miscreant to take advantage of the Minister's good and trusting nature. I shan't put stock in these allegations you have brought forth and quite frankly I'm surprised at you for doing so...etcetera-etcetera 'sincerely James.'” Sir Thomas looked up and asked, “Sir James, can you recall what letter is being referred to?”

“Sir Thomas,” Purred the silver haired man, knowing the omega had to make it look convincing. “I write dozens of letters a day, my assistants and deputies write dozens more and often do so in my name. In all likelihood it might not have been me who wrote this letter, I simply cannot recall.”

Sir Thomas gave a sagely nod, he was playing along finally. Then with an staged curious look, the type that was the reason many followed the happenings at this inquiry, Sir Thomas held up another letter. Everyone knew Sir Thomas' tact by now, he was about to drop his nicey-nicey act and go in for the kill.

“Luckily David Halcroft kept a copy.” Sir Thomas held up a piece of paper with a sort-of-smile and stern look on his face. Sir James had only seen the same nice long suffering look on his wife's face whenever he asked about his reading glasses and they were on top of his head. Sir James frowned, growing more concerned. Sir Thomas read the first letter, the one Sir James' had been responding to.
“Addressed to: 'Eastlake, J. Permanent Secretary to the Prisons Minister'. Letter reads: 'On the Minister's recent visit he asked to speak with one of the boys on his own. Over my expressed concerns for safety and security the Minister insisted. With great reluctance I permitted an unsupervised interview between an inmate and the Minister. About forty minuets later the Minister exited the visitation room. Later that evening a rumour started circulating that the boy was going to get a reprieve. In the following days the boy became angry and violent. The source of the inmate's anger was a rather concerning accusations of exchange of sexual favours for commuting of sentence.”

“As the official response sent in my name indicates,” Sir James said. Pulling at his collar a bit, feeling the metaphorical ground shifting under him. “The Minister was in good standing and who knows what this criminal boy- not boy young man had done. He was a criminal if he was in a Youth Offender's Institute.”

“Very well, Sir James,” Sir Thomas said putting aside both letters. “You have been given your right of reply to the evidence we received last week. Thank you, Sir James.”

'Was that it?' Sir James thought. A bit of Sir Thomas' usual bluster and flare, but otherwise not as bad as it could have been. Sir James nodded his approval, the omega was falling into line. Expecting to be dismissed, Sir James started to stand.

“Sir James,” Sir Thomas called, “Where are you going?”

Sir James looked to the omega as he thudded down a four inch thick folder on the bench. While the Clark of the Court, dressed in his flowing black robes was bringing a copy towards Sir James.

Sir Thomas looked directly at him cold and hard, “Last week there was a mishap at the National Archives. They accidentally released a whole slew of government documents that shouldn't have seen the light of day for another eighty years. And some civic minded individual, maybe one who was on forced leave trawled them and came up with some concerning documents that are now accidentally but legally in the public domain.”

He'd only risen an inch form his seat but when Sir James sat it felt like it was a hundred mile drop. Sir Thomas flipped open the folder and pulled off the top piece of paper, “This harks back to your early career in the Department of Education…”

Sir James brushed his hand through his silver hair. To be a civil servant meant he stayed when the person in a ministerial position came and went, he had seen many governments come and go, and the party in power changed with the mood of the nation. All the while he was meant to be the constant that kept the system stable. Yes he covered up indiscretions, so the person who was the Minister would owe him. It was the only way to get the system to function or the Minister would think they were in charge.

For five hours Sir Thomas brought up scandal after scandal. Covered up affairs, drugs, criminality and abuses of power that he had covered up. Sir James grew steadily angrier, as the omega went on a journey through his time in the Department of Education where he first worked, then every office of state where he'd worked throughout his thirty almost forty year career.

“You are now dismissed!” Sir Thomas informed, to applause. Nothing got the mob going like seeing someone being humiliated in public.
Sir James stood sharply and turned his back on the Omega. He marched out to the sounds of Sir Thomas calling for order. He marched out into the corridor. With head down and moving quickly he didn't notice the woman up ahead, only as she grabbed him by his arm and pulled him through a door did he notice her, and recognise her as Sir Thomas' attack dog.

“What is the meaning of this!” Demanded Sir James as he was manhandled into the dimmer and narrower corridor.

Up ahead the judge entered the corridor, took one look at them and moved off. The next through the door was Sir Thomas, and lastly Sir Humphrey who like the judge moved quickly in the opposite direction.

“Threaten me will you?” Sir Thomas said coming closer. He only continued when they were nose to nose, “Listen to me you plebeian little oik. Release the photo, I dare you! I got a drug peddling terrorist pimp off the streets. Those Daily Mail reading extremists will love it! They'll want me to do it in Trafalgar Square next time. Hell they might even call for me to run for Parliament!”

Sir James tried to back up a bit, he bumped the alpha woman behind him. He was penned in. Sir Thomas whispered even though they were alone in the private corridors of the Courts.

“Be careful, Sir James. By this day's end the dark scales that we in the shadows judge decisions on will tip from more inconvenient dead than alive, to more convenient dead than alive... for many not just me.”

Sir James' shoulder was grabbed and he was yanked back and booted out into the main public corridor. The heavy wooden door slamming shut behind him with the prominent 'Private' brass plaque and the heavy security handle with a number pad above it to gain access.

Having built up a fury like never before. Sir James stormed out of the court and into his car. His driver pulled away before being given instruction, so Sir James demanded, “Where are you going!”

“Sorry sir, I thought you knew. You've been summoned by Sir Arnold,” the driver responded. Quickly Sir James pulled out his mobile and found a message waiting on him, he had the device on silent while attending the Inquiry. True to his Driver's words he had been summoned.

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Arriving at the office with spectacular views of the Palace of Westminster and Big Ben. Sir James was invited to take a seat in one of the old green leather couch by the window. The office of Sir Arnold Robinson was done in a very traditional style, thick dark green carpets, overly large desk of oak made from the timbers of an old warship. A cocktail bar, where the alpha with sagging face and thick square glasses was pouring out two scotches.

“Here, you need this after today,” Sir Arnold said and sank into the soft leather chair beside the matching couch Sir James was on. “I'm afraid to say old boy, it's not over yet.”

Sir James sipped the whisky, so smooth it just gave a gentle warmth as it slid over his tongue. There was a peaty note of an island distillery. He looked at his boss, the head of the civil Service, “I'm braced and ready.”

“M and C have both revoked your security clearance,” Sir Arnold said. “They have also instructed
the police, and most importantly the Home Secretary and Foreign Secretary not to allow you to hear anything of a 'restricted' nature or above. Problematically, Director Denbigh does not share their view but has agreed to honour it. GCHQ can no longer read you into any official operations. Lastly, Sir Thomas has forwarded several files to the MET's historical crimes unit. You could be under investigation very soon...”

“BLAST!” Sir James spat out, “That... bitch!”

“Given what has happened in the last few hours, you can't continue in your position as part of the Security Services,” the Sagging faced man watched his irate junior pacing back and forth.

“It was him,” Sir James pointed in the vague direction of Vauxhall.

“Mycroft Holmes is personally leading the investigation into the unfortunate disclosure from the National Archives,” Sir Arnold watched the silver haired man just roll his eyes. “You need to keep your head down, old boy. We have a position for you, very out of the way. You'll keep your current pay and benefits of course...”

“You're paying me off so I go as a good little boy,” snapped Sir James. He calmed, not really but needed to think clearly. Opening his blue eyes he said, “I am adamant nothing will come of any investigation by the police. I will go, so long as it's only temporary.”

“Quite,” Assured Sir Arnold. “There can't be many more revelations to come out. Maybe a year or so.”

“A year!” demanded Sir James. He only got a smile in response, one of those non committal gestures that meant nothing. It was the best deal he could hope for though.

--

“...I do not allow alcohol, the minister keeps sherry in his office. If you are offered a glass you will politely refuse...”

Sir James was walking beside a monolith of an Omega woman. In her fifties she was very much like an old Matron, governess or Nanny. All trussed up like a ham, dressed in a too tight grey skirt suit. Miss Higgins, and he was to use that title because this fat battleaxe was now his boss.

Stopping at a door, the sour faced woman with permanently down turned mouth waved a sausage like finger at him, “And if you arrive again smelling of whisky I shall send you home right away!”

Sir James soured at being talked down to.

“WIPE THAT LOOK OFF YOUR FACE M'LAADO!” Miss Higgins snapped. “I don't care who you are or were or where you came from, you'll be treated no different to the other under secretaries!”

Permanent Under Secretary, an assistant to the assistant, that was how far he fell. Sir James gave a smile and nod and the horrible woman snapped, “Don't you dare give me a 'Mycroft Smile'!”

“Can we get this over with!” Demanded Sir James.

The omega knocked gently on the door and entered. Calling out pleasantly to the man in the small
office, “Minister, our new Permanent Under Secretary, Sir James.”

“Oh, good,” said a short Alpha with a dopey smile on his face. “Will you join me in a drink?”

As he had been instructed, Sir James politely refused. A look of disappointment passed the younger man's face. The minister said, “Welcome to the Department of Agriculture, we're not as fancy as spies and High Offices of State where you came from but what we do is important...”

Sir James kept a polite expression on his face while he was welcomed to this insignificant department of government. After the introduction to the minister Miss Higgins escorted him out.

In this block of concrete from the seventies, not one of the grand buildings of state he was accustomed to. The battleaxe showed him to what was to be his office. She stopped at a door, the cheep wood veneer had a crater like mark indenting the surface. It really was the cheapest of the cheep for this insignificant posting.

Suspecting the indent to have come from a fist, Sir James looked at the horrible woman, “Someone punched it?”

“Don't know, it's been like that since before I got here.”

“Then why hasn't someone called maintenance?” Sir James asked, feeling very tiered all of a sudden.

“It's a door, it still works as a door,” the woman said as if she was speaking to someone very stupid. “We won't get the funds to replace it until it stops being a door, and maybe not even then.”

The woman pointed further down the corridor to another office, one without a door at the entrance. Sir James really was in hell.

Miss Higgins opened the damaged door into an office that made Sir James' heart sink further. A small desk taking up the full width of the room. Made of the cheapest beach coloured wood and a swivel chair that hurt Sir James' back just looking at it. He dreaded sitting in it. There wasn't even a phone or computer, just a desk lamp... without a light bulb!

“Well that's five, you will be here eight-thirty sharp,” Miss Higgins said, turned on her heels and marched. Moving with the same force as the boulder from the Indiana Jones movie, she took up the whole width of the corridor too.

To her back, Sir James stuck up two-fingers and blew a raspberry. Just like he did with the Matron back at boarding school.

--

The last stop on this hellish day was his club. He sat in his favorite chair in the lounge, by the crackling fire. A whisky in hand. He began to relax in the quiet, refined, opulent surroundings.

“Sir James,” called a smug voice.

Opening his eyes, to see the smarmy little prick standing there. “Mr Denbigh?”

“I just wanted to explain...”
“No need,” Assured Sir James. Tapping his nose, “So long as it’s only in an official sense you were talking.”

Denbigh nodded once. “See you at Geoffrey's on Friday for the next phase.”

James nodded and they bid goodbye to each other. Denbigh passing an older man who was just coming in. Sir James waved over his old acquaintance and the tall Alpha sat in the chair opposite him.

“James old boy, you look terrible,” said Scotty.

“You have no idea. Completely cut out and posted to an insignificant little department,” grumbled Sir James.

“Yes, Old Boy, what would I know about being cut out and posted to department of little notoriety,” Annoyance clear in the taller man's voice.

“Oh yes, the incident, I forgot. Let me get you a drink and we can drown our sorrows,” Sir James said while the other man bit his tongue to hide his annoyance.
“M,” Tanner said with a note of resignation in his voice. Standing he confirmed, “I will have Alice on standby for your and Double O Seven's return.”

When the beta left Falkirk's office. James looked at his omega, “So, we're giving up the pretence Haller was army.”

“There's no point pussyfooting around,” Falkirk said. James just shrugged, not one for undercover work at the best of times. Falkirk adding, “Spectre know or strongly suspect we're on to them, so why hide.”

“And you want to strike back,” James speculated. Falkirk took a deep breath and stood. James decided to let the matter drop.

Pulling on his coat Falkirk headed for his car, at the centre of a posse. James one side, Selene the other with his bodyguard at the rear.

Selene rode with him, while James took his own car for the journey to the private hospital in Oxfordshire. It was rather nice when they passed through the high wrought iron gate. A grand house, done in a grey stone sat on a rise overlooking the ample lands and the encircling forest. Only the observant looks told the Security and orderlies apart from the patients who walked the manicured grounds. It looked just like a fancy hotel with guests taking in the surroundings.

The car pulled up at the covered porch way at the side of the stately home. As Falkirk got out, he saw James' Aston arriving and parking along side the row of cars at the edge of the gravel driveway.

An older man came through the automatic glass doors, dressed in good suite with a pair of half-moon glasses on the end of his nose.

“Ah, Sir Thomas,” the alpha called. Extending his hand, “I'm Daryl Nolan. Welcome to Summerland.”

Shaking the man's hand. Looked round, they were still under the outstretched porch roof supported by two columns. Falkirk said, “I wouldn't have guessed this to be a hospital.”

“We don't like to use that term,” Nolan said showing Falkirk through the frosted doors with a monogrammed 'S' shield crest engraved in them. “You won't find nurses, orderlies and the like either. Summerland is home!”

'For those that can afford it,' Falkirk thought. This was no NHS institution, hell most insurance
companies wouldn't pay either.

Falkirk was shown into a very impressive foyer, the like of which should be only seen in the highest end, of classic Hotels. Oil paintings, mirrors, crystal chandeliers, with opulent carved chairs and sofas. Better than the heyday of the wealthy family who once owned the home.

As he was shown up the stairs to the third floor Nolan spoke gently so his voice wouldn't carry, “I'm not sure of the value in telling Charles about his brother. Do you know much about Dissociative identity disorder?” When Falkirk shook his head Nolan began to describe the several distinct personalities Charles exhibited and warning a few were very dangerous but not often seen.

Stopping at a door, Nolan looked in. His reserved demeanour changed, a big smile came to his round face and very lively he called, “Hi, Lucas. There's a man to see you.”

Entering the large private bedroom, Falkirk noticed a woman standing out the way on the right. He was careful to not take more than a cursory glance of her. He then focused on the man in the middle of the floor laying on his tummy, with his legs waving in the air. He knew David had a brother, but not an identical twin.

“Hi,” The man on the floor said, a little higher pitched than Falkirk would expect and not really paying attention to him. Charles Haller, or Lucas it would seem was far more interested in the Lego scatted about.

“Thomas,” Nolan said to Falkirk while sitting on the end of the bed. The older man not quite able to making it down to the floor in a controlled or comfortable way. “Lucas is ten. He only met David a few times.”

Still focusing on his toys, Charles said abstinently. “Is he the one who took me to the toy shop? Is he coming? Are we going again?”

Falkirk knelt by the puddle of multi coloured bricks. “No, he won't be coming. I'm a friend of his.”

“'kay,” the boy in a man's body said, still not paying Falkirk much notice while building up pirate ship.

“I was in fact your brother's boss,” Falkirk said picking up some pieces and fitting them together how the instruction book said. “He called me M.”

“What does that stand for?”

“Some say it's for Miles Messervy but it's actually Mother,” Falkirk said. A little known fact, hardly known and slightly disputed. He handed over the small section he'd built and Charles, or Lucas attached it to the ship.

“You can do that bit,” Lucas offered pointing to the picture in the instruction book. So Falkirk got to work building the rear wall of the captain's cabin.

While Falkirk worked, he kept the beta woman just in his peripheral vision. They might not call her a nurse, but she was an employee of Summerland. A very recent one. Rather plane looking and non distinct, reddish hair and long faced. A perfect agent, your eye just wanted to slip over her. Falkirk made sure to keep her just in the corner of his eyes, even with Selene and James standing at the threshold of the room.
Falkirk noticed something, it meant he had to give up the nurse. It was just the way Charles blinked in a very controlled cat-like way. What lay behind those blue eyes sharpened and was far more aware of his... that didn't sit right with Falkirk's intuition. A single dimple formed when Charles' right cheek raised in a half smile.

“I don't think we've met, madam,” Falkirk said. The finely tuned instincts rising the hairs on the back of his neck.

“No, I shan't think we have... M.” poised, still higher pitched and a little sultry. “How is your brother, the detective. I am right, aren't I. You are related to Sherlock Holmes. I do so enjoy the good Doctor Watson's blog.”

“De...”

Falkirk held up his hand to stop Nolan. This Falkirk excelled at, dealing with those dangerous intelligent people of the world. He watched the controlled graceful woman sit up and give her skinny jeans, doc Martins and Batman T-shirt a condescending once over.

Getting up the woman in a man's body stepped on the Lego pirate ship, deliberately. Falkirk said, “I don't think Lucas will be happy with you doing that.”

Falkirk was just given a look like he was being stupid. He said, “But that's what bullies do. Destroy the things others care about.”

Falkirk got a scowl and eye roll. Pulling open a door, Charles entered what Falkirk assumed to be a closet.

“Delia,” The doctor called rather formally. No hint of the smile or nicety when dealing with Lucas. “M is here...”

Delia interrupted, her voice coming out of the door, “To tell me David is dead, it's not hard to figure out, Doctor Nolan.” She stuck her head out of the closet, having changed to a tight black jumper. “But is he?”

Damn, Falkirk thought and gave a subtle hand gesture. Selene cleared her throat and crossed the room casually, like she was going to look out the window. James appeared at the doorway and slid in, subtly going up the side of the wall.

“But is he, what?” Nolan asked, growing confused. Looking up to Selene who had stopped beside the bed he sat on.

Falkirk called to the closet, “You're right. Are there more than one?”

“I shan't have thought so,” Dressed in all black, there was a slight sway in the hips as Delia returned. “At least not inside, only a fool wouldn't be watching from afar though.”

Falkirk nodded. There was an 'oof' sound and scuffling behind him. Selene had a firm hand on Nolan's shoulder keeping him in place and out of the way. James had the unobtrusive nurse on her knees, with a bag over her head and was in the act of zip-tying her wrists together.

“Sir Thomas, I must protest,” the man sitting on the bed demanded.
The woman rolled her eyes, add a sigh and it would be a good imitation of Sherlock. Falkirk told Delia, “If you come across other concerning individuals, feel free to let me know.”

“Just that janitor, but given his interested in 'Nurse Ratchet' I surmise he belongs to you,” When Falkirk nodded in confirmation, she followed after James carrying the nurse like a sack of potatoes over his shoulder. Delia didn't even give backwards glance.

“What is the meaning of this!” Demanded Nolan now allowed to stand by Selene.

“We tried to place David in a criminal organisation, we think he was known to one of its members. Two days later, that nurse started working here. She was waiting to see if I pitched up, or someone from the Army.”

“I will be lodging an official complaint about you and your conduct,” The administrator of the home announced.

“You mean someone else will be getting the complaint, not me! I won't have to listen to someone complain about toes being 'stepped on', and 'lines being crossed',” Falkirk had a huge smile on his face, just slightly deranged. “O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay! Will it be the Foreign Secretary I'm hauled in front of I wonder? The Prime Minister!”

Selene sniggering to herself as she followed Falkirk out.

Nolan swept his hand over his bald head, wondering what had just hit his institution.

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Arriving back at MI6 from Summerland. In the underground car park, Falkirk felt his blood pressure rising. Along the row of parking spaces against the far wall portable floodlights had been set up. A group were being held back by a cordon, James, Daniel, Alec, Tanner and Alice amongst them. And moving too and fro were forensic technicians dressed in white coverall suits.

Falkirk flung open his door and crossed the car park quickly. Alice, the only one to look around occasional was the one to tap Tanner. Tanner quietly announced his arrival to the others and everyone turned to look at him.

“What's happened?” Falkirk demanded reaching the cordon and seeing what he half expected. The boot of James' car was open and what was in it he assumed to be a corpse now.

Tanner was the one to answer, “She was unmoving when we opened the boot, and there was no pulse.”

Daniel looked down on James, “I take it you didn't check for suicide capsules?”

Gesturing to the car, James shot back, “Evidence would say no, I didn't check!”

Alec mused, “Too bad it wasn't the same batch Silva got.” James elbowed him.

Alice asked, “Do I need to be here?”

Daniel really rubbing it in said, “Double O Seven? Do you think we need an interrogator?”
“I've got work to do,” James said, turning his back on the bigger Alpha. “And Q, make sure my car is valeted. That is your day job after all.”

“Private vehicle, do it yourself,” Daniel called after the Double O.

The brown haired woman followed after James next, no real reason for Alice to be here. Falkirk turned on his heels, he wasn't needed either. Over his shoulder, “Alec aren't there some recruits you have to whip in to shape.”

“Washed the last one out!” Alec called after him. “Bunch of limp-wristed pansies.”

--

“M,” said the tall older man following him through the building. “Summerland contacted me...”

Falkirk let his boss speak while escorting him deeper into MI6. The Foreign Secretary getting a bit confused when he entered a hospital ward deep underground. Falkirk knew he was being rather nasty when with the career politician beside him Falkirk walked into examination room with Dr Dean inside.

“My god!” the older Alpha gasped putting his hand to his face.

“Hydrogen-cyanide, does make quite a mess,” Falkirk said. The older man's eyes fixed on the melted mass that used to be a face.

"Not many innocent people replace their...” Falkirk accepted his bedtime reading from Dr Dean, the autopsy report. He flipped to the part he needed, “First lower right molar, for a crown with a suicide capsule inside it.” Falkirk looked and the read blisters around the Corpse's mouth and the spots of melted away skin showing the teeth beneath, “Very messy.”

“Just,” The Foreign Secretary swallowed and grimaced, like he was debating to be sick or not. “Could you go by the book next time, please.”

“Sorry, that wouldn't have worked,” Falkirk said escorting his boss back up to the ground level. “We knew of the undercover agent, surveillance teams and other agents were an unknown factor. Quick, quiet and decisive was the motto of the operation.”

“Hardly successful,” the taller Alpha recovering some as they rode the lift upwards. His gaze had returned to a cool and aloof as he sent Falkirk a sideways glance.

“You assume you know our goals,” Falkirk responded just as the lift doors opened on the ground level. He started heading for the lobby. Falkirk paused a moment, seeing someone waiting at the Manorial wall.

Falkirk showed the man meant to be giving him into trouble out. The Foreign Secretary's heart wasn't in it though, he was just jumping though a hoop so he wasn't lying when he responded to Nolan.

Passing the reception desk and the security checkpoint, Falkirk returned to the rear of the lobby. A crescent shaped bench had appeared at some point, it wasn't here the last time Falkirk passed through the foyer of MI6. Falkirk came round the side of the bench to sit beside the other man,
both looking at the memorial wall.

“Seems an age since I saw you last,” Falkirk said.

“Wanted some private time after the last mission,” Double O Nine said. “So is it true?”

Falkirk looked to the blond omega, “Haller, Helmsley or Thomas.”

“I don’t know him! I thought I could just catch you alone here,” Maloney said waving to the wall with the newest name recently added to its number. “I was asking about Thomas, but what about Helmsley?”

Falkirk told Double O Nine about the '00' message Haller carved into his own thigh, and how he was killed in a way consistent to Maloney's predecessor.

“Fine!” Maloney said a bit aggressively. “Now tell me about Thomas.”

Falkirk told him about the murders. How Thomas was getting a deal in exchange for testifying against his Alpha who planned, chose the victims and participated in the murders. Maloney, the first and again only Omega Double O just shook his head and whispered, “Dumb cunt.”

“Nathan,” Falkirk said softly. “Our biology works against us when it comes to our alphas, especially when we feel for them. Don't judge Stewart too harshly, I know when it comes to James I can't be assertive, not without his consent. That's why I need Daniel.”

“Then I better make sure I never have an Alpha.” The Double O stood and headed out the front door.

“Are you back yet?” Falkirk called after him.

“No!” Maloney shouted over his shoulder before exiting the building.

Chapter End Notes

I was in a rush last week and this note was meant to go there.

Secretaries of State(e.g. Home Secretary, Foreign Secretary) along with the more junior titled 'Minister' (e.g. Education Minister, Minister for Agriculture, Armed Forces Minister) are elected Members of Parliament who are appointed to oversee the implementation of a party policy within a government department(e.g. Home Office, Foreign Office to which MI6 answers.)

The Civil Servants who are Permanent Secretaries, or Under Secretaries work for the Government department directly not the elected party in power. In a practical way they run the Government departments(e.g. Foreign Office) under the overview and direction of the Secretary/Minister whom they serve and advise.

If you ever get a chance to see a series called 'Yes (Prime)Minister' it explains a lot. And how these 'little grey men' have quite a lot of power when not directly elected. Which is were I always thought it was implied Mycroft operated.
FYI: I knew I was using common titles and wasn't sure about calling the senior Secretaries of State so I looked up the Foreign Secretary's formal title and I was right. He is: 'Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs'. The Home Secretary is also listed as 'Secretary of State for...' along with others.
James finished his 'weatherman' routine. An image of a long faced man with curly grey hair pictured on the wall behind the standing Double O. It was James' target to get his SPECTRE investigation going again. Someone who was somehow deposing the existing leaders of Brazil's drug cartels. So far Falkirk with his connections in espionage and many assassin associates had managed a similar feat. So they, or James in this case wanted to know who was supporting Mr Sciarr in his endeavours.

Falkirk said, “You have two days from dispatch, then I'll send Alice to meet you in Rio, Double O Seven. Her safety is paramount.”

“M,” James acknowledged in a purr, and an infuriating twinkle in his eye. “Not a hair will be harmed on her head.”

“Bond!” growled Daniel, wagging a finger at the Double O. “I don't want to hear Christ the Redeemer has blown up, fallen down or otherwise been damaged.”

“Q, I'm wounded,” James responded, with a look of hurt on his face. “I would never deface a public monument.”

“James,” Falkirk said. “You're a Double O, we're teasing but we mean it too. If I get a call, I'll let Daniel loose on you.”

“You wouldn't dare,” James said with utter certainty.

“Try me,” Falkirk said standing. Behind his back Daniel was giving James a dangerous smile, tempting the Double O to step out of line.

Stopping at the door, Falkirk looked back to give the Double O the traditional parting words.

“Good speed, Double O Seven.”

--

From the clean and modern design of MI6, to something more traditional. In sight of each other, only separated by the river Geoffrey Dromgoole looked on the curving windows of the office he really wanted to occupy, M's.

“Ah, Sir James,” called Geoffrey from his seat behind his desk. Entering that plush classic office, an older man with swept back silver hair and dressed in a tailored grey charcoal suit and a club tie in a Windsor knot. At Sir James' side a smaller, weaselly Alpha in black suit.
Geoffrey didn't invite his guests to sit and spoke briskly, “With the success of Stuart Thomas, I've decided Nathan Maloney will be our next target.”

“I don't believe that's wise,” Sir James said. Noticing an atmosphere in the room.

“Quiet frankly, I no longer care,” Geoffrey said. “You are no longer in a position to offer me the posting as M when this is all over. You are no longer in a position to fulfil any of the favours you promised many. So I no longer care what you think,” with smugness and now knowing he was in charge, Geoffrey said, “Holding a minor post in a minor department of government, you are no longer use to any... unless there's some sheep-shagging to be covered up. You're good at protecting perverts.”

The older man felt like he'd been slapped in the face. He was then dismissed from the other man's presence, firmly and without thought. He was in a state of shock, feeling so old all of a sudden. His life's work all undone.

“If you don't mind me saying so, this might not be a bad thing.”

The voice took him by surprise. Sir James looked to the shorter man beside him. Denbigh was walking beside him. A fleeting thought that he might have misjudged Denbigh started to surface. That Denbigh wasn't the snivelling backstabbing ferret one assumed at first tight.

“How so?” Sir James asked, feeling a bit better that there was one person sticking with him.

“You know Geoffrey, he wants his 'God Calls Me God' and all the rest,” Denbigh said referring to the old Civil Service Joke. “Ms Elbaz has her animosity towards M. Geoffrey has his. Others dislike M for their own reasons. I am part of a group that see... well not the benefit of having M stay where he is but sees the problems in unseating him. We believe if we're careful of how we handle him, and so long as we don't make a fight personal M won't take it personally even when he loses.”

James was intrigued so followed Denbigh right into his car. They then set off through the streets of London with outrider escort for the Director of the nation's Cyber defences.

“Take Graham Addison for example,” Denbigh said and glance to the man beside him. “Elbaz's plan of demoralising M by getting the Double Os to quit is a good idea. That sort of non-direct action is how to attack M, other than just putting a bullet in his head but that could have problematic repercussions. Anyway, Addison. His pressure point is an infatuation with M's Personal Assistant.”

“I wonder why she didn't tell us that,” Sir James mused.

“The omega's alpha,” Denbigh said and something niggled at Sir James. Denbigh said, “To clear the way for Addison, we would have had to get rid of one Gareth Mallory.”

“Ah, that could draw some unwelcome attention,” Sir James admitted. Having forgotten that volatile little bitch that made scenes at any number of political gatherings had been hired by M.

“I believe,” Denbigh said sombrely, “We are being used by Ms Elbaz. She wants to know how far we can go before M notices and turns on us. Frankly, I think we got very lucky with Stuart Thomas. I don't think we'll be lucky again.”
“Which is why you think it’s a good idea to step away from Geoffrey, let him take the inevitable fall,” Sir James said and got a nod. He noticed they’d arrived at the Savoy. A prestigious pale stone building with arched windows.

Denbigh got out and invited Sir James to follow. Passed the classic revolving doors, through the foyer with its black and white checked flooring and to the lifts, Denbigh knowing where he was going.

In a corridor of the fourth floor one of the rooms had some guards either side of the door. One guard knocked when he saw them approaching and opened the door for them.

A lone man stood in the suite, looking out the window. All Sir James could make out was the reddish-blond hair, thick and slightly curly. Dressed in sharp grey trousers and waistcoat, the jacked of the suit draped over the arm of an art-deco leather and chrome chair. The man stood in a way that suggested he was holding a cup and saucer, with the rest of the teaset sitting on a low table, the service again in an art-deco style with square handles and simple clean lines on a white porcelain.

“Hello, Sir James, I've been hearing a lot of good things about you,” said the man at the window, while Denbigh indicated James to have a seat while 'being mother’.

“I don't think I've had the pleasure,” Sir James said, accepting the tea and thanking Denbigh absently.

“No, I don't think we have,” came the rough voice of the man by the window. The man turned, he smiled which Sir James didn't notice. His long face was heavily scared on the left in a web of pink marks, and his eye, his left eye, it was glass of a dark yellow colour. “I got into a fist fight with a cruise missile,” the man teased.

“You came off the better I think,” Sir James said with a gruff discomfort. “One would assume you to be in bits after picking a fight with a missile.”

The webbing of scars took a very wrinkled appearance as the man smiled.

“You may call me Number 1,” the man said coming over and sitting in the chair with his jacket on it. “I have some proposals to discuss assuming your affiliation with Geoffrey Dromgoole is now over?”

“--

“What the...” Andre, Falkirk's bodyguard said.

Looking up Falkirk saw his bodyguard and Driver both leaning forward. The bodyguard sitting directly ahead of Falkirk said, “M, a situation and I don't think I'm qualified to deal with it.”

“I can't quite interpret your tone,” Falkirk said. “I'm assuming it's not an assassination.”

“It's something, M.”

Falkirk's car pulled in before reaching his house. Falkirk got out to see what was going on and realised this was in no way good. A grey Land Rover was parked in front of his house, a young
A blond man was taking cases from the boot and dumping them down on the pavement with excessive force.

Hudson on the steps up to the house looked to be in new form of hell, trying to get the little... not so little omega to let him help with his bag or to help him up the steps. Both of which Arthur was refusing, while dragging one case and in danger of falling over backwards as he took one unsteady waddling step at a time.

To top everything off was the crowd of paparazzi that were getting good pictures of the domestic situation in progress.

Falkirk marched up to G just at the younger man turned with a case in each hand. Falkirk ordered harshly and very quietly, “Put them back, and take them all home!”

“It's over! He doesn't want me! And I couldn't be happier!”

Falkirk leaned in, glaring at point blank range. “I'm not giving a suggestion. Get that crap off the pavement and act with some decorum!”

The younger man visibly gulped. G nodded and put the two cases he held back into the car.

Falkirk climbed the steps into his house. He found Arthur halfway up the stairs to the first floor. The very round omega waddling quite a lot while dragging a single trolley-case behind him in a white knuckled grip. Hudson begging to let him help with the younger man's bag or something. Arthur just gripped the banister with one hand to help haul himself and case up to the next step.

“Hudson,” Falkirk called calmly. “See to the door please.”

The older Alpha acknowledged and came back down. A look of relief relaxing the older alpha's face. Falkirk decided to leave the fuming struggling Arthur to his own devices. Although just a few steps lower down Falkirk followed, ready to catch a falling omega if it came down to it. But given Arthur's size Falkirk wasn't too hopeful he could stop them, he had visions of being flattened like the other omega was steam-roller going right over him.

At least their latest house guest had departed. Philip was still in hospital and his friend had not been comfortable in the strange house so had moved into a new flat which he intended to share with Philip when he got out of hospital.

Arthur entered his old room and sat on the bed where he let out an explosive breath and let his body settle. He looked to Falkirk in the doorway, “It's over.”

“Of that, I'm sure,” Falkirk said.

“It is!”

Falkirk nodded once, emphatically. “Yes! So what was it that ended this blissful union?”

At that Arthur hesitated. Falkirk said sympathetically, “There was one point I wanted to brain James, just for the way he breathed.”

Arthur pouted, almost looking like he was going to burst into tears, “Stop being reasonable!”
That had never been a complaint Falkirk had over been accused of before. Coming closer, to cup the heart shaped face, Falkirk laid a kiss on the top of the blond head, “Your hair's greasy. You want a bath, they're big and wide with a step into them.”

Arthur just nodded with his face beginning to droop. Falkirk stroke his hair behind one ear, “You want anything special for dinner?”

Again Falkirk got a pathetic little nod. “Tinned-spaghetti and toast soldiers please.”

“Anything,” Falkirk again kissed the top of the other omega's head. “I'll start your bath, then put in your order.”

Arthur just sat there, Falkirk wasn't sure when the tears would come but from the anger the omega's mood was on the swing. In the attached bathroom at the inset tub, while he started the tap and drizzled in some bubble bath, Falkirk rallied the troops. Mycroft to deal with the press, and Alec to blow off some steam and make sure G didn't do something he would regret, or Falkirk would make him regret. He had just told Hudson about the special request and when he returned to Arthur's room he was in time to see the first tear slip over a rounded cheek.

“It's okay,” Falkirk said sitting on the bed and hugging the younger omega close. He started the constant reassurance and comfort.

Not sure if I used Marco Sciarra before. If so it's too late now. We won't be seeing him though, he's just a bad guy for James.

The civil service joke(the ranking of knights) comes from 'Yes Minister' but is allegedly based on reality.

**Bernard:** Well, take the Foreign Office. First you get the CMG, then the KCMG, then the GCMG; the Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George, Knight Commander of St Michael and St George, Knight Grand Cross of St Michael and St George. Of course, in the Service, CMG stands for "Call Me God," and KCMG for "Kindly Call Me God."

**Hacker:** [chuckles] What does GCMG stand for?
**Bernard:** "God Calls Me God."
Letting out a yawn, Falkirk opened his bedroom door. Not even noticing the short end of his tie was still sticking out. Arthur's emotions had been a bit, *inconsistent* would be the polite word. It took a while before the pregnant omega settled and calmed down. Then he was woken by Alec arriving, drunk as a skunk with a passed out G slung over his shoulder like a sack. Falkirk had just aimed them at the lounge and forgotten about them. It had been five a.m. after all and he had to get up in two hours.

Now two and a half hours later he reached the bottom of the stairs. Falkirk heard Alec talking and praising Hudson for a 'bang up bacon butty'. Arthur and Rupert were adding comments and small talk, the omega sounding in a better mood than last night. Standing at the open double doors into the dining room, Falkirk noticed someone missing. Arthur beamed a smile at him, Alec gave a pointed clearing of his throat, followed by Rupert dropping his knife on his plate to make a loud noise. Seeing Hudson about to take a breath to speak, not doubt to loudly welcome him, Falkirk held up a warning finger to silence him.

Passing through the dining room, with people making all sorts of warning noises. Falkirk entered the living room. For a moment it looked like a scene from sleeping beauty, G out cold on the couch with Andrew leaning over him.

“What the hell are you doing!”

Andrew jumped a mile and spun to look at him. Quickly he pulled his hand behind him, to conceal the marker pen.

From behind Falkirk, Arthur spoke, “He's just doing what I'm to fat to.”

Falkirk glanced back to the unrepentant omega who ate his fry-up like he was a starving man. The very chipper looking Alec added, “If he was dumb enough to match drinks with me that's what he gets.”

Looking back forward, Andrew had gained cheesy 'innocent little me' smile on his dark lips and twinkling blue eyes. Falkirk jerked his head in instruction. As his son passed him, he whispered, “We'll be having words later.”

“Bu...”

Falkirk's hard stare stopped his son's excuses. Quietly, using his 'parent's voice' he said, “I'm not impressed.”

Falkirk let his son pass him. Lucky for Andrew, his papa didn't see the face that he pulled at him. Andrew then went to his place, sending a glare to his uncle and brother. Rupert punched him in the
“We tried to warn you. Not our fault you were too dumb to notice.”

“You're the dumb one,” Andrew punctuated his words with a punch.

Ignoring the two boys, Falkirk stepped up to G asleep on the couch. His handsome face had been given a curling villain moustache and a triangular beard below his lower lip, one fully formed devil horn, the second horn ended in a squiggle from when Andrew was interrupted.

“Is it permanent marker,” Falkirk asked while going to his place at the table.

“It had better be,” Arthur said, still a bit hostile.

Knocking Andrew and Rupert's heads together on the way passed, Falkirk warned them to behave. He then took his place at the foot at the table and seeing as today was a Full English he helped himself to tea then sausage, bacon while Hudson offered to get him a freshly fried egg.

“This is so bad,” Falkirk said, getting tucked in. Given he sat down for most of the day, and quite often had fancy lunches or dinners as part of his job he tried to be healthier at home.

“So, Arthur,” Falkirk said looking up from his breakfast. “Are you staying.”

The blond shrugged. With a sharp head jerk towards the living room Arthur answer, “Depends on the idiot over there!”

“Please, remember it's stressful for him too,” Falkirk said. Then turning his attention to Rupert, Falkirk confirmed his son had his GCSE English exam so was going in later that day and not riding with Falkirk.

So on leaving that morning it was Falkirk and Andrew, and in Rupert's usual place was Alec. The man still smelling of sweat, alcohol and cigarettes. After dropping Andrew off at school, Falkirk kicked the dozing man's foot. Alec jumped awake with a snore.

“Not looking so chipper now,” Falkirk accused.

“'m old now,” Alec grumbled. Crossing his arms and rolling away from Falkirk he muttered, “Leave me. Got a headache. I did my job. Kept the brat outta trouble.”

When Falkirk's car arrived at MI6, he decided to leave the sleeping man in the back.

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In seeing off Arthur and G, Falkirk insisted the two come over at the weekend. Arthur needed other omegas and G needed a situation where he wasn't the most dominant presence to stop him being overly possessive.

After the two guests had gone, Falkirk looked into the lounge. After his exam, Rupert was having a break, that meant vegging out in front of the TV. Something Andrew didn't mind doing with his brother. The two sharing a large bowl of popcorn, lying on the floor while Star Wars was on the TV. With the boys content Falkirk headed for his Library.

Sitting at his desk, Falkirk contemplated a problem. He was the executor to David Haller's will and he had learned the estate was a pittance, everything he earned went on his brother. His private life
insurance had been honoured after some threats of bad publicity, David had fibbed quite a lot on his application. Mental illness, dangerous lifestyle and quitting his safe office job had all been omitted, so the company had been disinclined to honour the policy.

Falkirk's problem, the trust David wanted set up for his brother's expenses. It would be expended in about ten years time. Ten grand a month for...

'Charles is 29, so assuming another sixty year lifespan. That would be sixty years multiplied by twelve months of a year, multiplied by the £10,000 monthly fee, equals one hell of a lot,' Falkirk thought. “£7,200,000. Not counting Charles living longer or price rises. The trust is less than a third of that.”

Falkirk was coming round to an idea. It would be a big favour though. There was a special place where people lived a very similar life to Summerland, a prison that had no obvious bars or walls. Where inmates were overseen by the best guards and doctors.

Falkirk's phone interrupted him. Seeing the name on the screen he answered with a crisp, “Yes? Ms Adler.”

Very sultry The Woman purred, “I have something you want...”

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In one of the better artisan coffee shops of Westminster. The old reclaimed and rustic timbers of the flooring absorbed much of the noise of footsteps. A tall counter at the rear had customers standing, while others sat at the several bistro tables. Hushed conversations and clicking of crockery the loudest things in the room, along with the whoosh of the steam used to froth the milk. This was no Starbucks, it was what Starbucks dreamed of being. The air was rich with the smell of fresh coffee and home baking, caramelised sugar and yeasty bread the strongest.

Standing at the bar a blond man slowly flipped the pages of the Mirror, one of the papers free to the customers. They had gotten a picture of the King with his face covered in black marks and the young man passing it off as babysitting gone wrong. 'Practice for becoming a father' was the direct quote from the king.

“Excuse me, sir,” said the pleasant girl behind the counter. The blond man slid his paper to the side so the girl could put down his cappuccino, and because he felt hungry and had a sweet tooth so a piece of tiramisu too.

Taking the small spoon at the side of the bright white cup, the blond pushed back the foam. He need not have checked, the coffee beneath was pure black like it should be. The foam sitting on the double espresso perfectly. He smiled at the girl and nodded his thanks.

After taking his first sip the blond wiped the rim of the cup, then dabbed at his pink lips with a napkin. Using the blade of his pastry fork he cut a slice of the Tiramisu, savouring the flavours of his first bite. The bitter chocolate, mellow cream, the sponge soaked in coffee and... yes they used Marsala not rum or sherry just like they were meant to. Perfect! He so loved indulging at his favourite Italian Coffeehouse.

“Excuse me,” said a voice breaking into the blond's enjoyment. The voice was rather posh, with a slightly rough edge. Opening his eyes he looked on another blond, taller than himself, Alpha to his own omega, very handsome. Too handsome. The stranger's hair was shaved on his right of his
head with his long blond hair curling over it like a wave in on of those trendy stupid styles. There was a slight change of skin colour at the hairline, from where the spray tan ended and the hairline began. The eyes though, they were sparkling and oh-so blue, the stranger knew how to talk with his eyes. He was being flirted with and it was said all in the stranger's eyes.

“I said, could you pass the sugar please,” the stranger purred deeply. Very subtle though, like it was his natural way of talking.

Reaching out for the small bowl with the large unrefined crystals, the blond moved them form his right hand side to his left. Noticing there was an identical bowl not far from the stranger, in much easier reach.

“Thank you,” the strange said while putting in a single spoon of the large brown and golden coloured crystals into his coffee, “I find I just have to have something sweet to take the edge off.” Those eyes kept talking, speaking of what the stranger wanted.

“I'm surprised, you don't look like you eat a single gram of fat or grain sugar.”

Tinkly-eyes became all bashful. Gesturing to his toned physique he said, “What's all this work for if I can't be bad once and a while.”

Shifting closer to the flirting stranger. He could pick up the Alpha's scent now, under the ambient smells. The stranger was good, he could lie, get his body language to lie and even his eyes to lie but not his ques. Those little fluctuation in an alpha's smell were normal, no arousal at all.

In a lightning flash of movement, the blond struck. While reaching under his jacket with his right hand, his left hooked the stranger's arm and pushed it up behind his back. With a strong pull back on his leg the blond swept the stranger's from under him. The stranger's head slammed to the counter. Using his full bodyweight the blond kept the stranger pinned while pushing the barrel of the stubby revolver into the stranger's nostril. Those twinkly eyes went so wide and terrified when at point blank range got a view of the hammer being pulled back.

“PLEASE DON'T KILL ME!”

In the background the customers and staff were already running for the nearest exit.

“I WAS JUST DOING WHAT I WAS TOLD. PLEASE! I'M SORRY....”

Ignoring the begging crying alpha. A sudden chill creped up the blond's back. From behind him an annoyed voice spoke.

“Mr Maloney, you were meant to make contact.”

Double O Nine looked at the Alpha he was pinning to the counter, “Did I let you make contact? I think I did.”

“YES! YES WHATEVER YOU SAY!”

Maloney looked to the door where M stood, flanked by a couple from the Tactical squad. With a gesture from M the two men in the black combat gear came forward and took the terrified Alpha from Maloney's grasp.
M then approached and took held his hand out for the Double O's gun. With agitated movements M made the weapon safe and removed the six bullets from the cylinder, “I see why you wanted a Colt Detective Special rather than your normal Glock.”

“Small, nice hammer action that causes grown men to piss themselves...” Maloney looked round the floor by the counter. “Although I think the cry-baby managed to keep that much pride.”

“You had no intention of going through with the plan!” M accused. Holding up his hand, “No, I don’t want to hear your excuses. We had an opportunity that you’ve now blown.”

With a sagging faced contriteness Maloney said, “I'm tho tho thorry.”

Falkirk was not amused by the mocking. “Get your arse to Rio! James has left Alice hanging in the wind. Make sure no one black bags her.”

Maloney answered with a perfect military salute. “Sir! Yes, Sir!” He then pivoted on his heals and marched towards the door, the perfect little soldier.

“Shit, shit, shit!” Falkirk kicked the backboard of the counter.

“He told you he didn't want to do it,” Selene said coming into the empty coffeehouse.

“When did MI6 become a democracy?” Falkirk ranted while pacing around. “Every Double O, including Nathan's best friend is now in danger. We have never known who was going to be targeted before. They won't go to Adler next time to find an escort. It was our dumb luck and their ignorance that gave us the jump. All up in smoke now!”

“We have leads,” Selene tried to appease.

“A cheep tart and a disposable go-between, BRILLIANT!” Falkirk shook his head. Out of the corner of his eye he saw Selene turn away sharply and leave. Realising what he'd said Falkirk cringed, “SHIT!”

He jogged out, rushing to catch up to Selene. He had to tell her it was anger and a slip of the tongue and not a genuine derogatory thought.
Distantly Falkirk heard the front door, protocol dictated Hudson was to answer it. A moment later a soft knock against the frame of the Library door came, and a soft, “Hi.”

“Keading?” Falkirk greeted and stood from his desk.

“Selene's been a bit off,” Keading said coming in and joining Falkirk on the settee near the fire.

“I might of described someone as a cheep tart, and she didn't take it well,” Falkirk admitted. Keading gave a dismissive shrug, “I was never cheep.”

Falkirk leaned against the other omega, “Neither was the guy I was talking about. Ten grand a day! I don't even make that!”

Keading lifted his arm so he could hug Falkirk. “I love her, but when it comes us omegas she's a bit.. defensive.”

“She has reasons to be,” Falkirk admitted snuggling closer to Keading.

“So why were you calling someone a cheep tart, you're usually more *politically correct* than that?”

“You remember Nathan Maloney?” When Keading confirmed his did, Falkirk added, “He was going to be targeted by someone trying to get him to quit. He said bonding and relationships were his choice, his choice to exploit someone. He refused to let his omega nature be exploited even for show. So I ordered him and he sabotaged the operation as a result. I was not in a good mood.”

“No shit! Did you send him to Siberia.”

Falkirk shook his head, where it lay on the other omega's shoulder. Pointing to his desk, “That's what I'm working on. I'm not unsympathetic to his beliefs and needs, but when push comes to shove I am in command.”

Softly, Keading asked, “What are you going to do.”

“An emotional kick'in. Only way I know to get through their thick hides and thicker skulls is to make them feel guilt.” Falkirk said. “I can't wait for James to get back.”

Keading wasn't surprised by the last comment. There was a note of stress in Falkirk's que. “I don't know how you do it. I hate it when Selene goes away.”

“You get used to it, or go mad,” Falkirk turned his head to look up at the other omega, “I'm sure
there are a few who think I have gone mad.”

“Thing is, I've met your family. You, Cody, Sherlock, Mycroft, you're all made up of the same stuff just in different quantities. Speaking of Cody, he's not happy I made him wait to next year take his GCSEs. I can't make him see the journey is as important as the destination. He can't just cut to his GCSEs, then skip to his Highers, and go to university. He needs to be more mature, not just smart.”

“Curse of the Holmes family. I agree with you, he can't just skip the bits of his life he doesn't like,” Falkirk again turned his head to nuzzle the other omega, “You're doing a great job with him. Better than our parents did with us.”

Keading squirmed in happiness a bit. They cuddled and spoke for the rest of the evening.

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Looking at the mirror, James gently touched the bruise on his cheek. Strangely, savouring the tender prickling pain it caused. He straightened his tie, and made sure his suite was perfect before turning away from the mirror.

Coming out of the stylish locker room, of wooden panels, vanished benches and tiled floor. Turning right he headed along the corridor with its thick carpet to quieten foot steps. The old bat was at the desk at the end of the corridor, James by passed her to go through the double doors behind the Old Dragon.

Nine desks lined the communal office, each desk rather substantial and classical in design. Each one had a simple name plaque that never changed, denoting the Double O Designation. Usually mostly empty, today only one desk didn't have its Double O at it, James'. Sitting down at his desk, James looked to his left, to the assigned desk of '006'. The new guy wasn't Falkirk's usual style, mostly because James doubted the new Double O could count to two without using all his fingers and toes and asking to use someone else's to keep track. And to use the Idiom, he was built like a brick shit-house. James hated henchmen like that, you punched them and it took twenty minuets for the sensation to reach their brain and by that point you were usually dead.

“M, is not happy.”

Damn, James hated when Daniel did that. His hand was halfway to his holster before he stopped it. Looking up to the taller Alpha, “Hate the carpets in here. Can't even hear big ol' Benandonner.”

“I'm not in the mood Bond!”

Last name, that was bad. James just sat back in his comfortable green leather chair. “Don't know what you mean, Q.”

“Marco Sciarra, you killed him.”

“Now,” James said going for contemplative, “What you have to understand is the Law Of Attraction. A mass, like the Earth has a powerful attractive force that pulls objects towards it. It was really physics that killed him. Terminal velocity plus a sudden stop equals... splat.”

“You! Pushed him from a helicopter!” Daniel said with a quiet growl.
“There, you’re mistaken again, Q,” James was enjoying this. “Gravity and Physics were at fault, not me. Helicopter rolls, all unsecured objects get pulled towards the Earth, right out of any open doors. Resulting on wheee... splat!”

That tendon was pulling taut in Daniel's neck. The little vein in his temple wasn't throbbing yet, so James could push a bit more before he would end up in a fight. He gave he bigger Alpha a wide smile, that got him the first tensing of muscles along Daniel's head.

“My office, after the briefing, Double O Seven!” Daniel growled, loud enough that he got a few looks and some instinctive hands going towards holsters from the other Double Os. Looking round the on edge Double Os, “Briefing room, Fourteen-Hundred!”

After Daniel had left the tension decreased. James looked at his watch, only five minutes to 2 O'Clock. The good little Double Os headed out almost right away. The newest Double Os, Wardner(001), Choi(004) and the Brick Shit-house, Flemmings(006) were the first to go, so they made a good impression on M. Maloney(009) and his friend Evens(008) were next, with Addison(005) and Dawes(003) just behind, they were M's Bitches. Thorne(002), she headed out just before James(007). He didn't know why he pushed boundaries, when it came to Falkirk James didn't want to but he did he always did and always had.

James' eyes widened when he neared the dedicated briefing room for the Double Os. He recognised many faces, ones that weren't normally in or allowed in this section of MI6. There were prominent guards, executives, Medical staff, Q Branch Technicians. He was not happy to find himself at the back of the queue to get into the circular room beyond the door.

Eventually, James got into the low round room with the nine chairs set in a semicircle a distance from a wide table. He got to the seventh chair and sat, not liking all these people standing just behind him. But that was nothing to Addison who was glaring at one of the few who stood beside the chairs. Alice even gave Double O Five a wave and nice smile.

“If looks could kill, poor Alice would be a pile of ash,” a sultry voice of a woman said. Feeling his chair jerk, James looked up to the Alpha woman perching a round hip against the back rest. Dr Dean still wore her lab-coat. Looking down at him she said, “So know what this is about? Everyone seems to be here.”

James shook his head, he didn't know. He watched Selene appear from the door to the side of the rear wall, the one that connected to M's Secure Office. She had Darren with her. Daniel then Tanner emerged next, and even Butler. It really was something to have Director and two Deputy Directors in the same room at the same time.

Falkirk came through the door, flanked one side an Asian woman and the other an man of Pakistani heritage. Kew the ex-001 and Masood the ex-004. James whispered to the woman beside him, “I think I know.”

True to James' thoughts, the police mug shot of the ex-006, Stewart Thomas appeared on the screen behind the desk where Falkirk stood at.

“Thank you for coming,” M said. Indicating the image behind him then the two ex-00s standing off to the side, “I am warning you of a plot, that has claimed three Double Os already. This plot does not appear to be assassination but of destabilisation. So far, and I stress this, to our knowledge only the Double Os have been targeted. But that could change, which is why you are all here...”
Alice interrupted, “Where does Mr Jerrod fit in?”

That caused some speculation amongst the audience, to who Jerrod was. Falkirk gave Alice a pointed look, “Now, he is irrelevant. He knew little to begin with and we now suspect Burned!”

To James' left, he noticed Maloney crossing his legs and arms. A cool detached look crossing the Omega's face. Evens, the beta woman looked at her friend having noticed his sudden change too.

“Oh,” James whispered. “Someone's been a naughty boi.”

Dr Dean whacked him on the shoulder.

M continued his briefing, issuing his warning in a concerned voice, and looking at everyone. Especially the Double Os. He warned that others might be targeted. Kew then stepped forward to tell everyone how her grandmothers was used and murdered to encourage her to resign. Masood said how his partner had been the one targeted, having his desire for a family stoked until Masood had to make a choice, MI6 or Christian and choosing Christian. Lastly M spoke, pointing to the image of Stuart Thomas, who fell prey to a Honeypot Sting and how the honeypot encouraged crimes to be committed. M then took a moment for everyone to reflect and think.

“Be careful and be on alert,” M warned giving everyone a hard look. “We have told you as much as we can. You know how these people operate. If you suspect someone or something in your personal life report it! It might be nothing, it could be you being targeted. Report it directly to Butler, Tanner, Q, or Myself, whichever of us is the most direct contact. Be vigilant, you are now dismissed.”

Everyone started to file out.

The middle eastern Double O with neat beard called out, “M? A moment, please.”

Everyone was interested in what Double O Three had to say, but they weren't allowed to linger. Most saw Dawes go up to M and that's all they would see.

James like the Double Os returned to their communal office. Evens trying to get Maloney alone, Addison wasn't so tactful.

“What did you do to piss off M.”

“Shove it!” Maloney shot at the Alpha and pulled back his arm with fist ready. Evens grabbed him and pulled him back. James jumped in to separate the Alpha away, while Evens dealt with the omega.

Another Ex-Double O entered, Selene looking over the scene with a critical eye. “Double O Nine, E-Branch M's office now.”

She jerked her head, indicating she was going to be walking with him, and Maloney was to go first. She then looked pointedly to James, “Q's office, Bond!”

“Bond, Bond, Bond,” James muttered, “I didn't do anything.”
In the lift travelling up from the internal secure suite of offices, Selene looked to the omega beside her. His ques were like Falkirk's not quite normal for an omega. Quite hard to interpret in fact.

“It might not fell like it but M is in the right,” Selene said, “We have a choice, only one in fact. To do the job, or not. If we decide to do the job, we commit to the mission...”

“You want decked?” the hostile Double O said.

“I won't like it, but I'll hit back,” Selene warned. “There's no shame in not doing the job. I stopped.”

“You wouldn't understand.”

“Nor do you,” Selene said. “Everyone walks away for their own reasons, no two are the same.”

After a few moments of heavy silence she added, “He really thought he could count on you.”

“There are some lines I won't cross.”

She looked to the blond, “Then you need to walk away.”

“Sure you're not an agent, trying to get me to quit,” a defensive note in the man's voice.

Selene challenged, “Feel free to report me.”

The doors pinged and opened. Selene held her arm out for the Double O to go first, and escorted him to E-branch and right to M's door which she opened for Maloney. She pulled it closed behind the Double O while staying on the outside.

M looked up from his paperwork. Maloney said nothing, and he thought M would wait until he did.

“You have one week leave. When you return, you will bring me one of two letters. An apology, acknowledging you disobeyed orders and the danger you have now put your colleagues in. Or your resignation” Falkirk looked back down to his work as he said, “I will assume if you don't return you have reigned without notice. Dismissed!”

Chapter End Notes

The name James calls Daniel is the name of the Scottish Giant in the legend of the Giant's Causeway.
Chapter Notes

thanks for reading comments and kudos.

Having a nice quiet evening. Falkirk sat between his alpha's parted legs to recline back against him. In turn Falkirk had the blue-grey cat curled up on his chest. While Falkirk stroked the cat, he was being stroked by James. A nice tingling caress to the back of his neck that sent shivers up his spine. Sometimes a kiss landed on the nape or the bond mark of his neck.

Rupert looked away from the movie staring to ask, “Can I go out on Friday night?”

Falkirk asked, “Night, as in a party?”

“Sam's having some friends over,” Rupert said, being a bit shifty to say the least. “To celebrate the end of the GCSEs.”

Andrew looked away from Indian Jones escaping the boulder to ask, “Can I go too.”

“No,” Rupert hissed at his brother. “It's just the ones from my class.”

Falkirk could feel James' slight chuckle vibrating through them. Falkirk said, “Will Sam's parents be there!”

Rupert gave a rapid nodding. James had to stifle his vibrating laugh at the act, by burying his face in the crook of Falkirk's neck. The poor boy wasn't good at active lying, Rupert was much better at being unreadable while not responding one way or the other.

“Be back by midnight, no later,” Falkirk insisted and got a promise to be back, one Falkirk doubted would be honoured. “I'll tell you what I tell James and Alec, I'm not bailing you out. And stay safe, I don't want any girls getting into trouble or trips to the clap clinic.”

Andrew sent his papa a confuse frown, but quickly looked back to the TV. James was laughing full force while Rupert had flushed from where his neck emerged from his sweatshirt right up to the tip of his ears. James calmed down a bit and said, “Don't call me either. Find your own bail-buddy. I call Alec, he calls me, that's our deal.”

“So is there a girl, or boi,” Falkirk teased.

“Just friends!” Rupert pouted.

James teased, “That doesn't sound convincing to me.”

“Nor...”

A gentle clearing of a throat saved Rupert as everyone looked to Hudson standing in the doorway.
Looking to James he said, “Sir, the laundry from you luggage contained this. Is it to be... retained?”

The butler glanced down distastefully to the lump of grey rock he held.

“Oh, yes,” James jumped out from behind Falkirk. The omega and cat both hissing their displeasure. Taking the lump from the butler's hands, James said, “I was looking for that.”

The Alpha disappeared out of the room and the sound of him running up the stairs followed.

Shaking his head and settling back into the corner of the couch, Falkirk decided it best not to ask.

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Tanner knocked and opened the office door of M. A frown marring his face while looking at a piece of paper, “M, this just came in from Summerland. Have you signed out Charles Haller?”

“Yes.”

“Oh. Where is he?” Tanner said holding out the piece of paper.

“Let's just say he's with Top Men,” Falkirk said taking the document from Tanner, which turned out to be the final bill from the private hospital. His eyes watering at the final figure, that would take up a good chunk of the late David Haller's estate.

“Andrew watching Indian Jones again I see,” Tanner said. When Falkirk nodded, Tanner asked, “So where does Haller reside now?”

Falkirk smirked up at the beta standing over him, “If I told you, I'd have to kill you.”

Letting out a polite laugh, “Very good, M.”

Falkirk's smirk morphed to a cheesy smile, “I'm not technically joking. There are places above your pay grade.”

“Ah, The Village,” Tanner said. “Wait, I don't know anything about that do I.”

“Of course you don't, you're not entitled to know. If you knew anything about The Village you would be classed as an unacceptable security risk and...” Falkirk let the ending hang.

“How did you get him in?” Tanner asked, his frown returning full force. “Charles Haller shouldn't meet any of the criteria for The Village.”

“A friend.”

“Oh and how is No.1?” Tanner asked, and was told the head of the highly secured detainment facility was his usual creepy self, still talking about his birds and how Falkirk taking tea without milk was so uncivilised.

While they talked, Daniel arrived. Holding a piece of grey stone Falkirk had first seen the night before.
“Why,” Daniel asked, “Did I arrive this morning to find this on my desk. And why was it placed there by James?”

Falkirk shook his head and shrugged. “I found it best not to ask. Why don't you ask James?”

“He's gone to ground,” Daniel said and noticed Tanner trying to slink off without too much notice. He slammed his hand on the frame of the door to stop the beta retreating, “Mr Tanner?”

“I wouldn't know, Q. I don't keep track of Double O Seven. He's your responsibility, and all he gets up to.”

The beta ducked the Alpha's arm to escape. Falkirk said to the Alpha, “I don't want to know.”

Daniel turned away, looking at the stone. Smooth one side, rough on the underside and sharp around the edges. It looked rather like a stone pancake three inches in diameter.

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Something was disturbing his sleep. A sharp point in his shoulder, poking him hard enough to rock him. Batting at it, he hit a hand. Still he was being poked, and after some mumbling to stop it, he came to the conclusion he needed to open his eyes.

Crystal eyes seemed to glow in the dark just above him.

“Wh' the hell James?”

“I heard a Taxi arrive forty minutes ago.”

“So?”

“The front door opened twenty minutes ago.”

“So!”

“I've not heard anyone passing our door.”

“James Bond...” all the little details clicked into place. Falkirk flung the covers off himself and grabbing his dressing gown got up, while James pulled on his boxers. The two stepped out of their bedroom onto the dark landing.

About half way up the first flight of stairs from the foyer was Rupert. The boy was slumped on the bannister, using the spars to slide his top half on the railing, while taking one unsteady step at a time. All done, very, very slowly.

James mused, “He's doing better than I thought. I'd have put money on him being passed out on the floor.”

Slowly, a delayed reaction to their voice and very wobbly, Rupert lifted his head from the banister. His chest still pressed to the polished railing. Speaking very slow, very careful, to the point it took several minutes to get a single word out, “I... you're.... eh... just... bed...”

“Goodnight then,” Falkirk said pleasantly. Taking James by surprise.
“'kay,” Rupert muttered. He continued sliding up the railing and passed them and on to the next flight up. Once they saw Rupert enter his room on the landing above, Falkirk and James returned to their room.

“James!” Falkirk said and a cold shiver ran up the Alpha's spine. “Tattle tale tit, y'r mammy cannae knit, y'r daddy's in the dustbin eating fish 'n' chips.”

“I did not tattle.” James defended. “And stop listening to Daniel's rhymes.”

Falkirk only gave James a questioning look in answer. He then climbed into bed while James still defended he wasn't a 'tell tale'

Settling down, Falkirk closed his eyes. James started off on the far side but as they fell asleep their instincts pulled them closer until the Alpha was covering the omega.

The morning arrived. Even on Saturday without an alarm clock they were so used to getting up they woke early. They didn't have to get up right away though, so spent some time in bed. As they lay spooned, their bodies tied and stated James asked, “What are you going to do.”

“Want to know how much trouble you got him in to,” Falkirk teased. James just pouted in response, well a Double O Alpha's version of a pout. A good sullen brood with pursed lips.

When ready about an hour later. Falkirk headed up the stairs, with James at his back. Pushing open the white panel door, an awful stench hit them like a brick wall. Rupert himself had passed out fully dressed, with only his torso on the bed, his legs hanging over the side.

“Falkirk!” James hissed.

Glancing to the Alpha at the attached bathroom. Falkirk shook his head, “I don't want to know.”

“You have to see this!”

“James, I swear...” Falkirk warned approaching the door with the smell coming from it. He was mildly surprised, he expected to see carrot chuck studded puke everywhere. The small tiled shower room was very clean, discounting the rancid bile permeating the air.

James pointed to the lavatory, “He got it all in there! You can't teach skills like that.”

Turning away from the sight and the smell, Falkirk shot to the Alpha, “You have the oddest things to be proud of James, your really do.”

Going out of Rupert's room, Falkirk entered the neighbouring one.

“What do you want!” Demanded the boy in the bed. A true teen in waiting.

“The football rattle Mary gave you,” Falkirk said, in a cool tone. Andrew pointed to the toy box he was using less and less.

Opening the wooden trunk, Falkirk dragged his hand through the toy guns, soldiers, he saw the handle sticking out of a pile and pulled it. The heavy block of wood at the end giving some trouble as it stuck. A good yank and he had it freed.
Returning to the innocent, tender, sleeping cerebrum, drooling and snoring away. James braced as Falkirk started swinging the football rattle round. The springing piece of wood clacked around the wedges, making a deafening cracking sound.

Rupert jumped awake with a cry. Collapsing to the floor and clutching his ears, and clenching his eyes tight shut.

When the dark eyes opened, Falkirk had his patented 'M is not impressed' glare firmly in place while he tapped the rattle in the palm of his hand.

"I'm sorry."

Falkirk leaned down, looking into those heavy bloodshot eyes at point blank range. "You will be! Breakfast is in one hour. You will present yourself, washed and dressed!"

Rupert nodded. Falkirk turned his back and marched out. James sat on the bed and patted the boy's dark head, getting a groan from him. "Ah, the song of the suffering. I'll get you some some aspirin and water."

"Hay, Rupert," Andrew said having come to the door. In his hand the football rattle, "Papa said I was to use this if you go to sleep."

"Ge' lost," Rupert rolled and on hands and knees crawling for the en suite.

--

"You will tell me, and tell me now who gave you that alcohol! Sam? Someone else?"

James looked to his Omega at the desk, "Not so forceful. You know he can't really stand up to you."

Falkirk nodded, he rewound what he was going to say in his mind. Nodding, he glared at the spot Rupert would be standing in a few minutes time. Less forceful he said, "You will tell me, was it Sam who got the alcohol..."

A knock at the door came. Letting the boy stew for a moment, added with the silence the breakfast had passed in and the hour Falkirk had made Rupert wait until this summons to his library. When he was good and ready, Falkirk called for Rupert to enter.

Falkirk pointed to the spot in front of his desk. He could tell Rupert was still suffering, he probably would be all weekend.

"I'm sorry," Rupert said right away, glancing between Falkirk and James.

That caused a huge knot in Falkirk's chest, he almost called this off. He couldn't though. Andrew's puppy eyes didn't work on him and he couldn't let Rupert's effect him either.

"You are sixteen! You are given the occasional glass of wine, and even beer under our supervision to teach you respect, that alcohol isn't some mystical potion for adults. I am quite frankly surprised and disappointed in you. I know you didn't leave this house with any alcohol, you look under eighteen so I'm sure you didn't buy it. Who got it, Sam, someone else?" Falkirk tried to make
himself look expectant rather than angry.

“Don't, eh know,” Rupert hesitated, a sure sign he was lying.

“You don't know,” Falkirk going for flabbergasted. “You just magically arrived home intoxicated.”

“No,” Rupert whined.

“No? You weren't drunk as a skunk...” A tiny creak from the door drew Falkirk's notice. He waved at James and pointed at the door. The Alpha crossed behind Rupert silently and ripped the door open. Andrew overbalanced, fell down and sprawl over the floor with a yelp of surprise.

The boy jumped up and gave everyone a cheesy smile. With a flick of Falkirk's fingers, Andrew took the hint and scarpered. Falkirk turned his attention back to his other son.

“Now Rupert, where were we. Oh yes, inappropriate drinking. I shall be speaking with Sam's parents and we will be getting to the bottom of this. Make it easy on yourself. Where did the alcohol come form?”

“Don't know. There was something in the coke. I didn't realise, I really didn't... not at first anyway.”

That was a half truth, Falkirk thought. “By the time you did realise, what did it matter! Have a beer, a cider more vodka!” Falkirk shot back.

Rupert ducked his head and answered yes. James started chuckling, “Mixing your drinks, amateur move.”

Falkirk gave the Alpha his full force 'M is pissed' glare. James just shrugged and batted his big blue eyes at him. Cooley Falkirk said, “You are not helping.”

Falkirk looked from the 'good cop' to his son. “I am...”

Another creak drew Falkirk's notice. This time he picked up a book and threw it at the door. Rupert jumping a mile at the sudden move, even James looked a little startled.

“ANDREW FREDERICK BOND YOU WILL SHARE RUPERT’S PUNISHMENT IF I HEAR YOU AT THAT DOOR AGAIN!”

Looking back to Rupert, Falkirk said, “We will start with no more parties for a very long time. No going out with friends for a month, that includes mobile phone privileges. Curfew, now and for all of summer will be four o'clock.”

“Your mobile,” Falkirk held out his hand and Rupert took out the Samsung Galaxy from his pocket and handed it over. From his desk drawer Falkirk pulled out a dumbphone, a fairly hard thing to find now a day. He switched the SIM card from the Smartphone to the Dumb one. Holding the small brick of a phone out, “This is locked, it will send and receive from the authorised numbers I put in only.”

“Yes.” the boy said taking the small phone cut off from the internet and apps most teens used now.

Feeling like he just kicked a puppy, and the worst person in the world, Falkirk nodded to the door,
“Go, think about your actions.”

The boy nodded and walked out, with head held high. His hand went to wipe his cheek when he thought Falkirk and James couldn’t see.

When the door closed behind Rupert, Falkirk scrubbed his own face. “That was awful.”

“Could be worse.” James said getting up and coming over to give Falkirk a hug. “Did I ever tell you about the first time I got waisted. I puked all over my bedroom, the hall, the bathroom. It was an explosive trail from my bed to the toilet.”

“That's something I really wanted to know James,” Falkirk dead panned.

“No one there to shout at me after, no one cared enough.”

Falkirk hugged the Alpha tighter. Falkirk said, “Kincade cares. More than I think you realise.”

James didn't answer. He had gone as far as he would go, he had reverted to an emotional brick wall.

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'I'm outside let's meet' the message said.

No matter his trust in the sender, Falkirk still had to go to Selene's office before heading out. The Alpha woman and his normal bodyguard joined him for the trip outside. He exited the building on the side not often seen, the side that looked like any office block that faced the road. Turning right, Falkirk walked to the end of the street where he turned right again to walk along the pavement towards the river and Vauxhall bridge. On the river side of the building the iconic pyramid features fell into view.

A lone figure stood leaning on the embankment looking at the water while smoking a cigarette.

“Those things will kill you,” Falkirk said joining Maloney.

“You're probably right,” The Double O said looking at him. Tossing the cigarette into the water he said, “Never thought I’d survive to face those issues. But who knows now, because I'm not apologising. I regret the way I did what I did, but not doing it. I should have told you to your face to stuff the missions and keep me or fire me as you chose. That's the choice I'm giving you now, M. I promise I will never sabotage a mission, but I will tell you to stuff it if it comes to it.”

As M, Falkirk should ditch Maloney. Double Os had leeway, very wide but they had to achieve the mission aims. That was something Maloney had failed to do. When Falkirk needed him, Maloney had flushed everything down the toilet. That all competed with their history. From when Falkirk was being groomed by M an Maloney was a recruit he was helping to train.

“Get back to bloody work, Double O Nine and if you fuck up again, I'll shoot you myself.” Falkirk turned away and headed for Selene and Andre.

“You couldn't hit me with a blunderbuss at point blank range,” Maloney taunted.

“Try me, Nathan Maloney, just try me.” Falkirk called over his shoulder.
Joining his security, Selene looked from her phone to Falkirk with a frown. “Are you going away?”

“I don’t think so,” Falkirk said. “Why?”

A car screeched to a halt on the road beside them. James leaned out the window, “I’ve got us a couple days off, so I arranged a surprise.”

Falkirk glanced to Selene, “It appears I am.”

He rounded the classic car to get in the passenger side. The second his backside was in the seat, James was pulling away.

“So where are we going?” Falkirk asked, pulling on his seatbelt.

“Told you, a surprise.” James sent him a smile with a twinkle in his blue eyes.

They pulled up at the large white facade town house. A BMW was just pulling away, Falkirk looked at his watch to confirm it was four o’clock, so that was the car to bring the kids back. Falkirk had to chuckle at himself, he and a few other parents had cornered Sam’s parents in the days after the party. The parents had arrived back after a weekend away, to their posh apartment in Mayfair well and truly trashed by thirty odd kids. Served them right, a sixteen year old might be legally old enough to be left alone, but in other respects they were still dumb kids.

Coming out of the memory. Falkirk asked, “Why are you parking out front?”

“Convenience,” James said getting out. Falkirk chasing to catch up.

Hudson in the foyer called to them, “Your suites are ready, sirs.”

James didn’t stop his bounding up the stairs to shouted back for the butler to get them. Falkirk gave the butler a shrug as a way of apology for James’ abruptness. Falkirk watched James grab the two cases by the bedroom door and take them in, then like a tornado the Alpha packed everything they would need.

Andrew appeared at their door, still dressed in his uniform with green blazer and his phone held to his ear. He looked to Falkirk then James, “Yes he’s here.”

“Who are you talking to!” James demanded.

Absolutely oblivious, Andrew said, “Uncle Daniel. Why?”

“Traitor!” James accused, grabbing the two cases he ran down the stairs where the butler waited with four garment bags held in his hand.

Andrew looked to his Papa in confusion. Falkirk could only shrug in answer.

James looked from Rupert to Andrew, pointing a finger at one then the other as he spoke.

“We're going away for a few days. Be good, Mr Hudson will be giving me a report. And if you can't be good, don't get caught.”
Falkirk muttered, “Why do I feel you failed on both counts, James.”

“And if you do get caught, make sure they don’t actually catch you.”

“Wonderful advice James, wonderful...Ahhh!” Falkirk's arm was caught and was being pulled behind the Alpha down the steps, and into the car. James shoved the two bags and suite under his other arm into the back before jumping in.

James pulled away with sharp acceleration. Looking at the wing mirror, Falkirk half expected to see burnt rubber in their wake. He did see a dark blue Bentley turning onto the street just as they turned off. James escaping by the skin of is teeth again.

“James, what the hell have you done?”

“Nothing!”

Falkirk shook his head. He decided he would deal with it when he couldn't avoid dealing with it.
Where Loyalty Lies: A king commands form the rear.

Chapter Notes

thanks for reading comments and kudos.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Up ahead, a waiting man noticed their arrival so opened the double doors just as James and Falkirk approached. The panoramic view hit them just as they entered the suite, blue Mediterranean seas under perfectly clear skies. Only folded back shutters onto the wide balcony, noting else not even glass to impede that wonderful view. In the background the concierge indicated the waiting man and said he was their exclusive butler. A lobby boy passed behind Falkirk, heading for the archway into the open plan bedroom.

“No need to unpack,” James said. “Just the four garment bags, the suits will need to be pressed again after travelling.”

“Oui, monsieur,” the butler responded. He himself took the garment bags from the lobby boy to deal with. In heavily accented English he added, “Zay shall be ready for tonight, monsieur.”

Falkirk walked through the living area and into the bedroom, where the lobby boy had set down the two cases. Falkirk unzipped the first and found some of his toiletries and clothes. He started to put them away, having figured it was more than just a few days they were going to be gone. Mostly due to the drive from London, with the car going by Euro tunnel and through France to the south coast. While thinking Falkirk hadn't been paying much attention so was a bit surprised when his fingers touched something hard. Pulling out the polished rosewood box he frowned. Pressing his finger to the knot on the lid, the hidden fingerprint scanner unlocked it. Inside was the bronze finished gun with black grip, it was his Falcon a gun looking rather like a Walter PPK.

“Why did he pack this?” Falkirk asked himself. The gun built by Daniel was usually in his bedside table. Closing the lid, he put it in the drawer beside the bed and concluded James had been in such a rush it had just gone in with everything else.

Returning to his unpacking, his fingers touched something else hard. He pulled it out, finding it was his personal laptop.

To himself Falkirk said, “Now I'm suspicious.”

“Of what?” James purred coming up behind him and kissing his neck.

“Of Alphas, of people in our family, Double Os, of mates, especially when they're all one in the same person.”

“Why don't you draw us a bath, and I'll be through in a moment,” James purred, ignoring what Falkirk had said which made Falkirk even more suspicious.

Going through the next door. It was the Bathroom Falkirk expected, one with a claw footed tub in
the middle with the end pointed to the open balcony.

“You know anyone with telephoto zoom lens can see everything,” Falkirk called while turning the golden taps to start filling the shining enamel roll top bath.

No answer came, not until Falkirk had slipped in to the deep, foam filled water. When James came though he was stripped to the waist, with an ice bucket in one hand and a glass in the other. A smirk in his face. He teased, “We better give them something to see then.”

James set down the ice bucket near the tub, and poured the flute full of champagne. While Falkirk sat back and sipped the first cold crisp wine, he watched James unbuckle his trousers and push them down. The Alpha stood there a moment, having gone commando he was nude and semi aroused already.

Sliding forward in the water, Falkirk let the Alpha step in behind him then shifted so he was on the Alpha’s lap. They stayed there, sipping champagne from the same glass, touching and sharing kisses while they watched the sea and sky, with the gentle rolling crash of waves coming from the cliffs below the hotel.

“You defaced Christ the Redeemer?” Falkirk said, having had plenty of time to think on the car journey.

“Vandalised, just a little bit at the base that hardly anyone would notice...” James corrected, like there was a difference. “Except the tourist who filmed me climbing to the top of the plinth. That might be what pissed Daniel off. Or the police chase afterwards. Wasn't my fault the Brazilian plods didn't know how to take a corner and ended up barrel rolling. I'll have you know I showed excessive restraint, they even shot at me and I didn't shoot back once.”

“How magnanimous,” Falkirk said. “Now shut up. I want to believe you're doing something just for me.”

“I am!”

“I found my gun, and I found my laptop. You want mobile operational support, Double O Seven.”

“I miss you too,” James kissed Falkirk's neck. “And you needed some time away. No phones, no Tanner, no kids...”

“No bond-mates causing havoc.”

“We'll cause havoc together! Not really, I just need to sneak into one guy's room and some posh twit's mansion. In and out, silent like a cat.”

“Loud as a bull in a china shop I would say, from experience.”

James suddenly spun them round, so he was on top and Falkirk was pressed against the back of the tub. “You have no faith in me.”

“I do, I just know you too,” Falkirk teased. Getting a growl and kiss to stop him talking.

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James kissed his sleeping mate's forehead before slipping out of bed. Pulling on his black trousers, he played their first evening over in his mind. First a quiet dinner where a chef came to their room with a long cart to flambe stakes on the terrace in front of them, followed by crep suzette. Then when alone they fell into bed, where they basked in each other's bodies for a second time that day, until exhausted.

James, unlike Falkirk couldn't go to sleep tough. He wanted to spend time with his omega but also had a job to do. Now dressed in all black, he attached a holster to the back of his belt and a small pouch at his hip. The final addition were the black gloves that studded close around his wrist and a balaclava of thin black material that only left a strip across his eyes exposed.

Going to the balcony he gave a last look to his omega sleeping peacefully in the bed. Then using the white marble railing he jumped up to catch the eaves above the terrace to pull himself up onto the terracotta tiled roof.

The stars were so bright here. There was little to cause light pollution, only the hotel and club and a few villas and mansions along the coastline. Coming to the end of the building, James neared the edge of the slightly slopping roof and climbed down onto the Terrace of the end suite.

Only lamps illuminated the suite. The bed having been turned down, the occupants though would still be drinking and gambling downstairs. Beginning his search, what he was looking for wasn't in the bedroom so tried the walk in closet. There on the inbuilt dressing table was the box he was looking for.

Opening the lid of the cherry wood box finding, pearls, a rope pendant, not what James was looking for. Pulling out the top drawer, rings of women's styles. The lower drawer was what he was looking for, cufflinks, tie pins, and a few masculine style rings. Including a steel coloured band, with an octopus engraved onto it.

From the pouch on his belt, James pulled out what looked like a round sticky plaster an inch across. Taking off the back, he reached into the gap and stuck it to the roof of the drawer compartment where it wouldn't be noticed. Closing the drawer and making sure he had not left anything to indicate he had been there, James retreated.

Returning to his own suite the same way. James found Falkirk's laptop and booted it up. With it, he could access MI6's networks. Within the files for his investigation into SPECTRE he navigated to the surveillance folder and found the 'Key Cracker'.

That SPECTRE ring had a little chip inside that when exposed to a radio single would respond with an identification code. It was literally a key, one they had discovered Spectre used extensively throughout its organisation. They came in all shapes and sizes, pendants, phones anything that could hold a tiny chip and an antenna. That patch James placed was constantly triggering the ring and sending every code back to MI6, because the code was based on a equation and MI6 had to reverse engineer the equation from the results it produced. If they did, they could create their own keys to the organisation and access buildings, serves and files they had come across.

Gentle hands landed on James' shoulders and a kiss was place on the back of his neck. Looking round he came nose to nose with his omega.

“Have you finished for tonight?” Falkirk asked. James nodded, unable to tear his gaze from the beautiful green eyes. “Oh, I wasn't sure. I didn't hear any explosions.”
“That comes later,” James purred, while standing. Backing up his naked mate to the bed, kissing him as they went.

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Laying back in the wooden lounger, under the shade of a parasol. Falkirk watched the guests around the large pool. Being set on a cliff, there wasn't a beach so this was where many came to recover from the other entertainments of the hotel. Quite a few looked to be asleep, letting the worst part of their hangovers pass them by.

A waiter arrived to place down a tall drink on the table beside Falkirk. He didn't know what it was, he had just asked for something sweet, fruity and alcoholic. He was on holiday after all.

There were two types of clientele, Falkirk very much dreading he was in the first group. The ones like the troll of a man across the pool from him whom he was watching. A man with a skin tone that was chosen from a wood stain colour chart. Hair that was grey worn long, down to his shoulders with a shiny dome of scalp on top. Dressed in the smallest pair of speedos Falkirk had seen on a man, complete with a sagging beer belly hanging over the bright pink brief cut swim suite. Falkirk knew he wasn't as far gone as that Troll though. The other group James fit into, the toned ones, the ones who took care of their bodies first and foremost.

'Think of the devil,' Falkirk thought, watching James poke his head out of the water. Then in a way that had to be deliberate, the Alpha set his arms like a bulldog's to pull himself out the water. Every muscle bulging at the move as his washboard stomach slowly revealed from behind the edge of the pool. Then came the small shorts clinging to the alpha's hips and round his muscular thighs. Falkirk licked his lips, watching the water slide over the lightly tanned physique.

Coming over, James sat on the neighbouring lounger. The on set in full sunlight. There he lounged like a lion, until he was dry. A sky blue eye cracked open, taking in Falkirk dressed in his long shorts and open button up Hawaiian shirt with prints of pineapples on a green background. His round prescription sun glasses hid his beautiful eyes.

“Anyone?” James purred softly.

Falkirk shook his head. The troll across the pool hadn't been approached by anyone, including his six foot bimbo model wife. The image of those two arriving still made Falkirk embarrassed so had no idea how the wife and husband felt. The troll was so short he only came up to his wife's shoulder and had an arm around her waist because he couldn't reach any higher. He really hoped James and himself didn't come across like that to others. When he met his Alpha's hungry gaze, it didn't matter, Falkirk didn't care what others thought or that he was softer around the middle than James.

The Alpha stood and joined Falkirk on the same lounger. It took a moment to get comfortable, with Falkirk resting his head on James' chest while wrapping an arm and leg around him. James started stroking him, with an arm up the back of Falkirk's open shirt.

“How about the casino tonight,” James said, watching the troll across the pool from them. Feeling Falkirk nod against his chest. He kissed the nest of curls under his chin.

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Falkirk came out of the bathroom, dressed in his tuxedo. James was sitting on the bed, having
prepared Falkirk's Falcon and James' own Walther. Falkirk looked at his own black suit, the two suits were the only ones he had designed to conceal a weapon.

James came over, intending to slip Falkirk's gun into his shoulder holster. Falkirk though had been trained better than that, he checked the weapon over before slipping it into his holster himself.

“Ready?” James asked, while slipping his Walther into the holster under his own arm. Then setting his jacket so it sat right to hide the bulge.

Falkirk nodded and his hand was taken by James and they exited the suite. Firstly they had dinner on the ground floor terrace, overlooking the Mediterranean sea. A string quartet played gentle music in the corner of the grand room. The table was set out with white linen, crystal glasses, and real silver cutlery. The parquet floor cracked under their formal shoes.

The Maître d' took James' champagne order, while Falkirk studies the leather bound menu. Something bothered Falkirk, he took the menu out of James' hand to compare them.

“The bastards gave me a woman's menu!” Falkirk looked at the menu set at his place, with only the dishes, while the Menu James had been given had the prices too. “Sexist twats.”

“How dare they,” James teased. “If anyone's the arm candy, it's me. I've got blond hair and blue eyes and everything.”

James took the menu from Falkirk's hand, the one without prices. “I'll have the Thermidor tail to start, followed...”

“Why you telling me?”

“I'm the arm candy, remember.” James teased with a twinkle in his eyes.

Falkirk pouted, “Like my Alpha ordering.”

James' attention was drawn by the arrival of the Troll from the pool. Oswald had his arm around his wife's waist, the woman towering over her husband. If she turned too quickly she could probably brain her husband with her cleavage. Given the overhang the push up cocktail dress gave, it would be quite a blow too.

Falkirk whispered, “He reminds me of daddy.”

“I saw her coming out of a service door, with a poor pool attendant walking funny after her,” James whispered. James noticed Falkirk shift, just sit a bit straighter and avoid eye contact. Belatedly he realised what he said, the bored and promiscuous wife was his usual target to get information, or access to a house or suite.

Falkirk felt James take his hand and pull it so it lay half way across the table. Their fingers intertwined.

“Just you that... my omega.”

Falkirk gave a weak smile at the words, used to cover the ones James couldn't bring himself to say. “Your Omega, my Alpha.”
The meal was quiet for a bit. Both knowing that what they wanted wasn't the same as what they needed. James still needed to state his wanderlust and his desire for excitement. Even Falkirk, he saw what boredom had done to Sherlock and wondered if he would be the same if he ever stopped. They needed the challenges, the engagement and distraction in their lives.

After the main meal, Falkirk held his hand out and instantly James closed the distance to grasp his fingers. Smiling at the Alpha, “Can we forego dessert.”

James nodded and firmly clasped Falkirk's hand. The two crossed the opulent foyer and through the arch on the far said. The casino floor stretched out ahead of them. This was no Vegas, no slots or bells and whistles, no cheers or cries of loss. Refined dignified games, set to classical music with waiters dressed impeccably ferrying drinks around the room from the bar in the centre.

Heading for a semicircular table on the left. Falkirk looked to James, “I take it Oswald likes Blackjack?”

James nodded, “You're taking the lead, it's not my game.”

Falkirk nodded and took one of the tall chairs, so he was at a comfortable height compared to the croupier who stood. Like a good luck charm, or the aforementioned arm candy, James stood behind him with his hands on Falkirk's shoulders. Looking to the croupier Falkirk said, “I'll start with a hundred euro.”

The standing Alpha handed over the chips. The hotel knowing who they were so would charge it to the room.

There was only one other player at the table. A focused alpha, that Falkirk could tell wasn't doing well. There was a que of stress coming from him.

James gave him a peck on the cheek and went to the bar. He returned with a couple of drinks, and stood at Falkirk's back. Playing with the little hairs on the back of Falkirk's neck.

Falkirk knew the strategy of Blackjack, he ignored it most of the time. He would hit on seventeen and take the chance of a bust. Because he liked smirking at the dealer, even when he couldn't care less that a three had been dealt giving Falkirk twenty.

A grunting made Falkirk look to his left. The troll had arrived and was having a bit of trouble getting up onto the tall chair. A jolt of jealousy surged through Falkirk when the tall Nordic woman gave James a once over. Shaking off the sudden image of gouging out her crystal blue eyes with his fingers, Falkirk concentrated on the game, placing a bet down beside his original to indicate he wanted one card only, a Double Down. To his five and a six, a seven was drawn. The dealer flipped his card over showing an ace which added to his king to make Blackjack.

“I vill be back, my love,” the alpha woman said in a deep heavily accented drawl. From the corner of Falkirk's eye he saw how she looked at James, an invitation to follow if he had ever seen one.

James stayed though, which surprised Falkirk a bit. But it shouldn't have, he knew James wasn't planning to do a honey pot on this mission. It struck him, he even lifted his head in surprise. He was the Bond Girl this time.

“Sir?” the croupier said and glanced down. Slightly put out Falkirk had stalled the rhythm of the game.
“Well I'm going to stand!” Falkirk snapped. He might not hold to the formal strategy, but there wasn't much you could do with a ten and a nine.

James leaned in to whisper, his lips brushing Falkirk's ear hidden in the mane of black hair.

“Be nice, you're winning.”

Falkirk just knocked his head against his Alphas and got back to playing. Absently noticing the blond Alpha woman returning, this time ignoring James like he was a pile of rubbish that had been dumped on the floor. That actually improved Falkirk's mood.

“Monsieur?” the concierge said approaching them, going to Oswald. The up tight man whispered something to the guest that none could hear then backed off.

The balding little troll sacrificed his bet, needing to leave right away. James offered a hand, “May I help you.”

“Get lost,” the small man snapped and jumped down the few inches to the floor. Barging passed James as he did so. None seeing the operative slip a hand into the small man's pocket to deposit a small bug.

James leaned down to Falkirk's ear, “Stay in a public place until I return.”

“Sure,” Falkirk said waving James away, having split two tens.

James headed off, putting in what looked like an AirPod into one ear as he went.

Letting out a yawn, Falkirk realised he'd been playing for quite a while. His backside was rather sore/numb, his drink was like many a cup of tea having been forgotten while he focused on something.

“Monsieur Bond?”

Falkirk turned to find a man standing behind him. He was shown a warrant card, one to Falkirk's eye was flawed. He didn't know what a French police detective's warrant card looked like per se, he could just tell the one he was shown had been knocked up on an ink jet printer and laminated badly.

“Your 'usband was in an accident,” the plane clothed officer said. “I'm 'ere to escort you to ze 'ospital.”

Jumping to his feet, “We'll go in my car!”

Chapter End Notes

The woman's menu is something I've just learned of. But apparently they were once common. I don't doubt the source of the information but I've still got a bit of a hard time believing it.
Where Loyalty Lies: A King Commands form the rear, unless he's M.

Chapter Notes

Hi guys! Sorry for the delay. Spare times just seemed to slip away from me. It always does this time of the year.

Thanks for reading, comments and kudos. It's all appreciated.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Stepping out the front of the Hotel, Falkirk reached into his jacket. Pulling back the hammer on his holstered pistol, then to cover the move patted down all his pockets. To the Valet on the step he said, “I'm so terribly sorry, I don't know what I did with my tag.”

Ever the accommodating employee of the high class resort the valet said, “Quite alright, Mr Bond.” The valet picked up a phone from the podium at which he stood, to call for Mr Bond's car to be brought round.

The Alpha at Falkirk's side insisted, “My car is just over there.”

“I insist,” Falkirk said as the silver DB5 pulled up to the steps of the hotel.

Getting in behind the wheel. Falkirk unlocked the door for the 'police officer'. Clutch down, Falkirk shifted the stick to the far left and up, into 1st gear. Easing up on the clutch while depressing the accelerator the car shot off. The Alpha gasping at the sudden burst of speed.

Being told to take the left, Falkirk eased up on the accelerator while pressing the clutch fully down and pulling the gear stick into 2nd, Falkirk took the corner at some speed.

Clinging on for dear life, the Officer shouted, “Droite. Droite! DROITE! RIGHT! ON THE RIGHT!”

Falkirk jerked the wheel to get on the right side of the road, for France that being the right. “Calm down.”

The officer muttered, “...Stupide merde!”

Ignoring that, his French might be bad, but James and Alec had made sure he was proficient in cursing all major languages. Falkirk glanced at the mirror, spotting the car following. He had a sneaking suspicion the French police didn't buy flashy Jeeps. A far too niche car for Europe.

“Ralentis, tu vas trop vite!” The officer screamed.

“What?” Falkirk looking at the officer.

“SLOW! DOWN!” the frantic man pointing ahead and scrambling a bit for a hand hold.

Looking ahead and seeing the bend, Falkirk popped the clutch, down shifted and took the sharp
bend. “It's fine!”

A low and wide R8 passed them. Glancing at the mirror, Falkirk saw the silver Audi do a hand brake turn and fall in behind the Jeep. With a bridge up ahead, Falkirk shifted to 4th, top gear for the car.

“Non!” the Officer cringed, seeing Falkirk speeding up for the single file bridge. A bright flash came from behind them. He looked over his shoulder and out the rear window.

Flip, press, *clunk, whoosh, pissst*, “AHHhhh!”

Falkirk glanced to the empty space beside him. He flipped the cap of the gear stick closed. With a clunk the roof section closed up again. In the mirror the Audi had caught up, the jeep now a fireball blooming far behind them.

“James Bond, a holiday my arse!”

Flipping open the arm rest. Then the centre console, the hidden screen woke and showed a map of the area with a radar pinging outward from the car. There was an echo back from a locator beacon. There wasn't a hospital there, like the 'officer' said there was. That was James' location though.

A horn blast drew his attention. The Audi had pulled up along side, the man in the driving seat gave a waving gesture for him to slow down and fall back.

“No bloody way,” Falkirk pressed the accelerator, to pull ahead again. The Audi having no choice but to pull in behind him. In the mirror he saw the driver banging the steering wheel in frustration, probably cursing Falkirk too.

Turning sharply off the main road, Falkirk flipped one of the switches in the opened arm rest console. From the front of the car's bumper two rams shot out, just as he crashed through the gate. The rams cushioning the impact a bit, still he was jarred as the gate burst open. Guards took aim and fired, the bullet proof glass and bodywork did its job. The Security weren't expecting the car to return fire.

Falkirk made sure to avoid the house when circling the fountain at the front door, while still firing the machine guns. Shooting off in a random direction, the car bouncing over the manicured lawn. Falkirk's intention to cause general havoc. None took much notice of the arriving Audi or the sandy haired man getting out to storm the house.

Seeing a group trying to take cover in a guard house by the gate. Falkirk floored it, with rams still protruding out the front and machine guns firing he drove right through the out building. Splintering it, and sending the facade bricks flying.

Some webbing cracks started to form in the windscreen and side windows. From both the drive through the gate house and from the continued weapons fire of the guards.

Seeing a group running from the house, making for what Falkirk assumed to be a garage block. Falkirk pulled down on the wheel, to take himself towards the group. A lone figure emerged, chasing after them. Getting ahead of the group, Falkirk pulled down sharply on the wheel, kicking the back out to block them off. One by one they went down, trapped between a firing Double O and furious hyper M in a one man war machine.
James ran over the bodies, and pulled open the passenger door. “What are you doing he... Where's my seat!”

“Just get in!”

James ducked in, having to sit on the back seat, now with extra leg room. Falkirk pulled away sharply. Pressing the button at the side of the screen he enunciated, “M to base, I have Double O Seven.”

“Aye, acknowledged,” Responded a Scots voice, from the speakers. “Report when you're out of the fire zone.”

When Falkirk reported he was on the road again. Daniel responded he would give Double O Five the recall order.

“Falkirk!” James called from the back. Bracing against the frame of the car and even Falkirk's seat. “I'd like to die saving the world- NOT BY FLYING OFF THE ROAD!”

“It's fine!” Falkirk snapped back. Glancing at the mirror, the R8 was behind them again. “Oh, Addison's caught up.”

“How!” James asked, a sharp bend sliding him across the back seat and slamming him against the window. “Who the fuck can keep up with you!”

“Moan, moan moan,” Complained Falkirk. “Oh, look it's your seat want to stop?”

James looked out, it was hard to tell though. The brown blob on the slop of the bank by the bridge could be his missing seat. “No, I think I'll get a new one.”

“You'll get a new one? Who built this car, TWICE!”

“You, dear. Now if you could just get us back alive.”

“It's fine!”

Falkirk was still grumbling under his breath about why no one had faith in his driving as he pulled down sharply on the wheel, to enter the drive of the hotel. James thumped against something and swore. In a squeal of tyres, and throwing James forward, he pulled up at the entrance.

James felt like kissing the ground when he stumbled out. The valet who had been handed the keys looking rather shell shocked. Only James' torn suite, and the pockmarked car with missing passenger seat as evidence to something having happened.

“Don't give him the key again,” James said to the valet in passing.

Falkirk pulled to a stop at the casino floor. Off to the left at the blackjack table was the Troll of a man, Oswald. Glancing to James trying his best to fix his his suit into a semblance of something tidy.

“What's he still doing here?”

James smirked at him, “About to get a big promotion if I did my job right.”
“That was your plan?” Falkirk asked, heading for the bar.

James nodded. “Officially, we dealt with a people smuggler. Oswald will be under full surveillance from now on. Seeing as you and I have been so close to him and have let him live, hopefully they won't suspect we know Oswald is part of SPECTRE. Now I need a bloody drink after that near death experience.”

“You're talking about my driving again, aren't you,” Falkirk accused following his Alpha to the bar.

A third joined them at the bar. Addison nodded greeting to Falkirk, “Q says, he's on clean up. French authorities have been informed. He also says, M, you can make your weapon safe now too.”

Falkirk rolled his eyes. “I'm hardly going to do that in a public bar.”

His gun had a black box that transmitted every change of state along with its location. Every time a clip was inserted, every round chambered, the hammer being drawn back, the safety being taken off and even trigger pull, would be known by MI6.

James chanced an arm around his omega's waist. They were meant to look like they were celebrating after all. All while Oswald watched. Falkirk though noticed James was thrumming with energy.

Addison asked, “So, who gives M a bollocking for reckless driving and leaving ejected bad guys by the side of the road, and using a car as a tank.”

Falkirk glared at the Double O, “The DB5 is a private vehicle, so I will be paying for its repair. No compensation, so no budget impact! There was not a single reporter! There wasn't a camera anywhere near what I did, not even a speed camera, Double O Five. I wish you were that discreet!”

Like a child Addison pulled a face behind Falkirk's back. James issuing a half hearted growl in response. Something caught Addison's eye, he turned his back to the bar to look out over the room.

Hearing the Double O hum his appreciation, Falkirk glanced at Addison then had a subtle look back over his shoulder to see what Addison was looking at. Falkirk sang softly, “She'll chew you up, Oh-oh, here she comes, She's a maneater...”

The blond woman strode up, Addison keeping her in sight while in the background M still hummed the tune. He smiled at her, while they mutually looked each other over.

The still on edge Alpha gave into his desire, grabbing his Omega's lapel pulled him along. Leaving Addison offering to buy the woman a drink.

“Come on,” James purred when in the lift, on their way back to the suite. Pushing his mate up against the wood panelled wall, “Admit it, you miss the excitement. How long has it been since you were in the field.”

“Not long enough f...” James kissing him stopped the talking. Falkirk felt James tremble with the lingering adrenalin. It was effecting the omega too, the alpha's pheromones were building in the enclosed space. Placing his hand on the side of James' neck, Falkirk felt the thumping pulse.
They broke apart, both taking gasping lungfuls of air. For Falkirk he felt the dizzying effect of his Alpha's pheromones, making things disjointed and wonderful. Even as he tripped over his own feet, his Alpha's arms kept him upright through he journey to their suite.

Those wonderful lips moved from his mouth to his neck. Falkirk's eyes flashed open at the feel of the teeth on his neck, absently wondering why he could see the ceiling of their suite. Everything flashed passed in a blur until he was tied to his Alpha, and they were coming down from the high.

--

“She really pumped me for information,” Addison said, while they sat on the restaurant terrace. “She pumped me for everything I knew about the raid on the mansion. I made sure to brag while she p...”

Holding up his hand to stop the Double O talking, Falkirk lowered the morning paper, filled with the pictures of the mansion just further down the coast. The subject of a major police operation, or so the paper claimed. With the owner and his mercenary guards having a shoot out rather than being arrested.

Looking at Addison, M snapped, “Enough euphemisms, Double O Five. You are dismissed.”

“M,” The handsome Alpha smirked at him and stood. He swaggered across the restaurant, brushing his fingers across the shoulders of the blond woman without her husband noticing. The woman stood a moment later, leaving her husband to his breakfast while she went for desert.

James returned and sat in Addison's vacated chair, “Q Branch are arranging a loaner car, and picking up mine. We're going to have to stay for a few more days though.”

“That's too bad,” Falkirk waved for the waiter to come over. He was ready to order, and after last night fancied something hearty.

Chapter End Notes

My French is very basic so translations are via google. Errors are likely.
The second part of the holiday had been nice. Just Falkirk and James, no operations or bad guys. Oswald having left the day after James' attack on the mansion.

Leaning over, Falkirk lay his head on James' shoulder. The BMW around them was very executive, meaning sleek and impersonal in monochromatic piano-black already covered in a layer of dust and fingerprints. The car ahead took up most of their view, with the grey walls and ceiling of the car transporter carriage of the Eurostar taking up the rest of the view.

The gentle sway, the sound of muffled wheels on rail, the smell of James' sandalwood shaving soap, with the deeper musk of the Alpha's own scent and hint of gun oil. It was lulling Falkirk into a dream like state. Another train journey came to mind, from a long time ago.

“I like trains,” Falkirk muttered. Getting a stroke to his hair, and a kiss to his temple.

“Hipster,” James teased. Stroking the bridge of Falkirk's nose, not knowing why just that it was something he wanted to do in the private moment. A frown marred Falkirk's face, his brown knitting and his eyes popping open.

“I was fifteen back then.”

“So,” James asked, moving so he could pull Falkirk close and hug him.

“Rupert's sixteen... He seems so much younger though. Andrew's still a baby!”

James chuckled, and laid more kisses onto his mate. “Not quite a baby. They don't need to grow up early. They've still got their family to take care of them. Not something we had.”

Falkirk hummed in response, still thinking of himself, Alec and James and comparing them to Rupert, Andrew and Yulian.

“Falkirk, you've got that look that means you could nuke the world. Relax. Nothing bad is happening.”

Falkirk nodded and turned so he could bury his face into his Alpha's shoulder.

All to soon they arrived at the depot where they had to disembark. Falkirk not too happy he had to sit up again, so James could drive them north to London.
Arriving home, James again drawing up at the front of the house. How Hudson managed to open the door, just as Falkirk put his foot on the top step he still didn't know and the butler refused to give away the secret to his mystical talent.

Very suspicious to Falkirk, Andrew and Rupert stood to the left. Andrew came up first to hug him, followed by Rupert.

“Okay! Spill it!” Falkirk demanded.

“Sir,” Hudson said from behind Falkirk. “They were good as gold.”

James muttered, “If you believe that, you believe anything.”

“We were,” Andrew whined. Rupert added, “Only one spilled drink, all week.”

Andrew's eyes suddenly brightened, “Evie took us food shopping. Did you know you get Baked Bean Pizza. I had one!”

While Falkirk had visions of a cheep pizza with a tin of Heinz Baked Bans being poured over it. James said to the butler, “So they had nothing that could be described as food in the passed week.”

“I believe sir, described as food is the technical term,” Hudson said, taking the bag from James and headed up stairs with the other Alpha. Hudson telling James there was such a thing as microwave cooked chips, with an air of offence at the concept.

When the Butler was out of ear shot. Falkirk wagged a finger at the two boys, “I hope you were good while we were away?”

Andrew said he was, he could lie to your face without giving anything away though. Rupert nodded and said, “Pretty quiet. Cody, and Yulian came round at the weekend. Uncle Daniel and Alec, came by every day. Aunt Selene every other day, and Uncle Keading came by at random.”

“At least one of them was wise enough not to have a pattern,” Falkirk said heading for the stairs.

Over the evening, they got a bit more of what happened while the parents were away. Inappropriate movies, that Hudson knew nothing off. Soft Drinks, full of sugar, caffeine and chemicals to turn them electric blue or bright orange. And as the Heinz Baked Bean pizza indicated junk food that only teenagers and kids could stomach.

--

An old man sat in the stool of MI6's garage. He wore a blue overalls, stretched tight around his expanding frame. He cast his eyes over the work stations, an Audi had been lifted so people could work under it. The second birth had a beat up silver Aston Martin that had seen the workshop three times now. Old Calvin's contributions consisted of sitting and drinking tea while directing the mechanics from his bench, and for the most part being acknowledged while ignored in favour of the messy haired omega who was second in charge of the workshop.

“S’ where's the bastard that did it!” said Calvin when he saw the door open and the once young and fresh omega enter.

“Standing here.” Falkirk answered.

The rather round man pulled a stained and chipped mug close, and poured treacle coloured water from the beat up metal teapot. Falkirk didn't stop Calvin when he added a good splash of milk and
four sugars, it was the only way to make the over stewed tea drinkable.

Taking the offered mug Falkirk sipped the 'workman's brew'. “So how long until Guy has the car good as new?”

Calvin bellowed, “IT'D BE DONE T'DAY IF THEY DID AS THEY'RE TOLD!”

From the rear of the Aston Martin, the omega with wild upstanding hair looked up, looked round, like a meerkat or something. Judging there to be no threat Guy disappeared from view again. Everyone got back to work after the outburst.

Falkirk said, “I better go get my hands dirty, so I'm not lying when I tell James I rebuilt the car.”

“Do that, Lad. No enough working men now a days,” grumbled the old man. “I tell ya, we wouldn't have half the trouble we do if some of those twits in charge had done an honest day's graft...”

Calvin was still grumbling to himself as Falkirk walked away. At least he hadn't got the 'Youth of today' speech.

Taking off his jacket, waistcoat, and his shirt, leaving him in his dress trousers, braces and T-shirt, Falkirk headed for the car. Rounding the Aston, the front wings and bonnet had been removed exposing the frame and even the machine guns. The windscreen still had spiderweb pockmarks.

“Guy?” Falkirk said, reaching the mechanic working to take out the rear windscreen.

“HiyaM! Cometolendahand?”

The trick with Guy was to use all your senses to understand him. Listen to the words that came so quick they merged, watch his lips, think about what you were doing, think about what Guy was doing and where they were and it all became just about understandable.

“Yes, for a bit,” Falkirk said, starting to help the other omega remove the windscreen

“Brilliantopportunity. Theguysdolike working on an oldie. It'sbrilliantreally...” Guy continued to speak, but Falkirk had lost him. So falling on an old habit of smiling and nodding, and trying to catch up.

Yes! Falkirk picked up something about a motorbike, and a race, and a record. Falkirk could cry for joy, interrupting, “Are you going to do the TT this year?”

“Naw. Go'tawork. I'dlovetabu',” Guy leaned in close,
“OldCalvindosen'tlikemegonetoollong. Canacopeyasee.”

“I see,” Falkirk said. “People like Calvin, they don't know how to retire.”

“Iken,” Guy said.

They had gotten both front and back windscreens off when Guy said, “Thinkhe'sforyou.”

Looking over his shoulder, Falkirk's next appointment had arrived. Another Omega, this one blond and lightly muscled, dressed in a good dark blue suite.

“Double O Nine, I hear you've been making yourself useful in my absence.” Falkirk said, while carrying the front windscreen with Guy. The suction cups and hoist were out, they couldn't get a vacuum seal to use it, so it was the old fashioned method of moving the heavy glass.
“Can we talk here?” Maloney asked looking round the busy workshop.

“They're more trust worthy than the suites up stairs,” Falkirk said. “Make yourself useful put those muscles to work and take a side. Bullet proof glass is not light.”

The Double O took the long side of the window, to help the other two omegas take it over to the work bench.

To put in the replacement windscreen they could use the hoist, the new screen free of cracks that stopped the suction cups working. While they worked, swinging the new windscreen over to the car Maloney reported on his work in investigating the leads in the case he himself had sabotaged. Confirming John Dawes to be the next target, and the woman who approached him being very likely to be the next stooge.

“Keep on it,” Falkirk ordered Double O Nine. “I can't have Dawes being compromised, even if it costs us the investigation.”

Falkirk saw the look cross the Double O's face. Maloney's thought very clear to see: Why was M willing to sacrifice the investigation for Dawes but not Maloney. Falkirk snapped. “Think Mr Maloney. Make sure Dawes' history is not used against him, his old enemy or us!”

There it was, Maloney remembered the problem in John Dawes' history and Falkirk's 'Fuck You' to those who crossed him.

“You are dismissed, Double O Nine,” Falkirk said tuning back to the car. To help Guy attach the new front left wing. The silver panel smooth and sweeping again.

--

James waited at the car park entrance to MI6. The Black Jaguar idled about six feet away from where he stood, with police outriders waiting to escort M's car.

The employees that needed to secure their cars had slowly left, emptying the low ceilinged car park. Daniel and Alec had left about ten minutes ago. Darren almost strutted on his way out, humming a tune as he headed for the car that arrived to pick him up. Tanner didn't notice James waiting, the beta had been a bit rushed so had his nose inches from his phone with his briefcase under and arm so he could tap away at the screen. Selene gave him a nod as she left.

When Falkirk appeared, his jacket and shirt were carried in the crook of his arm. His white t-shirt was smeared with grease, including some finger marks over his tummy from wiping his hands. Even the dress trousers, the knees and thighs had been stained. James would bet everything he had the cute smear over the bridge of Falkirk's nose and right cheek had been done deliberately.

“Humm,” James said, crossing his arms with a frown. “Now what could you have been doing.”

Shrugging, and letting James open the door for him. Falkirk said, “Nothing really.”

James slid in beside Falkirk. The bodyguard James hadn't taken notice of getting in beside the driver.

“You know,” James mused as the diver pulled away. “In all the years you worked in Q-Branch, not once did you come home all greasy. It's like you're making a point.”

“Oh?” Falkirk said with complete obliviousness. “What point would that be?”
“I don't know. I'm just a dumb operative.”

“And don't you forget it,” Falkirk leaned in to give his Alpha a kiss.

A ringing made Falkirk pull back from the kiss. He looked at the screen of his phone, 'G' the caller. The voice though, it had more in common with Guy.

“It's happening! It's coming! What do I do?”

“You go to the hospital!” Falkirk said. G hung up leaving Falkirk looking at the dark phone. While telling James what the call was about a dark thought came to Falkirk. He tried to dismiss it, but he ended up calling G. When the young Alpha answered Falkirk said, “You have remembered to take Arthur with you?”

“Ehh....”

“Go back and get him! Remember his overnight bag! And get a driver!”

“Yes, sir.”

Falkirk hung up and shook his head. “Let's hope they get to the hospital in one piece.”
Arriving at a private hospital, a long building that took up the length of the street. Falkirk got out of his car under the blistering flashes of cameras. He was however reluctantly famous, or infamous so going to see his god child was paparazzi worthy. The baby had arrived the day before, after a twelve hour labour. How Arthur had done it Falkirk didn't know. His own experience was one second drinking a cup of tea, the next being exhausted and being handed a screaming bundle of brand new baby.

Picking up the simple teddy bear, a pale brown one with a plaid bow-tie. It had started out as red bow-tie, but that colour was traditionally associated with Alphas and the sex wasn't being released until the name and all the other details were formally announced. So everyone going in was careful to avoid colours that would denote sex or gender.

Inside the hospital, gently Falkirk opened the door to the only room with armed guards. Inside the private room G was standing over a crib, shocked and with glazed eyes. In the bed Arthur had curled up on his side as he slept.

Coming up to the terrified looking Alpha Falkirk looked over his shoulder to the baby with thin wispy blond hair sticking out from a cream woolly hat.

"It won't bite, doesn't have teeth yet," Falkirk whispered and G started. The young man waffled, that he hadn't noticed Falkirk entering. Falkirk took in the dark rings around his eyes and the exhausted scent almost masked by Arthur's and the baby's.

"Rest," Falkirk instructed and indicated the bed. G looked hesitant, Falkirk's glare ended the silent debate. Gently and carefully, G sat on the edge of the bed and lay beside his mate. Falling into a doze quickly, G was out for the count not long after.

Picking up the chart attached to the crib Falkirk was finally able to identify the baby as a girl to go along with the Omega scent. He also learned there was no name as of yet, or that could be just a miss direction to stop the name leaking to the press. Falkirk knew the shortlist, he didn't know the final choice yet.

Taking a seat Falkirk pulled out his laptop to watch over the baby and the new parents while he worked. But he could only focus on the memories of the day Arthur and G came to see him. Both looking embarrassed and hesitating. Eventually Falkirk had casually asked if Arthur knew he was pregnant and the younger omega's face went scarlet. G had answered and Falkirk congratulated both. Watching the two on the bed now. Falkirk was a bit worried by the way neither moved, because they were so tired. Both looking pale and washed out.

A nurse entered, she was just here to check over the new baby and family. There was something about the Alpha woman with wide flat nose. The way she wouldn't quite meet Falkirk's eyes, and the way she shifted nervously. He was about to call for his bodyguard when he recognised her and
almost burst out laughing. He couldn't remember her exactly but he had been told the story dozens of times and her mashed nose identified her immediately. She seemed to remember Falkirk because she backed out with a spiteful look that could kill. Falkirk couldn't remember what she had said during his labour that caused an instinctive violent reaction, but he was sure she deserved it.

About an hour into his vigil, a little plump Omega woman arrived to rouse Arthur for the feeding. The omega whining as he was woken and the Alpha became territorially protective at the noise. Falkirk moved to be in G's eyeline to remind him he wasn't alone.

When awake and sitting up, Arthur asked Falkirk, "Would you please bring her over?"

It was the permission he had been waiting for. With experienced hands Falkirk lifted the girl and brought her to her Papa. Falkirk found himself propping up the tired omega so he could feed the girl, the nurse giving praise for how quickly Arthur was adapting and how well he was doing. G stood in the background, where the little nurse had put him. The new father stretching to try and see but the Nurse insisting only calming omega presences were needed while nursing.

With Arthur falling back asleep almost instantly after having fed the nameless child. Falkirk offered James, Selene or Alec to stay so G could get some rest.

“No,” G said shaking his head. To Falkirk it looked like he could knock the younger man down with a feather.

"Arthur needs you rested. Even James left me, Daniel stayed so he could get some rest. It's what a pack is for,” Falkirk said. The hour or so that Falkirk had given the new father had not been enough and G was now looking worse than when Falkirk first arrived.

"Selene?” G asked and Falkirk nodded.

"I'll call her. Take my car. I'll stay until she arrives," Falkirk reassured.

Falkirk watched the exhausted Alpha plod down the corridor, using his arm to steady himself. Falkirk made sure his driver was ready for G, and called Selene and asked her to come.

--

“M,” Tanner called catching up to Falkirk while he toured MI6. Falkirk found it never hurt to let people see him and talk to him.

Stopping where he was, at the wall of a cubical in the communal offices for the liaison for the different countries intelligence services. Falkirk waited for his chief of staff to catch up to him.

“M,” Tanner said, a bit out of breath and sweat beading his forehead. “It's confirmed. John Dawes in the next target.”

“Do we know by whom?”

“Apart from Saz Kaur, who made contact with Dawes, no. Same M.O. subtle emotional manipulation of the target, like a long term honey pot. Ms Kaur has shown an unnerving prior knowledge on Dawes' past, which she expresses as her own background being similar to John Dawes'. Palestinian refugee. Family killed in Israeli Air strikes. Hamas sympathies...”

“But who is behind her?” Falkirk demanded.

Tanner shrugged. “Only MI6 and a very limited number of foreign powers have any data on
Dawes' past. If Ms Kaur is successful, that would be the fourth compromised Double O.”

“I’m still concerned with the: who!” Falkirk mused. “If this is an enemy, their M.O. is very inefficient. If the threat was coming from an ally, what is their goal? If this is coming from Britain, how did they get such sensitive information on the Double Os, Dawes in particular?”

“We're doing what we can,” Tanner said. “Just wanted let you know the latest.”

Falkirk nodded and turned away, letting Tanner return to E-Branch. Around the gap in the wall that only came up to Falkirk's shoulder height. He noticed the worker at the cubical desk, slim, beta and curly haired.

Smiling at the occupant, Falkirk greeted brightly, “Mr Kohler, I thought your desk was the other side of the room.”

“No, M, always here.”

“Silly me,” Falkirk said entering the small space. “So doing anything interesting?”

“Nothing really. You?”

Falkirk smiled, “No, no. Just thought I would have a walk. It takes my mind of the Parents' Night tonight. I'm not looking forward to it.”

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James was away, so like he usually was Falkirk was alone in dealing with this. He sat in a class room with six teachers across the desk from him. The Form Tutor, the teacher in charge of Andrew's year sat directly cross from Falkirk with several other teachers on his side who wanted Andrew in their class. Not alone exactly, Falkirk did have his son beside him but he was not an ally in this situation, Andrew just wanting to do the things that interested him.

With this academic year coming to a close and Andrew now at the age that he had to choose his subjects at school this Parents' Night was a big one for Andrew and Falkirk. It would set Andrew on his course for the future. Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics were a given. Cross Country there was no problem with as far as the school was concerned. Andrew was also the only Omega on the boxing squad, kick boxing and wanted to continue with the contact sports. The school had tried to push him into the Omega sports, gymnastics, diving and such, but he had refused out right.

"Your son will also need English," Andrew's Form Tutor was stressing. Falkirk could read his type like a book, disingenuous, condescending, a bully, in short a miserable bastard of a person who had not lived up to their own ambitions. There was only one reason he was being polite, because there would come a point later on when Falkirk would be expected to get his chequebook out. He was right though on this, Andrew needed more than the technical subjects and extracurricular clubs he had chosen.

"I don't like English," Andrew insisted. With Arms crossed and a sulk firmly in place.

Falkirk knew the tutor was right but apart from the bed time stories Andrew only ever read in order to gain knowledge. His son's only pleasure in reading was comic books.

Looking to his son, Falkirk insisted too, "In order to do the things we like we have to do some things we don't."

"Perhaps the Father will have better luck convincing Andrew," The Form Tutor said. It was the
subtle, nasty, remark Falkirk had been waiting on all night.

"Your contribution is unwelcome," Falkirk said to the Alpha. Looking to Andrew, and in front of the Form Tutor and Andrew's other teachers he spoke sharply to his son. "I truly dislike having to hobble every passing Alpha but I do it or I would have to give up the job I like."

"Doesn't matter. I want to go into the Navy, don't need English Literature for that." Andrew declared.

Outwardly Falkirk's eye twitched, internally he swore loudly and repeatedly. Nathan Maloney had been in the RAF, the most accepting of Omegas in Military services. Double O Nine had confided some of the horror stories of his training and service, and Andrew would never be the atypical Omega Maloney was. It was a depressing thought, Falkirk's analytical mind honed by being M couldn't see his son cope in the situation without a pack's support.

The little old Beta with white hair growing out his ears, The head of the Physics Department explained that the Military would be a poor career path given Andrew's skill. He tried to make it sound that it would be a waist of Andrew's talents but he was meaning his Sex. Falkirk was disinclined to argue.

"We will have to discuss Military options privately," Falkirk said and Andrew knew his Papa's tone of voice meant it would never happen.

"If I take English will you give me the choice at eighteen?" Andrew pleaded.

"Only if you also apply to university and consider a range of options," Falkirk stated.

"Agreed!" Andrew said.

That was an ordeal and a half, Andrew one side the school the other and Falkirk trying to find the middle ground in all of it. Falkirk signed the documents, confirming Andrew's subject choices for his GCSEs. Rupert's time had been much better, he had a clear goal of doing Law at Oxford like M had done. Even is that ambition failed, trying would give Rupert so many other opportunities.

Taking back the documents, the Form Tutor said, “The Head Master invites you for refreshments in the hall.”

'The time share presentation?' Falkirk thought while putting on an insincere smile. "How pleasant.”

Leaving the class room. A couple of the teachers swapping over. The Form Teacher remaining, he had to see every student in Andrew's year, while department heads only remained if a student was taking one of their classes.

“Papa...”

Falkirk looked to his son, “We will talk about your future later.”

They headed for the spots hall, where buffet tables had been set up. Some older students had been drafted in to pass out the watered down wine. Andrew vanished from Falkirk's side, and out of the opened up fire door onto the playground. Falkirk wishing he could do the same.

Selene and Keading were across the room, the dark haired woman having been cornered by the old sagging faced woman who ran the school. Selene had her chequebook in hand and as soon as she had it written out, it was almost snatched out of the long slim book by the claw like hand of the Headmistress.
Feeling a presence behind him, Falkirk looked to Daniel and Alec. Alec pulled out his wallet and handed Falkirk a fiver.

Seeing the action, Daniel asked, “What’s that about?”

Alec shrugged, “I bet Falkirk the old hag would get a donation out of you.”

“And you took that bet!” Daniel whispered harshly. “I pay a fair price for a service, why should I pay more?”

Falkirk leaned into Alec to whisper, “Mary one told me, 'Short arms, long pockets' is the traditional saying.”

Daniel snapped, “An' don't you bloody forget it.”

“AH! SIR THOMAS?” Called the headmistress crossing the hall. “SO good to see you once again.”

Alec whispered, “Fucking hell! She had a straight face when she said that!”

Falkirk subtly elbowed Alec, then stepping forward to offer his hand to the approaching woman. It was time to make sure Andrew got to do his Boxing, and other one-on-one(Alpha) contact sports.

Chapter End Notes

This is part of the original chapters. It jumps about a bit more than I would like. I hope you can follow.

Reminder Monday is the new Sunday for postings.
Andrew rubbed his chest again while grimacing. Reaching over, Falkirk brushed his son's hair. Falkirk said, “Why must you compete with uncle Alec.”

“Wasn't! I like hot curries,” Andrew defended, while still rubbing his chest. Turning away to look out the car window, really he was hiding his screwed up face.

Falkirk let the matter drop. Andrew was now at an age where if he wanted to act like a dumb Alpha he could, for the most part. Unless injury was a likelihood, then Falkirk would step in but only then. Everything else was a learning experience.

After the parents' night, they had gone to an Indian restaurant. Alec had ordered for a Vindaloo, Andrew wanting the same along with Yulian. Everyone else intelligent enough to order something that wouldn't melt their insides.

Arriving home, Falkirk got out the car first with his two sons following. Selene pulled her car in behind Falkirk's, so they could come in too. Hudson opened door and welcomed them back. Poor Andrew only able to answer with a pathetic little whine.

In the foyer there were a few moments of chaos, that nice homely chaos that Falkirk so liked. The old omega, Mrs Bridges was getting coats on the two youngest, Michelle and Luke because she and Mr Hudson had babysat the two. Keading thanked the cook and butler, and got assurances from both the kids had been good as gold. Mrs Bridges got kisses from the two youngest and polite thank yous. Hudson giving each a stiffly informal pat to the head.

When the family got into Selene's car. The group gathered on the doorstep waved to the car pulling away. Falkirk then steered Andrew towards the corridor that led to the kitchen stairs. Mrs Bridges and Hudson following behind them down to the basement.

Falkirk got Andrew a glass of milk to neutralise some of the spice. Suspecting the two servants could be using a good cup of tea, Falkirk offered to put the kettle on, also wanting one himself. He had to insist when Mrs Bridges tried to do it for him. Mr Hudson guided the little cook to the table where he pulled out a chair for her to sit.

After three glasses of milk, Falkirk sent his son upstairs. Andrew still rubbing his chest as he went. While the kettle boiled, Falkirk asked about Brayan and was told he had gone out for the evening with the new kitchen maid.

“Mrs Bridges?” Falkirk said bringing the tea pot over to the large kitchen table near the back door. “There was something about Andrew. For an assignment he had to write a story from a grand parent, it was one of yours I believe.”

“Oh,” the old omega said. Mr Hudson placed a comforting hand over hers. She looked worried as
she said, “I didn't realise sir. I hopes I wasn't stepping out of line. I didn't mean...”

Falkirk held up his hands, “No, no. It's not that. And frankly, Andrew isn't the only one who considerer you part of the family.”

The old woman blushed a bit, and Hudson even sat up a bit straighter. Sitting down at the table, Falkirk poured the tea into the three cups. He said, “It's the story I was interested in. I think Andrew failed to grasp something in it. You nailed a ten-bob note to the floor?”

“Ohh! Yes!” The old woman gave a cackle and rocked back a bit. Over the cup of tea she said, “My first job on my own. The madam, common as you please I tell you. First week there, the madam put a ten-bob note under the runner carpet in the hall. Finding it, I made sure she didn't lose it by nailing it to the floor.”

“Mrs Bridges!” Hudson glowered a bit. “You wouldn't have gotten away with that if I had been Butler.”

Falkirk looked between the woman across from him and the man at the head of the table to his right. “Sorry, I'm still confused.”

Mr Hudson said, “It was a test sir. The madam placed a valuable note under the rug. If the Madam got the note back, she would know the new maid was cleaning properly and was honest. If the madam didn't get the note back she would go look for it. If the Madam found the note she would know the new maid wasn't cleaning properly. If she didn't, the Madam would know the new maid was cleaning properly but was a thief.”

Mrs Bridge said, “She went to such effort to put it under the carpet, I just had to make sure she wouldn't lose her money.”

“So you nailed it to the floor,” Falkirk said, with a small smirk. He actually liked it, and respected Mrs Bridges for seeing through someone's bullshit and doing something unexpected. He glanced towards the fridge, where still hung a crayon picture of a yellow haired blob in black suit flying through the air. Falkirk wondered if Andrew still remembered the kidnapping attempt Hudson interfered with.

“No, Mrs Bridges, Hudson, If you don't mind Andrew thinking of you as grandparents nor will I.” Falkirk said. “I don't know about James' parents, but mine were waists of space that I wouldn't let near my children.”

Falkirk couldn't help the bitter note that had entered his voice. Hudson said, “I regret I never met your Papa, Sir.”

There was that, he technically had three parents. A mother, a father and a Papa. Falkirk nodded, and looked down. As far as he knew there was only one person with a living memory of his papa now. A down and out uncle who liked to play gangster just waiting for the day he crossed the wrong person and ended up dead too.

The door that led into the garden clicked and pushed open. The dark haired omega came in first, followed by the blond Alpha. Falkirk smiled at the pair, “A pleasant evening?”

“Oh, yes,” Evie said, “We went to the British museum.”

'Is it still standing?’ Falkirk thought. Mrs Bridges asked, “Did it survive dear?”

“Oh! Mrs Bridges,” Mr Hudson said. “The poor girl isn't that clumsy.”
Falkirk ducked his head and smiled. Controlling his face he looked up again. He asked Brayan about his time out. Evie gave a few hints, which the Alpha was able to pick up to tell Falkirk about.

While Falkirk finished his tea, Mrs Bridges got her coat and with Evie headed out. The younger woman escorting the older home. Brayan wished them a good night and headed back out the door, to go to his apartment above the garage. Mr Hudson started to lock up, while Falkirk washed the cups and saucers.

Wishing the old Alpha a goodnight, in case Falkirk didn't see him again. They usually did. Falkirk had a habit of working in the Library for a while, but was careful not to be too late because Hudson would stay up until Falkirk went to bed. Falkirk had a sudden image of the times he would go to E-Branch to sit with M. Being M was a job you could lose yourself in if you weren't careful, just letting everything outside of that espionage bubble slip by you if someone wasn't there to remind you of the wider world.

Falkirk headed upstairs, leaving Hudson to his History Channel documentary. Finding the two boys in lounge, Falkirk reached over the back of the couch, to Andrew laying on it to watch the movie. Falkirk patted his son's tummy, “Your insides still melting?”

Andrew nodded. Falkirk had to stop himself from saying something because he knew it would come out as an 'I told you so.'

Going to the other couch, Falkirk sat. Rupert, sitting in one of the corners with his legs curled under him looked to Falkirk, then shifted so his back was to Falkirk's side. It was less than a moment before Andrew shifted. He rolled to his hands and knees, crawled round the table that separated the two couches and climbed up to get some sympathy from his Papa. Falkirk quite liking the snuggling in the absence of his Alpha, who had other responsibility just now.

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“...yes, I could. It was embarrassing though. I didn't even let Daniel see,” Alec's voice was rather quiet. Falkirk pushed open the door fully, ending the conversation going on. He knew what it was about, Alec nursing. It was something he'd been told very privately by Alec.

“Just me,” Falkirk said, entering the room finding Arthur standing with Alec at the young omega's back. Both standing at the side of the bed and leaning over it slightly.

“You're up!” Falkirk observed brightly. Arthur nodded, while finishing changing the nappy of the little girl on the middle of his high bed.

Arthur said, “I think my insides are almost back into place again.”

“Hated that feeling,” Alec said. “But then again I had to be disembowelled to get the parasite out of me, then my insides threatened to spill out my front if I moved.”

“That how you talk about your son!” Falkirk teased. “A parasite?”

Alec nodded, “I make sure he knows he's the best loved parasites in all the world though.”

Falkirk noticed a devilish look flash across Arthur's face. The little blond omega then picked up his daughter, “You're not a parasite, are you Victoria. No you're not.”

“Victoria!” Alec said. “Queen Vicky? Queen Vic!”

Falkirk whacked the older man. Brushing the baby's brow, Falkirk said, “It's a beautiful name.”
“For a pub! OW!” Alec rubbed his arm where Falkirk gave a sharp jab.

Arthur looked up to Falkirk, then Alec. Very proud he said, “We still like it.”

With an emphatic fist raised, Alec called, “God save Queen Vic Two!”

“She's not queen yet,” Arthur pointed out. Falkirk informed, “I think she has a nickname though.”

“Yeah,” Alec said. “To us, now and forever more she shall be, 'Ge' outta' ma pub!’”

Falkirk scrubbed his face at the last bit, delivered in a cockney shriek. “What the hell have you been watching Alec?”

“Wait,” Alec said with a light in his eyes. Standing behind Arthur and stroking the sleeping baby's forehead, “Peggy, that's your nickname.”

Falkirk saw Arthur roll his eyes. Alec's sense of humour was something you just had to ride out. Stepping closer, Falkirk looked at the squashed little face. Even asleep the newly named Victoria made a sucking motion with her pursed lips. With Arthur just holding his daughter and surrounded by pack, they stood and looked on the new member.

Falkirk's phone interrupted the moment of reflection. Apologising, Falkirk excused himself quickly before the electronic bleating woke the baby. In the hall, Falkirk answered the phone with a crisp, “M!”

Tanner said, “Deputy Director Green of Mossad is here to speak with you. We have also monitored four Mossad operatives entering the UK in the past twenty-four hours.”

“Mr Kohler tattled on us, how smart of him,” Falkirk said, beginning to walk down the corridor. “Prepare for my arrival. Have Mallory at the ready, if Mossad rattle some cages I want to know who gets spooked.”

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The dark haired woman almost ran down the corridor. Normally someone who seemed to be poised and in control of herself, she was far from it in this moment. Barrelling passed a stout woman stuffed into a skirt suite, the Matron like woman bellowed after her, “OY! Who are you!”

She couldn't stop, they had no time to delay. The dark haired woman reached the office she was looking for. The Secretary tried to stop her but she pushed her way in. The politician with a sherry glass poised at his lips was not her target, the older man with silver hair having a drink with the low ranked minister was.

“Sir James, a word.” The out of breath woman said.

Now the Matron had arrived, puffing and panting with some security. Standing, and placing his glass down. Sir James looked to the minister whom he served, “If you'll excuse me a moment, Sir.”

Sir James waved off the woman who was technically his direct superior and the accompanying security guards. He then took the guest's arm and walked her away whispering, “Ms Elbaz, I don't know what I can do for you. I'm out of the loop.”

“You have to drop the Dawes exercise. Mossad are now all over this, if you reveal something like,
like... like Dawes' real name, they will know someone who is or was Mossad is involved. From there it's only a small step for Mossad to find me. Dawes is too volatile a subject with too many links to me.”

The silver haired man stopped and looked to the dark haired woman head on. “I cannot help you, Ms Elbaz. You will have to go to Geoffrey Dromgoole yourself. I suggest you hurry. He is becoming a little reckless.”

Elbaz turned on her heels and ran off down the corridor. Sir James headed back to the minister's office, The Minister was a rough one but under Sir James' care he could see the politician going far.

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Falkirk shook the hand of the little woman with big-hair and power-suite from the 90s, big shoulder pads and bright yellow. He said, “As always, Ms Green. It's been a pleasure.”

“Always,” Green said. She turned away from him, giving a jerking strut through E-Branch. Her stiletto heels cracking against the floor easily the loudest thing in the room. No, Deputy Director Green of Mossad didn't do subtle, unless subtle was a cougar wilding a sledgehammer.

Looking to the man sitting in his office. Sharp faced, with very short beard and neat hair style.

“Mr Dawes,” Falkirk said, returning to sit behind his desk. “It looks like you're off the hook. I'll have MI5 pick up Saz Kaur. If the MO is the same she won't be able to give us anything useful. A contact at most.”

“Are you sure it's British, M?” the Double O asked.

Falkirk shrugged, “At the moment I'm playing the probabilities. Probabilities say this internal political bullshit! They're cowards who are doing all they can to stop me learning their name, because the second I do they know I will go for them. They can't be seen to have acted against M6 or the country so are left with engineer the Double Os getting rid of themselves.”

“M,” the Double O said, leaning forward. “We don't have to arrest Saz Kaur, we could continue as we were. Turning the table on her, get her and her sponsors to come out of hiding.”

Falkirk shook his head. “Mossad don't want an incident, I agreed to have Ms Kaur arrested to stop it. That's three-for-two, You and Maloney are failures, Kew, Thomas and Masood as successes. We'll...”

Tanner knocked and entered, Director Green standing outside Falkirk's office with arms crossed and tapping her foot. A look that could freeze water on her face.

“M,” Tanner said, stepping in and closing the door behind him. “Saz Kaur was killed five minutes ago. A moped mounted the pavement, the rider tried a bag snatch and knocked her into the path of an oncoming bus.”

“Mopeds, that's Mossad's favourite tool,” Falkirk mused, along with limpet bombs stuck to cars. Dawes adding, “And the muggers of London, I've seen it myself.”

Tanner said, “Director Green has returned all the way from the lobby, to deny responsibility. None of the Mossad operatives we have been monitoring were involved. MI5 and the Met are investigating...”

“Make sure we are everywhere. Not one interview is done, not one fingerprint is lifted without
MI6 watching it happen.” Falkirk said. Dismissing his chief of staff and the Double O, Falkirk prepared for the dance of denying-all-knowledge. Falkirk called Green in to hear the required lines to stop an incident between the two countries. One point, Green was pissed off, Falkirk suspected she would be calmer if she knew what was going on. He believed she wasn’t involved.

Chapter End Notes

For reference Alec's talking about the landlady of the pub in Eastenders. It's awful, thirty minutes of people screaming at each other in nasal voiced shrieks. Save your brain, avoid Eastenders. I wish I could repress those memories!
Falkirk watched the compiled videos that were popping up on social media, along with some taken from the city's CCTV network. All showed a moped with a single rider, were in most bag snatches they worked in pairs. It was also quite a high powered vehicle, one that needed a full motorcycle licence to drive where most mopeds in London were the low powered ones that just needed a standard driving licence. So it wasn't likely the typical M.O. of steal a moped, commit a bunch of bag snatches, then dump the moped in the Thames. The last video was of the black moped, and someone jumping down onto it from an elevated position and fighting with the rider.

“Sir, thirty seconds out,” the driver called, to bring Falkirk's attention to their imminent arrival.

There was little point going to see the body in Falkirk's opinion. He really didn't wish to see the mess that a thirteen-ton bus did to a body. However, the short woman in the car beside him wanted to get any information at the same time as Falkirk did, so they were on their way to the morgue. There Falkirk and Green got the preliminary report from the Medical Examiner. It was as Falkirk expected, Saz Kaur sustained severe crush injuries resulting in death.

It was the next part of the trip that would be interesting, and why Green of Mossad was still beside him. The suspect had been apprehended and was in custody. They were now making their way to the police station.

“It looks to me,” Green said. “Someone is covering up their tracks.”

“It's a pretty emphatic way to burn someone, pushing them in front of a bus.” Falkirk responded. “We will just have to see this man your Operative caught.”

They arrived at the station and were shown towards the custody suite. In the long corridor lined with solid metal steel doors coming off it stood three men. Falkirk said to them, “An MI5 agent, a MI6 Agent and a Mossad agent walk into a police station... almost sounds like the start of a joke.”

Dawes didn't react, Guillam of MI5 just shrugged and greeted Falkirk with the title of M. The Mossad agent looked confused. Falkirk turned to the door they were standing around, he unlatched the viewing window to lower the little shutter. Inside the cell, sitting on the bunk opposite the door was a young blond man dressed in police issue track suite of grey.

The bright eyes flicked up to the door. The Young man shouted, “OI! YOU LET ME OUT'A HERE!”

Falkirk stood out the way, to let Green see their suspect in the killing. While Green observed the suspect, Falkirk looked to the Mossad operative, “Mr Bennett, you apprehended Mr Unwin with a modicum of discretion. I'm impressed. Well done.”

Green, turning away from the door was a little more crisp. She glowered at her operative,
“YouTube videos! Breaking cover! Hardy discreet!”

“No explosion, minor damage to property, no civilian casualties” Falkirk said with a frown. “I wouldn’t even work myself up for a good glaring for that.”

Green looked to M, having seen him when he works himself up good and proper. Of M she asked, “And what of the prisoner.”

“He shall be transferred to MI6 for interrogation,” Falkirk said. He ordered Double O Three to make the arrangements and for Guillam to help. Green remained with her operative, after making sure she would be kept in the loop on the matter.

Arriving back at MI6, Falkirk headed for E-Branch and his office. He found someone waiting for him in his office, having a drink.

“Caught up on your tan, James?” Falkirk asked coming in and sitting down.

“Wish you would pick something better,” James said, looking at the glass he held. A slightly annoyed frown aimed at the liquid it contained.

“I drank enough bourbon to be polite, I developed a taste for it,” Falkirk said, helping himself to a glass. It was after five, and he had both an early home and a late night of research ahead of him. This was his only time to relax. “So James, did you get your business done?”

James avoided that like the plague. Sitting back in his chair, Falkirk decided to let the matter drop, just that question caused a knot in his stomach. He said to James, “I spoke with Addison. He wants you and Daniel to ask him.”

James smirked at that. “He's afraid of little old me? When there's you!”

“I have to make the request official, notarized and cosigned by Alec, Selene and Darren,” Falkirk said.

“Why are Daniel and my words good enough, but he wants a contract from you!”

Falkirk smiled, that one that pulled his cheeks just a bit too wide. “I'm more imaginative James. That makes me the scary one.”

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The young man inside the interrogation room had been given his possessions back. Wearing his Nike tracksuit and baseball cap with the peak set to the side he waited. His handcuffs were threaded through a loop on the table, but apart from that it was quite nice. A view from the window looked over the Thames. Comfortable chair with good back support, not too cold, natural light and no camera or tape recorder to be seen.

The door clicked and in walked an omega, a little absent looking and dressed in a retro suit. He held a bundle of papers to his chest.

“Jesus Christ man, they got me a bitch brief!”

“No,” the omega responded and sat down across from the table. The young Alpha frowning when the omega gave him a dopey smile.

“You the coppa bruv!”
Shaking his head, “No, Mr Unwin...”

“Eggsy!”

“No, Mr Unwin! I am not a coppa or a lawyer. I'm M, the head of MI6 and given your unique circumstances, it was decided I would have the most effective interrogation technique.”

Eggsy shrugged and leaned back. He wasn't scared of this librarian toff.

“Let me start Mr Unwin,” Falkirk pulled out a piece of paper full of names, columns of numbers, dates of birth. It never hurt to have a visual aid. “Let us start with your copious credit card fraud.”

“No, not me bruv.”

“Yes, yes you Mr Unwin,” Falkirk said. “I don't underestimate you, please do me the courtesy of returning the favour. Now Mr Unwin, have you ever heard of the Proceeds of Crime Act?”

“Yeah, me an' ma mates talk about it aw the time Bruv.”

Falkirk gave a bright smile, “Oh good. Then you will know that it doesn't matter in whose name an asset is in, so long as it can be proven to have been bought with illicit funds it will be seized. Now, can you tell me about the Unexplained Wealth Act?”

“Well that's when you find a fiver you forgot about in your pocket and act surprised.”

Letting out a chuckle, “Good one Mr Unwin. You see Mr Unwin, if you were to win the lottery that can be explained. If you invent a do-dad and sell it for millions, that can be explained. If you sell drugs, suddenly people don't want to explain how they got their money. If a person washes cars but tries to claim they made a couple grand in a day...Mmmm? Unexplained wealth, Mr Unwin.”

Falkirk slid out a photo out from the pile in front of him. A picture of a blond woman pushing a pram. Then another photo of the woman speaking to a man with shaved head.

“You are such a good son, you take care of your mum and sister. Got them away from a stepdad that liked to talk with his fists.”

This was not how his other interviews had gone. To give himself time Eggsy demanded, “Oi! Where's my brief.”

“You don't get one, Mr Unwin. You could tell me who hired you before this gets nasty.”

“I ain't no grass.”

Falkirk gave a forced smile, hollow, and looking it.

“Then let us continue, Mr Unwin. You, you can't explain how you got your wealth. That means, your posh flat with river views is now gone, your car... that shed out Camden way too, and everything within.”

“YOU CAN'T DO THAT!”

“I already have. Where do you think I got your list of Credit card numbers and aliases,” Falkirk said holding up the piece of paper he first pulled out. “On to the proceeds of Crime Act. What a lovely son you are, buying your mum a house, fully detached with a big garden for your sister and even a trampoline, all in your mum's name. It's all gone too, because you paid for it with money
that you stole.”

The spicy scent of Alpha anger had been growing. It was no surprise to Falkirk when the young man entered a rage and shot forward in a lunge. The table was bolted to the floor, the prisoner's wrists cuffed to the far side. Falkirk got a good view of those bright white teeth as they gnashed at him, a foot way from his face. The young Alpha's arms and neck stretching and straining to reach him.

Seeing the hormone swamped mind slowly come to understand Falkirk was too far away. Planting his feet, Falkirk rolled his chair back quickly. He had plenty of time before the Young Alpha swung his legs up and round the table to try and kick him. Falkirk ended up with a view of Gary Unwin's back side as he was bent over the table, trying to kick out behind him to reach Falkirk.

Falkirk waited, and waited, and waited. The Alpha rage burned itself out, leaving Eggsy slumping and exhausted, while still bent over the table.

“Have you calmed, we aren't finished yet, Mr Unwin.”

Soft, almost begging, “Fuck off.”

“No, Mr Unwin. You tell me the why, the how and most importantly the who or this will get worse.” No answer came and it felt strange addressing a rump ready for a paddling. Falkirk didn't change position though, he knew there was a spot where a kick would reach him if he tried to get to the far side of the table to look Eggsy in the face. “As you have not become talkative...”

“Not a grass!”

“When your mother was thrown out of her house this morning, she tried to call you. You being in custody meant you didn't pick up. So to whom would she turn in your absence?”

“Fuck off!” again it was quiet and hollowly said.

“She, your mother loves Dean, like many victims of domestic abuse. That's why they want to forgive their partners, why the give them one last chance time after time. Your mother is an adult, she can throw her life away if she wishes. Your sister, I couldn't allow poor little Daisy return to that. She's in foster care now, with a truly lovely couple. A rather sad story, cancer meant they couldn't have their own. They aren't really into fostering, they want to adopt. They really took to Daisy I could see her being very happy with them.”

“Shut the FUCK UP!”

“I will stop when you start, Eggsy. This is your one chance- Would you please climb back over the table I don't like talking to your arse!”

Eggsy lifted one leg and got his knee under him to climb back over to the other side of the table. Falkirk stayed where he was at the wall because Eggsy knew he could be reached now. Although the misery written over the boy's face was clear to see. Falkirk thought if he pushed just a bit harder there would be tears.

“Eggsy, everything I have done can be undone. The upset in your mother's life can be explained away as part of the investigation into the murder you committed. I might be open to a lenient sentence for the murder and forgetting the fraud all together. Only if you start talking.”

“Fordy, they took 'im,” Eggsy said. “Tariq said to push her, and they'll let Fordy go.”
“Tariq!” Falkirk demanded.

“Nonce, from Russia or somewhere.”

Yes, that's the Tariq Falkirk knew of. Standing and grasping the door handle, Falkirk stopped a moment, “If you are lying Eggsy, there will be no second chance once I leave this room.”

“’m not bruv, I swear.”

Out of the interrogation room, and heading for E-Branch. Falkirk found the theatre like situation room at the back of E-Branch rather full. To his surprise, Mycroft was amongst group of people with a broad shouldered man Falkirk didn't recognise along with an older man with reddish hair almost white.

“Chester King!” Falkirk said, announcing himself to the room. “Interfering do-gooders who go out looking for trouble are classed as expendable in this building.”

A quick glare from Falkirk and those who just wanted to watch him tear someone apart slunk away. Expect for Darren, he was bold as brass.

When down to Green, three Double Os, Mycroft and his to guests. Mycroft started to say something, when the dark haired man stepped forward. Falkirk was offered a hand, “Harry Hart, I knew Eggsy's father, he saved my life in Afghanistan. Eggsy's mother called me. I promised to help if I could.”

“Oh,” Falkirk said with a note of surprise. “I assumed when he was killed in Afghanistan, while having left the Royal Marines a month before, Lee Unwin was gathering poppies. And here it was, your incompetence if this little show of camaraderie is to go by.”

“M?” Mycroft said. “The Kingsman have served us in the past.”

“Is that the Royal us? Because MI6 has clear views on enthusiastic amateurs.” Falkirk stepped up to the older of the guests. “They get in the way and things that get in the way get shot.”

The three Double Os still in the room were chuckling over that. While James and Maloney were also competing against each other to out macho-intimidate the interlopers.

After a sharing of looks, Hart looking to King, then King to Mycroft. Mycroft said, “This would be a personal favour M.”

“A personal favour?” Falkirk said with a raised eyebrow. “What will they do when I get fed up of them, and issue a kill order for the merry band of gentlemen spies.”

Harry Hart chuckled at that, while meeting James' eye. James met the dark haired Alpha, glance for glance, and smiled. The Professional and the Pretender. Both Alphas in subtle posturing, and wanting to see who would come out on top. In Falkirk's biased opinion it would be James.

“Please, no pissing competitions,” Falkirk said brining attention back to himself. “I win them all! Or you could be flirting, it's hard to tell.”

Falkirk ignored the sudden glare aimed at him by the two Alphas. He looking to Chester King, code name King Arthur. Falkirk said, “You will get Gary Unwin, if I choose and only when I'm done with him.”

“What about his mother?” Harry Hart demanded.
Falkirk glanced to him, an unpressed look on his face. “You apparently spoke to her! Was she on the streets!”

Harry Hart admitting, “Well, no not when I spoke to her.”

“My god! A room full of spies, can no one tell when I'm lying my arse off!” Falkirk glanced round. Most shaking their head


“Who is he?” the blond asked.

“Find out, it's not hard! Try googling London Gangsters.” Falkirk snapped, then gestured to James and Dawes, “Go with him!”

Chapter End Notes

A side note. I thought I was doing my usual of taking the story from one Taron Egerton film and using as a more convenient back story for his character in Kingsman. But I got mixed up. Egerton wasn't in Plastic (the source of the credit card fraud elements) it was an actor called Ed Speleers (Downton Abby, Eragon). Who does make an appearance later on as one of his other character.
Standing on the concourse Falkirk shook hands with the shorter woman. He then gave a goodbye to her and the operative. The Mossad Deputy Director then escorted her operatives onto the gangway and plane.

Turning away, Falkirk let out a sigh. “Thank god, I don't think I could have taken another day of her.”

“It went rather well,” Tanner mused, while walking beside Falkirk.

“Well I didn't threaten to blow up the world, anything less than that I suppose could be viewed as 'rather well','” Falkirk responded. “You can release Mr Unwin to the custody of the Kingsman on the condition they know I will hold them responsible for Unwin from now on.”

Tanner nodded silently while he made a note of M's orders on his mobile, Falkirk getting a flash on Anthea in the gesture. Falkirk turned his thoughts to the last few days.

Tariq, the wannabe kingpin of London's crime was nowhere to be found, nor his family or his henchmen or Unwin's friend. All that was found at the Gangster's house was a crime scene. Blood in the cellar(confirmed as belonging to 'Fordy'), blood spots in the kitchen(from Tariq and others.), spatter consistent with high velocity gunshots was found in halls and room walls from several other individuals. The master bedroom looked like someone had been dragged out of bed, nail marks along the floor confirmed they weren't taken willingly. Similar signs of a struggle were present in the room of a girl, belonging to Tariq's daughter. The biggest proof of Tariq's unwilling disappearance was the implosion of his criminal empire from a power vacuum. As morbid as it was there was a pool at MI6, wasteland and parks were all bet on as the locations several bodies would be found soon.

At least the M.O. would suggest for the target to change after a failure. Which was why Deputy Director Green found it safe to return home. While Falkirk was left to worry about who was next and when would someone be targeted again.

At the end of the day, returning home Falkirk found no children or even Mr Hudson. Just James and two places set near each other, one at the head of the table and the other to the right. The layout was so they could be close without the head-to-head posture that can be intimidating to Omegas. The table was candle lit, the flickering light being cast on to a silver ice bucket with a bottle and a square slap of white marble filled with small mounds.

“Very nice,” Falkirk said, letting James pull out the chair for him. Getting a peck on the cheek from behind, James whispered, “I thought you needed a distraction.”

“Yes, thank you,” Falkirk said to the Alpha taking his own seat.

James poured them champagne while Falkirk looked over the several piles of caviar on the ice cold
slab of marble between them. Taking up a bone spoon, he aimed for his preferred Salmon, the little orange balls. His hand was gently grasped before he could reach it though.

James smiled at him, while holding Falkirk's hand. Using his own bone spoon James place some beluga caviar on the webbing between Falkirk's thumb and index finger. Falkirk giggled as James leaned down and wrapped his lips around the caviar and gave slight suction and lick to take the caviar from the back of his hand.

“Am I to be you plate all evening?” Falkirk teased.

Letting out a humming purr, James shrugged his shoulders. “Caviar should only be eaten from the back of the hand... or the hand of a beautiful person.”

“Oh, shut up,” Falkirk said with a blush turning is cheeks rosy.

“Anything you want,” James purred and dropped a few more of the tiny black eggs onto the back of Falkirk's hand. Then keeping hungry eyes on Falkirk leaned down.

The moment those soft lips touched his skin, Falkirk had to shift. A discomfort growing while thinking of those lips touching him other places. James turned Falkirk's hand to place a kiss on the pulse point of the wrist. Biting his lip, Falkirk asked, “Did you even plan a main course.”

“Omega, served hot on a bed of silk sheets,” James purred. Still gazing at Falkirk with the piercing blue eyes.

Before James could kiss his wrist again, Falkirk caught the Alpha's chin to bring them together for a proper kiss. Their lips touching gently and first, before becoming hungry. James had been naughty, Falkirk tasting the staleness of a cigarette, along with the saltiness of the caviar. All under that was James, that unique taste that was his Alpha.

Shedding clothes they made their way upstairs, while kissing and touching each other. Falkirk lay back against the cool sheets, naked, with his Alpha over him. James driving him wild with lips and hands. Fisting the sheets, when James’ lips touched him where he needed it most. All too quickly, Falkirk arched his back and pulled at the fisted sheets, his whole body going taut as he cried out his first orgasm, spilling his seed into James' teasing mouth.

Panting and glowing, Falkirk looked at his Alpha climbing on top of him. It was too much, too soon, but James knew him. James wanted him out of his mind with need and desire. Arching his back at the first penetration, Falkirk clung to the rock that was his Alpha in the overwhelming sensation. Unaware of the ribbons his nails were raking in the flesh of the tanned back.

Before recovering from his external orgasm, Falkirk screamed out his second internal orgasm, to the feel of his Alpha moving inside of him. It wiped him out, sending the omega into darkness.

“...my beautiful omega...”

Falkirk slowly coming to, to the sound of James' gentle whispers,. As an omega, to feel their Alpha anchored inside them, causing those craps that stimulated the release of semen was wonderful. The bigger body covering him and pressing, even better. Perfect was the pheromones that bound them on a bio-chemical level, deep and rich it smelled like and stimulated the omega brain to adapt and accept the Alpha.

“...my Omega,” James repeated again.

“Your omega,” Falkirk responded in a dreamy voice. He was still a little wiped out. Gentle kisses
rained down on his face and neck, especially the tender bond mark.

“James,” Falkirk mumbled some time later. Still they were tied and recovering. “Did Andrew tell you he wants to go into the Navy.”

“Hmm, no,” James responded, nosing at Falkirk's neck basking in the scent of his omega. “Good for him.”

“James, talk to Maloney.”

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The following few days had been great, James was thrilled by the news of Andrew's career choice. Until today, when Falkirk had pushed the issue of James speaking with the Omega Double O. The Alpha had been a storm cloud ever since. At dinner that night, James looked to his son, and with the typical Alpha tact said, “Andrew, I've thought about it and no, you're not joining the Navy.”

“But Dad! You can't!”

Falkirk cradled his head. Maloney was in the RAF, the most accepting service to omegas. Falkirk knew some of his horror stories and agreed with James, just not how he was going about it.

"Out," Falkirk snapped to the two boys before the growing argument could escalate. Andrew storming out, Rupert following while trying to calm him down. It didn't work, Andrew showed his anger by leading with his heels all the way up the stairs, stomp-stomp-stomp....

“James,” Falkirk said moving place to sit beside James. "The choice is not yours to make and there will come a point where Andrew will be able to join the Navy without our consent.”

James growled and stood sharply, pushing his chair back. He needed to pace.

"An Alpha through and through. Every time you have displayed dominance it has not worked for you. If you do it now with me, or Andrew over this it will alienate you," Falkirk said with a waver in his voice.

James backed away, issuing a soft growl as he he paced the room. With hammering heart Falkirk carefully approached the furious Alpha and pressed against him.

"Do you trust me," Falkirk asked, wrapping his arms around his mate. A soft affirmative growl answered him. The Omega focused on relaxing himself in order for the Alpha to calm his raging emotions.

"I don't want him to go through..." James said as he calmed. “You know Maloney was nearly raped once!”

“Yes, but this is Nathan Maloney we're talking about. He broke his Flying officer's jaw in six places. Then tied him bent over a railing naked. Got away with it because the flying officer refused to report who assaulted him,” Falkirk said. "It would be better for Andrew to make his own choice. We need to give him the knowledge and experience to make an informed one.”

James pulled his Omega to the couch to sit Falkirk in his lap. Stroking the Omega's neck and back to help start the production of the pheromones used to calm an Alpha. They sat like that for a while, until both began to zone out.

Thinking clearly again James opened his eyes and looked to the closed door. Quietly dislodging
the relaxed Omega and getting an annoyed grunt from Falkirk. Silently James went to the door, Rupert and Andrew tumbled in when it was suddenly opened. Both looked up to James, Andrew both a mix of sheepish and resolute.

"Come in," James said returning to his mate. Andrew and Rupert moved to their parents sitting either side of them. James putting an arm around Andrew, and looking into his dark blue eyes.

"Andrew, I realise the choice is ultimately yours," Andrew beaming a smile at him and giving a hug. James made the opening salvo on Andrew's chosen career path. "You have to be under no illusion though. I remember this Beta wimp in my group. Alec, I and a few others got him hammered. Striped him and threw him out in front of a church just as it was coming out, and left him there. He was arrested for indecent exposure, going AWOL and a few other things. We drummed him out and it was with the blessing of our superiors. At the time it was funny as hell but looking back he really wasn't as bad as we thought. That beta had done nothing wrong, he was fit enough just the least fit of the recruits, for that, all the recruits hated him for some reason. That hatred was encouraged along with the bullying. We bonded and became a unit by bullying some poor kid until he walked away and we called him a coward for not taking our shit."

“But I won't be the slowest,” Andrew said.

“That's not it,” James said. “He was just the designated one, that we all bullied. As an omega that will make you the early favourite. I won't be there, none of us will. And despite what Papa might want, he won't be able to interfere.”

“Watch me,” Falkirk glared, like the mother from hell.

To Andrew, James said, “If Papa swoops in and bitch slaps everyone from your instructor to the First Sea Lord herself, it will only make matters worse for you.”

Falkirk glared at his mate.

James pulled Andrew close and kissed the top of his head, making sure he didn't look at Falkirk. Just knowing, feeling the look his mate wore.

“Please, think,” James said. “We will support you. You will be on your own though."

Andrew nodded, very unsure. James finally looked to his other side, where Falkirk sat. He really didn't like that gleam in the green eyes. It was the one that James saw in many a madman, the one that let Falkirk threaten the world and have the world believe him.

“By Christ, you are fucking scary,” James said. “I really worry about you Falkirk, I really do.”

Andrew gave a small giggle. Falkirk got a comforting hug from Rupert.
After the private ceremony, a small party was held at Buckingham palace to celebrate the christening of Victoria Windom. Mostly pack, with a few personal friends of G's. Arthur having few of his own, and preferring the company of Darren and Keading, the less assertive omegas of the pack. It was a competition between Mary and Mycroft for who could preen more, Daniel's grandmother the more dignified losing out to Mycroft, just.

Standing in front of a window, looking over the gardens at the rear of the palace. G nodded his head in answer to something, then patted Rupert on the arm before heading off. The young blond approached the short omega standing and looking at the photos on a table. G ruffled Andrew's hair to announce his presence.

The little omega glared and rubbed his hair to get it back to the messy style Andrew had it in. Looking back to the Turning Out picture of G and his Papa, Andrew said, “You're going to tell me how bad it was in the Navy.”

“Yes, your papa was quite insistent,” G said. He flung his arm around Andrew's shoulders, so both could look at the photo from his turning out. “You see, I was Rupert's age when my dad had to abdicate and go into exile. My mother, I only have foggy memories of. I was left with this really scary man to look out for me, a man who caused me real nightmares. Then I met this little omega, who gave me in to trouble for being rude and didn't care I was king. That omega then started standing between me and that scary man, the only one who would. I owe your papa a lot because he fought the battles I was too young to, or outnumbered in, and in the end invited me into his pack. So I will say this: I was born to a privileged life, with the title Your Highness even as a baby. I first went into the army, then the RAF and finally the Royal Navy. I was hated by many because I was born upper class, I was rich and held a lot of power being king. There were incidents, I'll admit one in the army left me in tears. I walked out the gate, and when they tried to stop me... I was King! Every order issued is done in my authority, who were they to stand in my way. I walked away because I couldn't take it one second longer.”

Seeing the Omega hunch in on himself, and scenting a que of anger and despair. G leaned down to nuzzle the omega. Whispering as he pulled back, “Your brother convinced me to give you some encouragement too.”

“Really?” Andrew asked. “He's a bit of a wimp?”

G laughed, “Oh no he isn't. Rupert just needs the right motivation. And there are plenty of medieval weapons about, I don't fancy getting my head caved in by one.”

“Anyway,” G whispered. Nodding to the picture of himself and Falkirk he said, “I got some training by your Papa. I wasn't the worst when I went into the Navy. I worked hard during my time there. I still got some stick about being privileged but I put my head down and worked hard. I earned respect, I didn't demand it. As I said, I was born 'Your Highness' when I took the throne I
was 'Your Majesty'. The best feeling was when I was called 'Sir' on HMS Dragon, it wasn't someone getting my title wrong, it wasn't because I was born noble. It was because I had *earned* my rank, I *earned* the right for someone to salute me and call me sir.” G tipped Andrew's face to look at him directly, “That is still one of the best moments in my life, when I first earned something for myself.”

Andrew nodded. “Thanks.”

“Don't thank me, I'm whipped by your Papa,” G looked to Rupert across the room, “He's the one who's fighting your corner.”

“Still a dweeb,” Andrew pouted.

“Oh you're such a bratty little bother.”

Andrew stuck his tongue out at G in answer.

“And what's going on here?” Falkirk said, interrupting the two.

G patted Andrew, sending him off towards the others while he answered, “Just telling my little fellow about the army, when I walked off base and threatened to send people to the tower if they tried to stop me.”

Watching Andrew cross the apartment to go to Rupert and the other younger ones. Falkirk raised a questioning eyebrow, a sceptical look on his face. “Andrew doesn't seem as down as when James and Alec mentioned their service.”

“I may have gone off script.” G admitted. A charming smile on his face and batting his blue eyes.

“At least someone did,” Falkirk mused. “I think we were getting his back up. Much more and Andrew would join out of spite if nothing else. He gets that from his dad.”

G chuckled, “I know Mycroft, Sherlock, Cody, you. I see a lot of that in him too.”

Falkirk humphed, and looked up and away. “I'm going to preen over my new god daughter!”

G called after him, “Oh we decided we'll come, get away from London for a while.”

Falkirk welcomed him. The annual trip up to Skyfall a traditional gathering of the pack now.

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A few days after the christening, on the following Saturday Andrew found himself with his Papa. A shopping trip for going up north, no matter how much Andrew insisted he could pick out his own clothes. Why Rupert got to go with his dad Andrew didn't know either. The streets of London were passing by when his Papa received a text.

"Vauxhall Cross!" Falkirk snapped at the driver.

"Something wrong?" Andrew asked as the car made a sharp turn and increased speed.

Giving an absent, "No," Falkirk tapped away on his phone. A frown marring his face as his thumbs moved across the screen constantly and there were beeps of responses.

The car pulled to a jerking halt in front of MI6. Andrew followed his Papa into the building and up to the deserted E Branch.
"The last time you were here you were a baby in my arms," Falkirk mused as Andrew looked about him. Falkirk shook that thought from his head, and pointed to the desk outside his own office told Andrew to sit there and not move.

Sitting behind the desk Andrew spun the chair. Through the glass wall his Papa was on the phone he could see, and tapping away on his computer. Quickly getting bored, Andrew picked up a tiny folding photo frame. A picture of Colum as baby one side, on the other a family photo of Uncle Gareth, Darren and Colum in his school uniform.

"Stay here!" his Papa snapped and ran out of the office.

Replacing the frame Andrew picked up a pencil and started doodling on a piece of printer paper. The first indication he wasn't alone was the intense scent of an Alpha. He looked up into the blue eyes of a sandy blond man with a sprinkling of freckles over his nose and cheeks.

"A younger model?" The Alpha purred.

Andrew looked him up and down. He was around six foot with the thick strong fingers like his father's, the languished mannerisms of Aunt Selene, the slimier tight muscle tone of Uncle Alec. The Alpha came to perch on Darren's desk, his powerful thigh straining the materiel of his light grey trouser leg.

"Sixteen?" the man asked with a look that made Andrew shudder uncomfortably.

"Thirteen!" Andrew spat holding the man's gaze. A wired felling tingling his spine with the way the guy was looking at him.

Giving an unconcerned shrug the Alpha leaned forward to stroke Andrew's neck. “You’re a pretty little thing...”

“Don't touch me!” Andrew slapped the hand away. The Alpha growled and grabbed Andrew's neck with bruising force and pinning him to the desk.

"Little Bitch!" the Alpha growled, his scent and fury overwhelming to the omega.

Andrew fought the desire to go still and submit. Lashing out, Andrew felt is nails digging into his own palm and remembered what he still held. He swung his arm up hard and fast. The Pencil Andrew had been holding now sticking out the Alpha's forearm.

Grabbing another pencil Andrew started vaulting the desk to press home his attach on the backing up Alpha when soft and commanding a voice called out, "Andrew!"

It was his papa's voice. Looking behind him, his Papa, Uncle Daniel and Uncle Keading were standing with proud expressions. His dad stood with Aunt Selena and Alec at the other side of the room.

"He stabbed me!" The Alpha attacker whined holding up his arm with the yellow HB Pencil stabbing through his suite jacket and dripping blood from the pointed end. Alec broke out in hysterical laughter, while he and Selene went to help him.

"Thank you Mr Addison," Falkirk said as he, Daniel and Keading approached the confused Omega.

"You did good Little Laddie," Daniel praised.
"Bloody good!" James added.

Falkirk guided Andrew into his office with James, Daniel and Keading following. He would have introduced 005 to his son but he was already being taken to medical. James and Daniel stood back while Falkirk and Keading surrounded Andrew. In the office that smelled heavily of his Papa, Andrew's heart slowly returned to normal. Getting gentle reassuring touches from his Papa and uncle to further ground him.

Daniel said, "You didn't freeze when a strange, furious, Alpha pinned you"

"I didn't?" Andrew said, looking round for confirmation. Everyone nodded. "I didn't!"

Falkirk said, "It was the last test. Real Life. Or as close to real life as we could get."

With a bit of confusion, Andrew said, "That guy..."

"Graham Addison," Falkirk said. "He works for me, works with your dad. Friends with Darren. Colum's god father. I didn't think you would remember him, while being an Alpha I trusted. It was as close as we could make it to real life while being in control."

Falkirk added, "Don't tell him, Addison is one of my most trusted."

"What about me?" James asked.

"Least trusted," Falkirk dead-panned. Then looking to Andrew said, "Addison is really quite a nice person. You were never truly in any danger and you did so well."

"Impressive," James purred. "That jab, the improvised weapon, it was...*perfect!*"

"Aye little laddie," Daniel said. "Be proud of yourself."

With his parents and uncles so close and calm. Having surpassed a test and getting praised from all, the Omega was floating high on a cloud of euphoria.

"Will he be alright" Andrew asked.

"Do you want to meet Graham?" Falkirk asked, getting an unsure nod in answer.

Descending into the understructure of MI6 they entered medical. Where in a small ward, there were some empty beds. From the only occupied bed on the left, surrounded by a curtain 005 complained loudly. Andrew tensed hearing the deep voice from out of view.

Falkirk whispered to his son, "Double Os, just a bunch of Prima donnas. Like it's the first time Addison's been stabbed."

James mentioned about getting shot, to also help put Andrew at ease. Confirming the more a Double O bitched the better they were doing. Quiet meant they were in real dander.

Across from the occupied bed, Alec was still laughing his arse off and even Selene deemed it amusing enough to have a smile while listening to Addison complaining and Dr Dean telling her patient, "Do shut up, Double O Five!"

Reaching the curtain Falkirk looked round the open end. He called to the operative, with the doctor working on his arm, "Mr Addison, are you up for visitors?"

Seeing the family with the young Omega hiding behind his father. Addison bitched, "Could you do
me a favour: fine! My son wants to stop freezing when pinned: fine! He's been practising with Q:
fine! I end up with a pencil in my arm: not fine! Shouldn't have expected anything less from Mini
M!"

From behind his dad, Andrew apologised. Addison was rather sweat as he said, “Not your fault kid.
It's his!” An accusatory finger pointed at Falkirk. The Doctor extracting the pencil reminded
Addison to be still so he shouted at her, “I was being still!”

James chuckled, like Alec and Falkirk accustomed the the obscure humour of the Double Os.

Falkirk hid his smile while approaching the side the doctor was extracting the pencil from.
Standing beside the Doctor he said, "We are grateful and I may not be quite so annoyed the next
time some minister calls me regarding a daughter, wife or mistress when you... you know.”

“Ah-ah,” Addison shook his head. “Not enough, I'm going to lord this over you forever. Double O
Five that gadget cost a million pounds. I'll say: do your remember that time your son stabbed me.
Double O Five, you blew up the White House! But your son stabbed me. ”

Falkirk said with an eye-roll, “What about the time M shot you?”

“You haven't shot me.”

“Not yet,” Falkirk teased. “And what about the time you were about to become a eunuch, who
saved you... wait don't tell me it'll come to me in a second.”

“Your hired that bitch!”

“Yes I did!” Falkirk smirked. He watched Andrew approach the bed bound Alpha's other side,
probably because he couldn't pick up on any hostile ques from the Alpha either.

"Thank you, sorry for..." Andrew said.

"Don't worry, I've had worse Mini M," Addison reassured with a charming smile that caused the
young Omega to blush. Giving an 'Ow' at the flick that landed on his knuckles, he glared at his
boss, "What was that for?"

"Just because I won't have your bollocks for screwing someone else's son or daughter doesn't mean
I won't let Alice finish the job where mine is concerned.”

Slowly, while the bater went back and forth between the alpha and his papa, Andrew approached
the Alpha who attacked him. Addison continued to send him a sparkling smile that made his eyes
shine bright. It was nothing like the predatory and creepy smile he had been given up in the office.

"Andrew?” Addison said. He offered his left hand while his right was still being worked on now
with sore knuckles to boot. Shaking the offered had Addison charmed the young Omega. He said to
Andrew, “Kid, you did good. If someone attacks you, do what it takes to survive because you
never know what the other guy intends or how far they will go.”

Andrew nodded in response. At all times Addison was aware of the senior Double O and the even
more scary M not far off.

When it came time to separate Andrew leaned forward to nuzzle the Alpha and giving a lick to the
side of his neck. Addison returned the nuzzle and said, "You did good and you have nothing to
apologise for."
"A thank you then," Andrew said, blush firmly in place as he pulled back.

From further back, where Falkirk had given the two space. He felt a presence very close. James whispered, "My need for challenge, danger and fighting. Your intelligence and curiosity not to mention an obvious preference for dangerous charmers. Andrew is doomed!"

Letting Andrew and James head off, Falkirk returned to the bed side. “Don't expect a lick from me... but thank you Graham.”

“Still going to hold this over you!” Addison threatened to M walking away. “FOR-EVER!”

“Double O Five!” Snapped the alpha woman treating him. “If you don't stop moving I will sedate you!”

Chapter End Notes

Reminder. A lick to the neck is an old Alpha/Beta/Omega way of expressing sorrow or gratitude.
Falkirk and a bald with with wide staring eyes beside him watched as the child in a man's body kicked his legs out then curling them under him to get the swing to go higher and higher. Falkirk looked to the side to thank No.1, then called out a bye to the man playing on the swing. Charles Haller now No.11 called out a bye but wasn't for giving up his play.

Falkirk walked through The Village, of small almost toy houses, towards the domed building at the centre. Many of the residents called a hello to him, or simply nodded. The '2' badged pinned to his black suit, along with the colourful scarf and umbrella were conditioned into all the inmates of this Top Secret containment facility. He had met the previous FSB director who was held here and had made a home for himself, but Falkirk's main reason for the visit was Charles Haller.

Some of Haller's personalities enjoyed The Village. Ones like the childlike personality, enjoyed playing. Some of the inmates who underwent stronger conditioning ended up a bit childlike themselves so he had some friends of similar mentality. Others like Delia saw The Village as a puzzle so had security running around whenever she asserted herself. One point No.1 had brought up, Charles' more problematic personalities hadn't asserted themselves, so Haller must feel fairly safe here.

Reaching the miniature version of a grand domed building, Falkirk entered. The short butler showed him to the cocooning chair, in an office with images of the village playing on the walls. Falkirk needed the umbrella to reach out and press the switch on the control panels surrounding the chair. The chair started to spin slowly while it descended down into the utility tunnels under the village where those that ran it could access all points. Waiting for him was a little golf buggy, to take him to the main facility a few miles away. It was a dull journey, sitting beside a guard who wouldn't talk to him, and going through a box tunnel with no view.

Reaching the industrial underground complex, from where the village was administrated, Falkirk was able to dress in his normal suite. His bodyguard was waiting for him, still in the foyer unable to enter more deeply. They took a Land Rover to reach the end of the tunnel coming out of the hill. Looking from above, all that a satellite would see is a small coastal village, and then nothing for about thirty miles and then a small private airfield.

Arriving at the airfield, Falkirk wanted to swear at the thing on the tarmac. Not that there was actual tarmac, just a strip of grass to act as runway. With several Cessna planes parked up in a row, even a helicopter that was a toy for some rich person to play with.

“I hate planes, especially the small ones,” Falkirk took a deep breath, put his head down and marched forward, while squishing down growing fear. He had gotten quit good at it but it had never left him.

He strapped himself into the passenger seat of the small twin prop plane. His bodyguard in the last of the three chairs behind him. The pilot reached back and held out a flask, “I was told to have this
Taking the small flask, Falkirk unscrewed the cap and folded it out the way. He took a swig of the bourbon and thanked the pilot. Falkirk drank it all down while the pilot did his checks and taxied onto the runway.

The deafening sound of the engines. The way all these little planes struggled to get off the ground. Falkirk decided sitting with his head between his knees was a good way to die.

“DON'T WORRY SIR!” Called the pilot while taking off. The plane bouncing like a roller coaster over the ground, getting higher with each bounce. “NOT CRASHED ONCE.”

“That's because there isn't usually a chance for a twice!” Falkirk answered while taking deep regular breaths.

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Back in his car, Falkirk was calming down. He truly hated little flying deathtraps. Best of all, his car came equipped with a mini-bar, so he could settle his lingering nerves with a healthy Bourbon.

Arriving at MI6, Falkirk told the driver to wait. It was almost five, and once he did a quick tour he wanted to go home.

Stopping in on E-Branch, there was nothing for Tanner to report. Well there was, but anything less than explosions Falkirk could safely ignore until tomorrow. Darren called after him as Falkirk left, “Graham was looking for you. I think you're in trouble.”

Falkirk just waved the teasing omega off. Like he was scared of Double O Five. In Analyses, Falkirk found James. Falkirk took one look at the board in the small room where James was coordinating the SPECTRE operations.

“James 'The Penguin'!” Falkirk snapped, looking at one of the pictures pinned to the wall.

“What,” James said a picture of innocence. “He's four-ten, bald, pointed nose and his name is Oswald! What better code name is there?”

“Code names are meant to disguise people, not point to them,” Falkirk said. “Let's hope Spectre doesn't hear we're looking into a 'penguin' because I can't think there are too many who fit that description.”

“Oh, nag-nag, do I come into E-branch and tell you how to run MI6?”

Falkirk clasped James' arm to pull them closer, where he laid a kiss on the grizzled cheek. “Don't work too late. This M is bunking off early after flying twice in one day.”

“Number-One as creepy as ever?”

“He's not that bad,” Falkirk responded while heading for the door.

Almost under his breath, James said, “Only you could say that.” He looked across the room to where they had researched the original members of sceptre, where under the same name 'Number One', the bald man was top of the pyramid.

Arriving at his car in the underground car park, a handsome Alpha was leaning against it. Addison crossed his arms, winced then put them down again.
“Still a little tender?” Falkirk asked.

“I've a bone to pick with you!” Addison demanded.

“I've got about two-hundred of them, but Mr Addison I'm attached to most of them.”

“You said Andrew was training with Q to overcome his instinct to freeze,” Addison accused. “You didn't say he was training with Q, Double O Seven, Alec and Selene in combat! Even the odd chemistry lesson with good ol' Uncle Darren!”

“I'm sure I mentioned it,” Falkirk said, a picture of innocence.

Addison opened the door of the car for him. As Falkirk entered the car, Double O Five said, “I'm sure you didn't mention a thing about combat trained Mini M-Double Os...”

“What will it take to make this go away?” Falkirk asked.

An unholy light lit the Alpha's eyes. He said, “Nothing, can't think of anything.”

“I might believe that Mr Addison, if I were blind, deaf and very very stupid. I literally saw the Ka-Ching sign light your eyes.”

“Next mission I want a Morgan, fully tripped out that I get to keep.”

“You mean like James' Aston?”

Addison nodded.

“Boys and their toys, I will consider it,” Falkirk said with a weary shake of the head. He pulled the door closed.

Addison opened the door up again, “And you're not to do something mean, like making it pink, or yellow or purple. Or...”

“Yes, Mr Addison!” Falkirk pulled the door closed. Watching the Alpha waving at him as the car pulled away.

Arriving home Hudson pulled open the door and welcomed Falkirk back. Falkirk returned the greeting, while heading for the library. Taking off his coat and putting down his bag, a voice called from upstairs, “IS THAT DAD OR PAPA?”

Going out to the foyer, Falkirk looked up to see Andrew two stories above him. “You have boundless energy, you could come see rather than bellowing.”

Andrew vanished from view a moment before he started running down the stairs. Falkirk told him not to run, but the boy was like his father he wouldn't learn until he fell. Andrew reached the bottom of the stairs, holding a piece of paper in his hands.

“Papa, can I join a club? Well a club sort of. It's more an organisation.” A hopeful look on his little face.

Falkirk held out his hand and was given the piece of paper. “Sea Cadets? You aren't half pushing this. You have to tell your dad.”

“I will,” Andrew swore while Falkirk took out a pen. Falkirk noticing an enterprising little individual had already filled in the required information. All he needed to do was sign the
“So when do you start?”

“Day after tomorrow,” Andrew said, taking back the permission slip.

“Good luck,” Falkirk said, heading for the lounge. “Unless you see that as a jinx then good speed.”

Sitting down in the lounge. Falkirk reached under the couch to pull out the tray he left there last night. Small invitation cards sat in piles. Going up to Skyfall was now the official pack gathering, Christmas becoming just the core pack. He would be going up for three weeks, with various pack members coming and going over that time.

“Why the hell did I agree to be Pack Alpha,” Falkirk complained while starting on what he called the 'Holmes' pile of invitations. It consisted of Mycroft and Tanner, Sherlock and John, Lestrade and his wife. “Oh yes, Mallory and his mother, that's why I had to be pack alpha.”

Falkirk chuckled remembering that time. Then remembered the woman who had made Falkirk's point by shooting Mallory with the paintball round. 'Poor Rosie,' Falkirk thought, the girl would never know her mother.

A gentle kiss landing on his cheek broke him out of his thoughts. Looking up, James was standing behind the couch.

“You were deep in thought,” James said while going to the decanter on the sideboard.

“Just thinking about Skyfall and who will be there when,” Falkirk saw James tense.

“I will be away for the first week and the week before we go,” James said. Returning with two drinks.

“SPECTRE?” Falkirk asked, accepting the drink and leaning against James when he sat. The Alpha just took a sip of his own drink and shook his head.

“Okay, come when you can,” Falkirk said. “On another note, Andrew is joining the Sea Cadets. When he tells you, act surprised and support him.”

James started chuckling, “Sea Cadets, you know that will be worse than being an omega. There was this one guy, Peters. Just before an inspection I switched my locker with his... I’d have gotten away with it if I hadn't forgotten he was a little twerp. One look at my dirty, size XL boxers and the instructor knew they were too big for Peters. Then there was the time Alec put superglue on the soles of Peters boots. And...”

“James! Supportive!” Falkirk snapped.

“I am!” Defended the Alpha with a hurt look on his face. “I'm supplying invaluable experience based intelligence and maybe a few points of inspiration. I swear the crap we did was why they shoved us into the SBS, let us go torment the enemy.”

Falkirk just rolled his eyes. If Andrew ever did make it into the Navy, if he managed to make one or two friends, Falkirk was sure his son would be the ring leader in something that would get him discharged if caught.

“Papa,” Rupert said, coming in. “Can I talk to you about something.”

When Falkirk nodded for Rupert to continue the boy said, “I’ve spoken to Stella Gibson, I wanted to help out and she said I could so long as you said it was okay.”

“Stella?” James asked, “Is that the little evil witch one?”

“The ex-police one, red head, short,” Falkirk answered James, then looking to Rupert to say, “I’m fine with you volunteering at the refuge. What are you going to be doing?”

“Running errands and a bit of tutoring. Some of the kids have missed a lot of schooling, Stella said I could help her and Margot.” Rupert said. Then looking down and back up asked, “Do I have to be at Skyfall for the whole three weeks? I’d like to spend some more time at the Refuge, and going away for three weeks...”

“A likely story,” James teased. “You just want to ditch us, to have a huge party.”

“No! I promise I’ll behave,” Rupert said. “I’m sixteen, I can be on my own but I’ve spoken with Mr Hudson, and Brayan will be here too, and for some of the time Uncle Daniel and Alec. I can fly up, or get the train, or back down...”

Falkirk held up his hand to stop Rupert's babbling. “James is missing the first week. He will pick you up here on his way to Skyfall where you will have two weeks vacation.”

Rupert nodded, accepting the compromise. Falkirk added, “And the redhead girl isn't to stay over!”

Rupert went bright red. “I'm not interested in Chloe!”

James nudged Falkirk and pointed to Rupert, “He knew who you were talking about, that's a bad sign.”

“Stop it,” Falkirk told James.

James leaned forward to look Rupert directly in the eye, “Now Rupert, be careful with this redhead. They tend to be fiery, really wild, in fact she might be too much for you.”

Falkirk whacked the teasing alpha in the arm again. “Pregnancy and STIs are what you're meant to be warning him about, James. Not 'Bitches Be Crazy'.”

James replied, “I haven't gotten onto omegas yet. Now they do be crazy. With omegas you might end up with scars, definitely a few scratches...”

“Oh god, I'm leaving!” Rupert marched out with his hands on his ear.

James and Falkirk descended into fit of laughter, having driven off Rupert in a fit of mortified embarrassment.

Chapter End Notes

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.
With a few tugs Rupert got the zip to go along the holdall. He then slung the black canvas bag over his shoulder to rest against his back. Coming out of his room, he heard some banging at the last of the four doors on the landing.

Putting his head into the last room he called, “James, I'm ready.”

“Just a moment,” James said, moving the boxes around. Careful of the wooden board being supported by a few of the packing crates to make a desk. James stuffed something into one of the boxes, then closed up the lid. His office still looking like a store room.

Rupert, looking at the car door propped up against one wall said, “Why do you keep that?”

Rupert tried to duck the big hand that ruffled his hair, then the cheek pinch that followed. James said, while still pinching Rupert's cheek, “Your first rage was so cute.”

“Didn't like it,” Rupert pouted following the bigger Alpha down the stairs.

“You're not meant to like it,” James said, grabbing his own holdall from his room. Continuing down the stairs he added, “A rage is meant to see you through a fight with a threat or rival. Either you survive or the other Alpha does. Hell most of my training was to control and Alpha rage, to stop me going mindlessly homicidal.”

James stopped at the bottom of the stairs, to look Rupert in the eyes. “It didn't always work. There were times I was a caveman, try to be better than that.”

Rupert could only nod, not quite sure what James was going on about. And feeling it unwise to ask for specifics.

They continued down into the kitchen, where they said goodbye to Hudson and the others. Then going out the back door and up the external stairs to the garden they headed for the garage. Brayan following them, to open and close the doors for them.

When in the car, Rupert asked, “Is it me, or is there something different about this car.”

“Rule 1,” James said pulling the car out into the lane behind the house while waving to Brayan that he was clear and to close the door. “Never, ever, under any circumstances let your Papa drive. I swear it was like someone had shot my car up while he drove it through ditches and hedgerows.”

There was a few moments of quiet laughter from the boy. James kept them on the road north, out of London.

“I noticed something,” James said when they had left London and were making good time northwards. “You call me James.”
“You don't like it?” Rupert asked.

“It's not that, just you use Papa for Falkirk.”

“My dad died, I don't think he chose to die. My Papa, he...”

“It's okay, I was just wondering,” James reached over, he stroked the boy's dark hair. As he was the one to bring it up, he hated this sort of stuff but thought Rupert deserved an explanation. “I was a bit worried. I do consider you... Andrew's brother, and Falkirk and My son.”

Rupert gave him a small shy smile. James gave the boy's hair a last ruffle before pulling his hand back. That had been an ordeal for James, feeling uncomfortable and embarrassed. He was not one to deal with the emotional crap.

“You do make a good dad,” Rupert added quietly.

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Very displeased, the dark haired man arrived at the distinctive 'Doughnut'. The home of Britain’s Cyber Intelligence, GCHQ. An inconsequential nobody had been sent to greet him in the reception. He was shown to a curving office that looked over the inner ring of the Doughnut.

“Geoffrey,” called the small man sitting behind the desk. He didn't even look up, “What can I do for you?”

“Your contributions have been somewhat lacking of late!” Accused Geoffrey Dromgoole. Insulted. Annoyed. Agitated. He paced from one side to the other, in front of the desk with the window behind.

“You may not have noticed, this conspiracy has collapsed,” Denbigh said, still not looking at the guest in his office. “Sir James, has lost his power and position, removing M now will not aid him. M is now aware and expecting another attack on a Double O, so we... you risk exposure with each new attempt. As for John Dawes! What if he attacked Israel? He is now one of ours, so his attack would be our attack! Not M'S! Did you think of that!”

“I NEED NO LECTURE FROM YOU!” Geoffrey roared. “You will do as you are ordered, for the good of the country.”

Denbigh deemed to sit back and raise an eyebrow at that. “You are aware much of the respect we get comes from having a fanatic like M in charge. Who the hell in their right mind crosses him! Have you seen what happens to those that do? Sir James' plan had merit, but ultimately it has failed. You are the last to still believe in it, not even Sir James does.”

“You will do as you are ordered,” A desperate crack entering the tall man's voice. “When Double O Seven is next deployed, I need control of his mobile phone.”

“Oh, is that all,” Denbigh said with sarcasm dripping from his voice. “Just so I get this straight. One: I need to know when Double O Seven is going to be deployed. Two: Compromise Q-Branch Fabrication early enough because fuck me I'm not going to be able to hack their software from the outside or inside. Three: Because we don't know which of the dozens and dozens of mobile phones being produced will be assigned to Double O Seven we will have to compromise them all. Four: Pray Q Branch don't notice. Five: Pray when Double O Seven reports his phone is compromised M doesn't trace it back to me. Six: When M comes knocking pray I survive.”

“He won't be M after I'm done with him,” Snapped Geoffrey.

“Just do as you’ve been told,” Geoffrey said, heading for the door. Compounding his desperate weakness he added, “Or else.”

To the closing door, Denbigh responded, “Sir, yes sir.”

Clasping his hands and resting them on the desk. Denbigh asked himself, “What to do? What, to, do? What... to... do?”

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“This isn't a good idea,” Rupert said for the fourth time in that hour.

“Don't panic, just gently,” James encouraged. “Smoothly, down on the clutch as you ease up on the accelerator, slip it into third. Ease up on the clutch and use the accelerator to pull us out of the bend.”

Rupert held the wheel tight, while getting his feet to move right on the peddles. The car came round the sweeping bend.

“Good,” James said. “Now more acceleration. Hear that whine? That's the engine wanting to be in a higher gear so ease up on the accelerator, clutch right down to the floor, into fourth and ease up on the clutch while you go down on the accelerator.”

There was a slight grinding of gears, but Rupert got the car into fourth and they were making their way to Skyfall. The road snaked through the valley, between high mountains. Everything in muted colours of green, grey and brown. The occasional splash of bright colour from the purple or yellow heather, or lupins growing on the side of the mountains.

James talked Rupert through brining the speed down and turning into the drive for Skyfall. They pulled up beside the line of parked cars, where Rupert forgot to put the car into neutral and it jerked forward and stalled. James patted the boy, “Not half bad. Ending needs work.”

A cracking echo rang out. James looked round for the source of the gun shot, with his hands going to the back of his jeans where he wore a holster. He quickly identified it as a rifle, something common to these getaways. He forced his instincts down, that it wasn't someone shooting at him.

Grabbing his holdall, with Rupert grabbing his own, James opened the door. Going round to the far side of the house he saw two near a dead tree. Rupert at his side asked, “Who's that?”

“Graham Addison,” James said and started to cross the uneven ground to where Andrew and the Double O stood, to do some target practice.

Between shots, James bellowed, “Addison!”

The other Double O made the weapon safe and held it. He then waved in acknowledgement.

“What the hell are you doing here?” James asked, offering the Double O his hand to shake.

Flinging a casual arm around Andrew beside him, Addison said, “Someone was feeling a little guilty still so invited me, and someone else made it an order.”

“Speaking of someone else,” James looked around, “Where is he?”
“Inside,” Addison said. “Seeing him in a nest does destroy some of the mystique.”

“I bet Gareth is thrilled to have you.”

“Absolutely,” Addison said, his focus falling to the dark eyed boy beside James. “It's good to spend some time with Colum, I'm his god father after all... James why does that one look like he wants to kill me?”

Everyone looked to Rupert. James patted the boy hard, “He's just protective of his little brother. You should be careful, Rupert likes blunt force trauma.”

Looking at the arm around him then to Rupert. Something boiled deep in Andrew's stomach, “I DON'T NEED PROTECTING! ARRR!” Andrew launched himself at Rupert. The two falling to the ground. Rupert called out, “I didn’t say you did!”

“You thought it!” Andrew trying to get the bigger boy in a scissor hold.

James leaned down to grab Rupert's holdall. He then jerked his head, calling for the Double O to come with. Walking away, Addison look back to the fighting brother, “Shouldn't you stop them?”

“They'll be fine,” James said. “Oh shit!”

Waiting on them at the back door of the stone house. Arms crossed. Foot tapping.

“Mother is not happy,” Addison whispered.

As they got closer, Falkirk raised an unamused eyebrow. “James? Did I see Rupert getting out of the driver's side of the car?”

Shrugging, James said, “I don't know what you saw.”

Addison edging away said, “I'll just... eh, go round the other way.” He put his head down and walked off. James calling after him, “Coward!”

Looking back to Falkirk, James gave his mate an innocent smile.

“It must have been the angle you saw the car at,” James shifting closer until they were within each other's personal space. “Would I let someone under seventeen drive, without insurance, or L-plates.”

“Yes James you woul.. what is that noise?” Falkirk looked round James. “ANDREW FREDRICK BOND! RUPERT MANSFIELD-VILLIERS-BOND! STOP THAT NONSENSE RIGHT NOW!”

While his mate was storming off to do some parenting, James took the opportunity to slip into the house to avoid notice.
Legs pumping hard, keeping a tight hold on the boy behind him with one hand. His phone pressed to his ear with the other hand, “...Be! There! Five! Min...FUCK!” He dropped his phone, the flat piece of glass and metal bouncing bouncing on the concrete. Glancing back, he saw his phone skidding to a halt and the irate man with snarl firmly in place still following. 'Fuck the phone!' he thought, putting his head down and pushing onwards.

Following the towpath along the river, passing the tied up narrow boats then under Lambeth bridge. Veering off the towpath beside the the Thames he joined the road behind the river front properties. The boy behind him was whining and crying, the Alpha a hundred yards further behind was the bigger concern. He saw the edge of his destination, a building of pale stone and black windows. He passed a coffee shop, and he had reached the building of MI6. Turning sharply into main doors and darted into the lobby, where it felt like his lungs were going to burst. The younger Alpha with him collapsed to the tiled floor.

“Boys!” barked a guard coming towards them. “This isn't the place to play.”

If he could speak, he thought he'd have a few choice words for the guard. He tried to convey something through his panting using with hand gestures. Something along the lines of: 'People who play aren't running themselves to exhaustion.'

“Sorry, officer,” said a new voice, also a bit out of breath.

The twelve year old boy whined and cowered behind Him. For his part he was trying to warn that the guy was a nut job, using deep gasps and hand gestures. He couldn't get one word out though, and felt like his middle as about to cramp very badly. At least in here another attack wasn't likely, so it was safe to bend over and press his hands to the forming stitch.

“I'll just tak'em,” The younger boy's father said coming forward. The guard asked, “Why have you a black eye, sir?”

To that the panting older boy managed a mime of a punch, and hoped the guard understood that he was the one to do it. Through the pain and panting he saw his Papa and James come from the side, emerging at the wall with all the names on it. Seeing them, he waved and decided it was now safe to collapse on to floor beside the other boy.

Falkirk came towards the group, now with the guard having figured something odd was going on so stood between the children and the short man with grizzled head and sagging square face. Behind Falkirk he heard James taking care of the two boys, “Come on you two, up. Sitting only makes it worse.”

Falkirk ordered the guard, “The police are on their way. Detain that gentleman until the they arrive.”
While the guards took the now shouting man under control. Falkirk returned to the two boys. Putting a hand on the shoulder of the younger, Falkirk escorted him. James helping to prop up the very flushed and sweating Rupert.

MI6's staff canteen, from what Falkirk could remember was not the best. A large windowless room, with the counter running up one wall. The lunch rush was over so there was only one woman serving, and only there to take the money for the pre-packed items.

Falkirk grabbed a couple bottles of water from the refrigerated cabinet, then paid the woman in the apron for them. He then joined James at a table with the two boys, the younger of whom was rather delicate, unnaturally small for his age too, with sharp face on a slightly too big head. Given Rupert was volunteering still, and the few bits of information he'd been given he deduced the younger boy's appearance was down to a problematic home life rather than medical condition.

Falkirk offered the two boys the bottles he had brought. James telling them to drink slowly.

“This is Neil,” Rupert said indicating the younger Alpha beside him. “He's staying with Stella, along with his papa.”

“Nice to meet you, Neil,” Falkirk said, holding his hand across the table for the boy to shake. It was just a slight grip of his fingers Falkirk got before the boy pulled his arm back.

Rupert said, “Stella asked me to take him out for a while. We ran into his dad near the London Eye.”

Falkirk picked up on something, Rupert really wasn't a good liar. He said to his son, “Well, you kept me informed of your progress. Which is more than some can do.”

“Is that a dig at me?” James demanded with a hurt look.

“Yes, and at others,” Falkirk said, concentrating on the big Alpha because there were some strange ques coming from the boy. “I swear James, if we didn't have satellite tracking we would know nothing of your movements.”

“Less you know, the less the bad guys know too.” James answered with a shrug.

Falkirk's phone rang, answering it he was told Stella Gibson had arrived. He ordered her to be brought to the canteen. The moment he said Stella was here, the boy whined and ducked his head so much his chin touched his chest. Rupert said to the other boy, “It's going to be okay.”

“Oh,” Rupert said, casually trying to keep the atmosphere calm. “I lost my phone.”

“Yes, I heard you swearing,” Falkirk answered. “I'm sure Alec has an annoyance that he can make go find it.”

The short red haired woman arrived, a little flustered. Falkirk waved off her escorting guard as she approached their table.

“Neil,” Stella said patting the boy's bony shoulder. “Were you hurt?”

The boy shook his head. Stella looked to Rupert, “How about you?”

“Nothing serious,” Rupert said. “Mostly surprised when this guy ran up to us and grabbed Neil.”

Stella asked Rupert, “You didn't know Neil's dad worked at the London Eye?”
Rupert shook his head. She tilted the younger boy's chin up, “Did you know your father was going to be at the London Eye?”

“Stella,” Falkirk interrupted softly. “We all know what happened, we can guess at Neil's reasons. He is a child, and children make silly decision. No harm was done. There's no need to go over his mistake.”

Rupert was rubbing the quietly crying boy's shoulder. Through the hiccuping, Neil uttered, “Just wanted to see my dad.”

“Maybe one day,” Falkirk said reaching out to take the boy's hand. “For now, your dad needs to learn what he did wrong, and you and your papa need time away from him.”

They sat until Neil had collected himself. Falkirk and James then walked them out, Stella saying she had run here. The refuge just the other side of the river and foot being quicker than car over the distance.

Rupert led the boy through the doors, where he spoke to him quietly on the street. Falkirk called over the lobby guard, and with Stella beside him confirmed Neil's father had been arrested. Stella then joined the two boys to walk back to the refuge.

“Well,” Falkirk mused watching the woman and two boys heading along the road. “Fistfights and chases across London. Who could he have learned that from?”

“Don't look at me,” James said, turning away. “I'm a responsible parent.”

“Ha!” Falkirk barked following the Alpha.

“You think we should get him a cake or something?” James asked as he walked the corridors of the building. “Celibate his first chase.”

“No, James. We encourage him to do what is right, we don't celebrate him getting into fights even if in the moment it was justified,” Falkirk said.

“Stick in the mud,” James teased, and shoulder bumped his mate walking beside him. Falkirk bumped him right back.

Reaching the room in Analyses, where James conducted his investigation into SPECTRE. He opened the door and let Falkirk in first. Inside was a red haired Omega boi, and an older woman. Noticing something on one of the desks, Falkirk picked up the round dark framed glasses.

“Shut up,” James whispered taking his glasses from Falkirk's hand. He tucked them into his inside pocket.

“You don't even wear them where I can see,” Falkirk whispered. The Alpha growled at him, drawing the attention of the two other omegas in the room. Falkirk held up his hands, “Okay, okay, I'll drop it.”

“James,” the male omega called. Both Falkirk and James stood behind him to look at the screen. The omega said, “The Penguin as been going to an unusual number of meetings and has had a higher than usual contact with other members of the organisation.”

The slightly older woman at the other computer said, “I've seen something similar with the other monitored SPECTRE agents.”
James hummed in acknowledgement, he headed for his own desk. He started brining up the surveillance data on the agents they were watching and what they were up to. The Alpha reached into his suit jacket pocket to pull out the glasses and slip them on.

“I'll just go back to boring old E-Branch,” Falkirk said, heading to the door. James just watched while still looking at the screen, through the glasses perched on the end of his nose. It still amazed him, James had a glasses for a few years now, and Daniel had been wearing them since Falkirk's Q branch days but very few Alphas wore them openly. He put it down to Alphas not liking to show any weakness.

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Arriving home, Falkirk tossed the mobile with cracked screen to Rupert. “You need to thank Uncle Alec, he had some of Britain's finest hopefuls scouring London for that. A guy had to fight a junky for it, needed a Tetanus shot and three stitches after getting bitten.”

Rupert ducked his head and said he would call Alec after dinner. Andrew asked how Rupert lost his phone and was told of the ‘incident’ and wanting every gory detail from when Rupert was tricking to going to the area Neil's dad worked, to them being jumped and the punch Rupert delivered, finishing with the chase to MI6. At the end Andrew crossed his arms, with a pout on his face, “I wanna do that!”

“You will, one day,” Falkirk said hugging his son. Looking to Rupert he asked, “How is Neil.”

“Down,” Rupert answered. “How come he still wants to see his dad when his dad is...”

“An abusive arsehole,” Falkirk filled in the missing end to that sentence, making Andrew's eyes bug out at his swearing. Falkirk shrugged, “He's Neil's dad, that's the only thing I can think of. He doesn't want his dad out of his life, no matter what he's done. Blood is a strong tie, normally.”

Rupert was a bit quiet in the wake of that. Andrew shifted his weight to lean against his brother, the move a bit more empathetic than Falkirk had come to expect from his youngest son.

“Falkirk,” James called from the door. The Alpha jerked his head and left, indicating he wanted a private word before dinner.

In the library, Falkirk found his Alpha. Closing the door behind him Falkirk waited to see what James wanted.

“Something odd is definitely happening with SPECTRE,” James said, with a frown.

“An attack?” Falkirk asked, taking his chair behind the desk. It was a small ritual to help him get into the mindset of M and not act as omega to James Bond.

“I don't think so,” James paced. Falkirk suspecting he was just meant to be a sounding board in the situation. The Alpha continued, “It looks like they're pulling in a lot of information on their operations. Don't know why?”

“Why does any organisation collect information on itself?”

James stopped to look at his mate. “To find out how well it's doing. That sort of order would come from the top, wouldn't it?”

Falkirk nodded.
“So if we follow the information, it could lead us to the top.”

“That or the money,” Falkirk said standing up. James telling him the money had already been a bust. “Then James, let's see if we can follow the trail of SPECTRE's self audit.”

Chapter End Notes

Well that's Christmas over. Let's hope things get back to normal, because a mid week Christmas(& New Year) day has thrown me for a loop and I've been two days out since. Sorry for any extra mistakes in this chapter I didn't have time to do more than a quick check to keep to my schedule.
Entering Q-Branch's garage, Falkirk looked at the three cars there. The nearest was an Audi saloon, a more practical choice for Operatives like the Double Os in this day and age.

The next bay contained a low and wide car, a Morgan. A car with classical sweeping lines and wheel arches, the body was done in an ivory white with chrome for the trim, lights and around the windscreen. Only two small doors, and no side windows. The soft top was folded back to show the chestnut brown leather upholstery. A lone mechanic was working on Addison's bribe, outfitting it with some toys that weren't available from the factory.

The last car James was standing at, with the wild haired omega Guy showing him the modifications. Sleek was the only description, grey, and...

"Is it just me," Falkirk said approaching the DB11. "Or has Aston Martin lost something."

"Bloodybrilinatcar! Noughttosixty..."

Falkirk interrupted the mechanic, "I wasn't talking about the specs. Something in its style is... lacking."

James' silence on the matter was deafening. There was a reason Falkirk had to repair the same car from the 60s time after time. Calling James over, Falkirk separated from the others working in the garage so they could talk quietly.

"Daniel tells me you're going into the field, SPECTRE may know and expect you," Falkirk warned.

James answered, "If they know me, they know all the Double Os. I'm limiting the risk by making contact with a SPECTRE agent in Sao Paulo that we have been careful to avoid. This will be the first contact by any agency with Pablo Barracuda's network. We need to know why they're doing a 'stock take'."

"When do you leave?"

James looked to his car, "It's leaving today, going by cargo plane. Me three days later. We should arrive in Brazil at the same time."

Falkirk rolled his eyes. "You could have got Station B to arrange a car for you. Do you have any idea how much it costs to ship a car by airfreight?"

James just shrugged, "That's M's problem."

Falkirk crossed his arms. "M's not going to be happy, I suspect he will have something to say about it."
“Don’t worry,” James moving very close. Using his nose to push a lock of hair to the way so his lips brushed the shell of the omega's ear, “M is a big old softy at heart.”

Falkirk felt the soft lips move from his ear to touch his neck. The Alpha then pulled away and called to Guy that he wanted the car ready to go to the airport in an hour. The incomprehensible mechanic answered, and to Falkirk's amazement James seemed to understand him.

“You're bloody lucky M has a soft spot for you, James,” Falkirk muttered and headed for the door.

--

“GE’ UP YOU WORTHLESS PIECE OF SCUM!” Officer Kay blasted at the top of his lungs. The blond jumped up from the lower bunk, while a dark haired man jumped down from the upper. The two prisoners dressed in identical grey tracksuits stood at attention. The officer, in black trousers, short-sleeved white shirt and black tie got into the face of the shorter blond inmate.

“You have a visitor,” the prison officer said. “DOES THIS LOOK LIKE VISITING TIME TO YOU!”

“No Sir!”

“MOVE YOUR PRETTY ARSE WHILE I'M STILL BEING NICE! MOVE IT! LEFT RIGHT! LEFT…”

The blond turned on his heels and marched out the door, with the officer still screaming behind him. The officer not seeing the the other cellmate give an upward thrusting fist while grabbing his biceps, in the gesture to 'go shaft himself'.

The blond omega walked briskly along the landing, turned sharply at the top of the stairs to go down. He marched passed the other inmates making use of the tables to play games and talk on the ground level. Reaching the end of the cell block he waited for the escorting Officer to get have the door opened for them. With a buzz it opened and they moved into the secure passageway, the door behind them having to be locked before the one in front could be opened.

They entered the large windowless room, filled with round tables with attached stools embedded into the concrete floor. Only one of the tables was occupied. The blond approached the table, and M stood. A scowl on the other omega's face, “Stewart, if you don't let me come visit normally I will just have to start throwing my weight around.”

Stewart Thomas glanced to one of the meanest Screws in the Prison. At least he knew why the Prison Officer was extra pissy, M just had that effect on people.

Looking back to M, Thomas said, “Well, M, you could take the hint and leave me.”

“I could grow wings and fly to the conference in Paris next week,” Falkirk responded. Sitting back down on one of the little round stools sticking out from the table he said, “Now if we have stopped discussing things that won't happen. Maloney wishes to visit too, so stop avoiding him…”

Stuart Thomas sat at the table, propping his head on his fist as he did so. As childish as it was he started to mime M's words silently while getting told off. A tin was slid across the table, it was open and had several fairy cakes inside with jam and butter icing.

“Not that you deserve them,” Falkirk said. “I made them myself.”
“Sir,” barked the Prison officer. He took the tin, “These will have to be checked.”

Falkirk took a breath, Thomas interrupted him, “Leave Officer Kay alone. He's just doing his job.”

Falkirk pouted. “I was looking forward to ripping him a new one. I love doing it to officious little oafs and you can tell he's a bully.”

“Please don't,” Thomas said. “If you're here for a visit... How are the kids? What's hubby doing? Something that won't have blow back on me!”

“Nothing will have blow back on you,” Falkirk giving the older alpha a quick glare, which turned into the brilliant smile that James always said creeped him out. Looking back to the ex-Double O now serving a life sentence for murder Falkirk started talking about Andrew first, and Addison's part in the desensitizing to pinning. Then moved on to Falkirk’s work chairing the abuse committee and how they had moved onto the childcare homes run by charities. Which led to Darren's cousins, and the release of the book about the IRA's conduct towards omegas during the troubles.

When it came time to leave. Falkirk placed his hand over the other omega's, “Send me a visitation request, or I will force my way in again. Send another to Nathan Maloney or I will let him force his way in too. He won't be so diplomatic as me and I don't want a Double O implicated in a jail break.”

Thomas nodded. Falkirk added, “Maybe next week you can do some talking.”

“Yes, M.”

Falkirk stopped at the exit door and looked back to the blond still at the table. “See you soon, Stuart.”

“Oh, just go!” The Blond omega snapped, not willing to admit how nice it was to have a visitor.

--

Sitting in his office, Falkirk worked away on his computer. Tanner stood at the internal glass wall, which Falkirk had to glance to from time to time when his Chief of Staff brought up something that needed to be seen. These briefings were necessary, it kept M informed without him having to get bogged down in the details. They did it day in and day out, so often in fact Tanner wasn't offended Falkirk split his attention between the briefing and his other duties.

“I noticed,” Falkirk said when Tanner had reached what Double O Nine was up to. Glancing to the beta, “You skipped over Double O Seven.”

“Ah,” Tanner said, rocking on the balls of his feet and looking anywhere but Falkirk. He focused on the tablet he held in the crook of his arm and tapped the screen a few times. “There are some facts, M. The DB11 has been destroyed.”

Falkirk sat back and gave the beta his full attention. Falkirk thought Tanner would prefer him to continue on the report he'd been writing. “Go on, I'm all ears.”

“Apparently, Double O Seven bailed out just as his car left an elevated road letting it hit a lorry carrying several tons of a new drug hitting the American market, 'Giggle Pig',” Tanner looked down at the table and whispered, “Double O Seven mentioned something about a petrol station and the car being on fire at the time. Apparently his tuxedo was singed.”

“Anything else?” Falkirk said, keeping his face straight.
“We haven't had contact since Double O Seven purchased a first class ticket to Austria,” Tanner said. “No hits on his passport entering Europe. He hasn't used his Credit Card. And he isn't picking up his phone, his phone also went dead ten hours ago.”

“Anything else?” Falkirk asked.

Tanner looked over his shoulder, through the glass wall to the chairs that backed up to it. “Mr Denbigh has been sitting out there for over an hour. Strangely he's being quite polite about it.”

“Shit! I forgot about him,” Falkirk said, looking a bit guilty.

Tanner looked away from the dark head, to the omega behind the desk. Taking note of the flush of embarrassment M had. “M? Being rude on purpose you're fine with. Being rude by accident has you flustered?”

“Yes. Being deliberately rude makes a statement, being accidentally rude is just being rude,” Falkirk waved the Beta off. “Go! Send him in on your way out!”

Letting out a little chuckle, Tanner opened the door. Stepping out of the office he said, “M will see you now, Director Denbigh.”

Chapter End Notes

Giggle Pig comes from Brooklyn Nine Nine.
Pablo Barracuda comes from a cartoon Bordertown.
“Mr Denbigh,” Falkirk said with a polite smile. He indicated the guest chair, “I must apologise, I didn't expect Tanner's briefing to be so long.”

“No need to worry, I wasn't looking forward to our meeting,” the short, rat faced Alpha said. His face not quite in the normal pulled up expression, more pensive in Falkirk's opinion. Shunning the chair, the guest preferred to stand.

“What is wrong, Director Denbigh,” Falkirk said. Not liking to look up to the man, but using other small rituals like steepling his fingers to ground him into remaining the Hard-Ass Bitch M.

Denbigh started to pace, from the internal glass wall to the rounded one that looked over the Thames. He went back and forth twice before he said, “I followed a legitimate order from my superior and yours.”

“I'm not liking the sound of that.”

The shorter man stopped his pace and looked at Falkirk, “I am here because I'm conflicted. I can leave, and comfort myself with 'I was ordered to' and I tried to listen to my conscience and you scorned my aid.”

“Sorry,” Falkirk said. His dislike of the man was effecting his behaviour. “I am listening.”

“I was ordered to compromise the communications between MI6 and the Double Os.”

Falkirk took a deep breath to stop the spike of anger exploding. When he was sure he wouldn't start shouting and threatening he said, “To what end?”

“I don't know this officially,” Denbigh said, having gone back to pacing so Falkirk couldn't see his face. “You have been the subject of a Loyalty Exercise. There was concern that when it came to your Double Os you would let them away with murder, literally.”

“Scarlet Papava might disagree with that assessment,” Falkirk said.

“Suzie Kew was inconclusive though, Stuart Thomas was almost a failure on your part,” Denbigh pointed out. He glanced to Falkirk, “We are getting distracted, M.”

“Yes we are. We were discussing GCHQ sabotaging MI6 Technology, and compromising active operations,” Falkirk said curtly.

“Yes we were,” Denbigh answered more politely than Falkirk expected. “We set up in the Q-Branch issue mobile phones a system, a system that allows us to hijack the phone. We can block calls, messages, email, GPS. We can spoof calls to the phone so they appear to come from a secure location like E-Branch. We can spoof the GPS location, sending operatives off course...”
“Unlike you and your political background, technology is mine, I don't need the sales pitch,” Falkirk said. “For what purpose was this done? And don't tell me: ‘to compromise a Double O’. It's time for specifics, Mr Denbigh!”

“I DON'T KNOW!” roared Denbigh. “All I know, the system was activated two days ago. I got the memo this morning, and I've been sitting outside your office since!”

Falkirk no longer needed his small rituals of M. There was a churning ball of fire in his stomach.

“Mr Denbigh, if you have compromised this agency, put in danger its personnel...”

“BLA-BLA-BLA!” Denbigh shouted. “Don't dare threaten me, Mr Falkirk Vice Admiral Sir Thomas Holmes McLair Bond Q M. I know you! I know your past! Come for me, and I will go down swinging and I've got some juicy things on you. A nice recording of that sweet innocent voice of yours, arranging some poor sod's murdered so you can pay off someone else with the stolen heart. That wasn't part of your Moriarty investigation, that was all for you. What about the brothels, and not to mention all the blackmail. How many trials have you compromised? Two to my knowledge. I suspect that Alpha of Stuart Thomas' will have a big surprise when he comes to trial. Make me your enemy at your peril!”

By now Denbigh was leaning on Falkirk's desk, like a bull dog with arms wide and fists to the surface. Falkirk glaring up at the rat face.

The door clicked open. Selene said, “Is anything wrong M?”

“I've said everything I had to,” Denbigh said, straightening up and tugging at his suit jacket so it sat right again. “Next time I won't bother.”

Marching to the door, Denbigh held his head high. Refusing to look at the Alpha woman sanding just inside the office. He stopped and glanced back, “Not that your conduct deserves this, but like you the safety of our country is my concern. Have you lost contact with a Double O?”

Falkirk didn't need to tell the man to get out, Denbigh was leaving on his own accord. Falkirk watched the man crossing E-branch. Everyone had been watching through the glass wall, most got back to work after the show. Falkirk met eyes with Tanner who stood by Darren's desk.

“James!” Falkirk realised. Looking to Selene, “Get the kids safe.”

Selene ran from the office. Falkirk followed only to the door, to call in the troops. Darren arranged for Daniel and Alec. Looking to Tanner, Falkirk said, “You said James has been out of contact for over a day now.”

“Yes M. Is this to do with Director Denbigh.”

Falkirk nodded. “Have the Archivist brought up and summon Rhett Butler.”

Falkirk returned to his office when Tanner acknowledged. He noticed a new set of scratch marks had been gouged into the surface of his desk. It really was starting to look like a scratching post. Maybe it was time Falkirk replaced his desk. Shaking his head to rid himself of the distracting thoughts.

“If the M.O. is the same, they aren't aiming to hurt James,” Falkirk said to himself. “What would make James abandon his duty? Me? Maybe. The Kids? Yes. But we're safe and I'm a little... lot nuts when it comes to that sort of threat. What would make James abandon his post without setting me off? What would James be about that I wouldn't? Or...what would someone think James cared
about that I...

A dark thought came over Falkirk. Grabbed the set of HUD glasses he kept in his drawer, he marched to the door, not even bothering to get his coat. Reaching the communal office, Falkirk bellowed, “ANDRE!”

From Selene's office Falkirk's bodyguard ran out, pulling on his suit jacket. Falkirk then shouted, “TANNER! GET ME A PRIVATE JET READY TO GO AT LONDON CITY!”

Daniel and Alec just entering E-Branch stopped, almost running into the shouting Falkirk. “Laddie, is this about the SLS?”

The omega barged between them, “Out the way! Daniel, get R to find me whoever compromised our phones. Then throw them into a cell until I get back.”

Stepping into the lift, Falkirk turned round, “Find out from the Archivist and Rhett Butler what they knew about a loyalty Exercise and don't take 'I don't know' for an answer.”

Alec saluted, “Will do M.”

Daniel said, “Where are you going?”

The doors of the lift bumped closed, without time for Falkirk to answer.

Selene came out of her office, looked in Falkirk's and then came over to Daniel and Alec, “Where's Falkirk?” The two men shrugged. She said, “Well the kids have been pulled out of school and are on their way home, under guard.”

Tanner stuck his head out of his office, the receiver of his desk phone pressed to his chest while his other hand held his mobile. Looking at the screen of his mobile, “Would someone organise a tactical squad for M, you have twenty seconds before he reaches the garage. Call in Double O Nine, and Five. Double O Six, redeploy him to Istanbul.”

Tanner went back to the receiver in his other hand, with the cord stretching into his office. Members of E-Branch shouted out what task they were doing.

The three by the door looked at each other. Alec was the one to say, “What the hell is going on?”

Daniel and Selene answering with shrugs.

“Excuse me,” said the Archivist. The slightly bumbling man tried to move past, “M wanted to see me.”

Alec clasped the man's shoulder making him jump. “Ah, Ruffy know anything about a loyalty exercise?”

The blond, realising he was surrounded shook his head. “No.”

Alec hummed and using the hand on the other man's shoulder pulled him away. “M said we weren't allowed to take that as an answer.” Looking over his shoulder, “Danny, you deal with Butler.”

“We're not allowed to be in the same building,” Daniel pointed out, watching the slightly panicked man being led away by Alec. “I know what to do. I'll have someone talk to him for me.”

--
This was the culmination of years worth of investigation by MI6 some of it done by James himself. In South America he had learned an old castle in Europe was the location of a big meeting of SPECTRE, chaired by 'Goldeneye' himself. James drove the car he borrowed from Q Branch Vienna. Not his preferred Aston, it was an older model but still impressive except for the colour. In a very understated cannery-yellow the low and wide Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG flew along the country roads.

With Pablo Barracuda dead, James had to risk intercepted one of the other guests. The guest in question, one Herr Otto Flick was up ahead. A person MI6 had been monitoring.

Seeing his target up ahead, James felt a twinge of remorse for such a beautiful car. An Aston Martin Vanquish in classic British Racing Green. Pulling out, James overtook the impressive sports car. Reaching for the centre console as he pulled back in ahead of the other car, James released the caltrops from the compartment of the rear bumper. The star shaped spikes ripped the green car's tyres to shreds. James watched that elegant car swerve off the road and barrel roll over the embankment into a field.

Kicking the back end out, James’ car screeched to a stop pointing back along the road. He opened the gull wing door and straightening his suite as he got out of the yellow monstrosity. Leaving the door open he headed for the wreck. Reaching the upside down car, seeing the driver slowly coming to terms with what happened. A single execution shot dealt with the German People Trafficker, the only occupant of the car. Reaching through the shattered window, James searched the dead man's pockets. Coming up with what he was looking for, a pure black credit card.

Walking back to his own car, he waved the card over his phone. The phone identified the key card was transmitting a identification single, like the rings that he had found previously. Uploading the single to MI6, he got a message back.

'Okay to go 007!'

Getting into his car James pulled away. Turing as he accelerated, throwing up gravel and smoke he left the wreck behind him.

Twenty miles from the crash, James pulled his sleek car pulled to a stop at castle done in dark stone. A high outer wall and what looked like a collection of conical turrets and spires inside. At the portcullis James lowering the window and casually with an air of boredom, he flashed the card over the scanner the henchman held out. With the limited access they had to SPECTRE's system a picture of James himself should appear on the gate guard's tablet. He was waved in to the courtyard where he pulled up beside the other high end cars.

Getting out, James smoothed down his grey jacket and made sure his tie was sitting straight. A man dressed in a very good suit, befitting the setting approached. In perfect German the man said, "Welcome Herr Flick! Please, this way."

James nodded, boredom was the key to passing without notice. The second he looked nervous or like he didn't belong was the moment his cover would fail. He treated his escort like an annoying waiter, ignoring him for the most part.

Only Seagate had James experience of. Despite Seagate looking like it belonged in the set up for an Agatha Christie novel it had a homely feel to it. Where this Gothic building of dark stone was more akin to a horror movie or corrupted version of the Disney castle.

Being shown into the atrium, a large round foyer. The scanner in the middle of the room he was
instructed to go through, so he placed his keys and phone onto the silver tray on the small table. Passing through the metal archway it beeped. Before he could be searched, James gave a bashful smile, in German he said, "Sorry, habit."

He reached into his jacket to pull out a Glock using only two fingers. Like it was a dirty sock he didn't want to touch he let the escort take it, making sure to appear unconcerned about being disarmed. A little trouble always put security guards at ease after all. He passed through the scanner again without the alarm sounding. James didn't know how Q-Branch did it, but his Walther in the holster at the small of his back went by unnoticed. He picked up his keys and phone again and was escorted beyond the spacious atrium.

The escort opened a door onto a dark, short and very wide corridor, with an arched oak doors ahead of them and a set of stairs either side. Up the set of curving stairs on the right, James was led to a gallery that ran the length of a great hall. Spotlights cast strange bright spots and deep shadows all over the hall. Large chairs had been set up, here in the gallery and down in the great hall. The only table was at the rear of the great hall where there was a throne like chair.

James was shown to his rather ornate chair of carved wood and leather padded seat. A small table beside him had a microphone, and into its base was a slot for the card James stole. James slid the black card in and a red light near the mouth piece lit.

"Schnapps," James demanded before his escort left.

"Of course, Herr Flick," snapped his escort and marched away. A clear military baring, but with a relaxed readiness common to an operative.

James made himself comfortable, sitting back and crossing his legs. There were other people on the balcony level with him, their chairs spaced far enough apart to discourage interactions. Across on the opposite gallery, James saw the man MI6 monitored the closest, code name 'Penguin'. The small round man needed to stretch to see over the banister. Down on the floor below where the highest ranked of SPECTRE would sit there were two rows of chairs either side of aisle facing each other. With the main chair at the rear of the room.

A woman in a maid's uniform appeared with a silver tray. She put the small glass down and left, quickly, efficiently and without a word spoken. James getting the impression SPECTRE didn't like its operatives to socialise.

He watched the first of the highest ranked arrive, and take a chair in the great hall below him. He recognised the Akuza Boss easily, he was on every watch list James had studied. Then a Don Falkone from New York, James knew him because Falkirk had dealings with the family from time to time. Then in marched a tinpot dictator of some tiny African country, dressed in a fancy sky-blue uniform and large sun glasses. James raised an unimpressed eyebrow, when noticing on the war lord's chest hung a Victoria Cross, and a Congregational Medal of Honour amongst the other awards he had not earned.

Lastly, from a small door at the rear of the room, a lean man entered. Wearing a light coloured suite, cream or very pale yellow. It was hard to tell in the dim light. A wide brimmed panama hat concealed his face. As he sat on the throne like chair, James saw one hand was burned with a network of pink scars over it.

“Goldeneye?” James said. He shifted forward in his chair to try and get a better look at the man's face. His view got worse when Goldeneye leant forward to pull a piece of paper from the edge of the desk closer to himself. Then taking out a pen, of a type that the lid needed to be unscrewed he sat ready. Goldeneye gave a slight wave with he unscarred left hand, while the pen in his right was
poised on the piece of paper.

In response to the wave, the woman sitting in the nearest chair on Goldeneye's right stood. An older woman with grey hair done in an elegant French Roll. Speaking in English her voice was flat, Netherlands James suspected the accent to be. She started to say, “Ten percent of all legal Prostitution in Europe is now under our control, that number growing to forty percent for illegal...”

A buzz came from James' inside left pocket. He pulled out his mobile to look at the message.

'I would like to meet you James Bond. Here...'

There was no name, or number as the source of the message. While holding the phone a new message arrived, just a picture. His heart burning when he saw a surveillance shot taken from across the street of the target. It showed a slender woman with olive skin and thick dark hair, as she walked with a gangly teen boy of similar skin tone but with azure blue eyes and natural blond highlights in his otherwise dark hair.

A third message arrived.

'Don't be long. We're going to introduce ourselves soon.'

James breathed through his nose, like an enraged bull. Loud enough that the noise drew the attention of those around him. He closed his eyes to help focus, he needed to stop the Alpha rage. Opening them, an intense glare firmly in place. He tapped a message, 'Q trace last message received.'

As soon as he sent the message there was a response.

'Come now Bond. Don't be so foolish. You are alone!'

The reports had moved down the line of SPECTRE operatives. It was the Tin Pot dictator giving a war story, of how he annulated his enemies. James had a job to do. Identify Goldeneye, identify members of SPECTRE, destroy the leadership if he could. The phone buzzed again.

'Your phone isn't moving, Mr Bond so you're not moving. Hurry! Hurry! We don't have all day, Mr Bond.'

James stood sharply, getting a few annoyed looks. A blinding fury building up inside him. He was sacrificing his mission. He was giving up on finding out who this 'Goldeneye' was. Reaching the stairs down, the man who escorted him was standing guard. The henchman looked rather annoyed, demanding, "Herr Flick?"

There was no point in pretending, and James had a more important thing to consider. Smoothly, James pulled out his gun from his back waistband, aimed and fired. The henchman hit the wall and slid down leaving a red steak, his arm flopping down unable to reach the holster under his arm in time to save himself.

Panic broke out at the sound of gun fire, shouts went up and the guests started to run. James let some of the others go ahead to overwhelm the guards. Running out in to the courtyard, James headed for his car. He got in just as the wall guards opened fire into the fleeing crowd. The bullets bouncing off the reinforced bodywork and glass. Reversing out the space and swinging the car round, he saw the portcullis coming down.

Tapping the 'Q' icon on the console touchscreen, a plan of the car appeared. James selected the forward missiles. The side panels of the car folded out and fired two misled straight ahead. The old
lattices of wood and iron exploded in fireballs, sending splintered wood everywhere.

Now the path was clear, James floored it. The yellow car shot through the gate and out of the courtyard.
Lowering the window didn't help with the heat in the cabin of the Jeep. The dark grey Cherokee was out of place enough on the street of Istanbul without the engine running to power the air conditioning and drawing attention to the two men sitting in it.

Both men sitting in the car had a similarity in a way to each other. In body both were of fit build and a little stocky. With shorn hair, little more than stubble over their scalps. Dressed in khaki short sleeve shirts and jeans. Everything, even in civvies they bore a military bearing.

The black man sitting behind the wheel lifted his arm to wipe his forehead on his short sleeve. Then swiped his hand over the top of his head, to get the moisture from the buzz cut hair. With a smirk he said, “Worse than Afghanistan!”

The slightly taller and leaner guy with red stubble over his head, sitting in the passenger seat sent him a smirk, “Don't find it too bad myself.”

Reaching out to the guy in the passenger seat, and swiping his hand over the other man's head and face. Letting his friend see the drop gathered on his dark fingers, “Stop talking bullshit Rory!”

Danny wiped his hand on his buddy's shoulder.

“Hay, Danny!”

“It's your fucking sweat!” The addressed Danny said while wiping his face again with the sleeve of his shirt

"Not that!" The red haired guy watched a someone walk passed the car. Tapping his buddy, “Is he one of ours?”

Danny's light brown eyes followed his friend's line of sight towards a man walking away from them. Dressed in black combat trousers, tight belt, and broadening torso covered in a tight black vest. The body shape, the dress, the way the guy walked it all pointed to military.

“No, not one of ours. Looks Merc. I wouldn't worry about him.” Danny said after a moment studying the strange man. There were plenty of ships that needed security, and slightly further afield there were oil fields and terrorists that could also need security much of it operating out of the safer country of Turkey.

Rory focused on what he could see of the campus at the far corner of the street. Just able to see the Union Flag fluttering in its forecourt, and above the gate an arched sign, 'British School Istanbul'.
A beep sounded from Danny's shirt pocket. He pulled out his phone to look at the message. He said, “We're to pick up the kid and wait for Double O Seven.”

“Sir,” Rory acknowledged. They had to wait though, through the mid day sun and into the afternoon. Just before four o'clock they exited the large jeep.

Together they crossed the rough street, even in the posh part of Istanbul everything was very basic. The building they passed looked nicer, made of modern grey concrete and black arched windows. Passing the end of the office block, set a bit further back from the street was a set of older buildings behind the perimeter wall.

Kids were spilling out of the gate, some on bikes riding home, a select few having cars waiting for them. Many children of diplomats or business leaders going to this school that taught the British curriculum. By far, most of the kids walked despite the wealth of their parents.

There he was, a kid of long and gangly limbs. Dressed in the uniform of grey shorts and long socks, and a white shirt with a green tie under grey V-neck knit vest. An old style leather satchel on his back. His small round face was tilted down to look at the brick pavement in front of his Oxford leather shoes.

“Azlan?” Danny said and the boy looked up. The boy's strange eyes not fitting with his dark complexion, yet he had golden streaks in his otherwise dark hair too. The boy looked round, cautious of them.

“We're here to take you home,” Danny said. “There's something we need to...”

The boy jumped a bit as hands landed on his shoulders. He looked behind him and gasped when he saw the lean omega standing there.

“Azlan, I need to talk to these gentlemen alone. Go on home, I'll follow in a moment.”

The boy nodded, he was then pushed gently to the side, to cross the road when he didn't need to rather than continue passed the two strange men.

For their part, Danny and Rory were not for moving. Amongst the children flooding out of the school they had noticed at least six men and woman, all in combat trousers, a few in matching shirts worn open or in vests to look casual. All were armed, with guns tucked into waistbands or held in hand just out of view. They were ready for a firefight where Danny and Rory still had their weapons in their holsters.

“Wave goodbye,” M whispered. “Let him see we are the best of friends.”

Danny looked the omega first then the boy walking away and sending the occasional glance back. Danny raised his hand and waved, then elbowed Rory to do the same.

“How's he out the way,” M turned on them. Eyes behind the thick framed glasses full of an ice cold wrath. “If you threaten an innocent, why should not I!”

Danny tried to protest that wasn't what they had been ordered to do, M just spoke over him.

“As of this second I'm giving you a choice,” M said lifting his mobile so the screen was in front of Rory's face. “Scrape whatever honour you have from the floor and sacrifice yourselves...”

Rory gasped and reached for his gun, then grunted and stilled before reaching the weapon. Danny looked behind them, to a sandy haired alpha with a gun pressed to the back of Rory's skull.
“Don't do anything silly,” M warned. “If you do not do as I desire, it will not be you who face the repercussions. Even if you are dead your punishment will still be, *executed.*”

M then did something with his phone and held it out for Danny to see the screen.

--

Suave, an older alpha male with greying black hair and moustache. He sat cross legged on a very uncomfortable chair, he made sure not to show that discomfort. Ahead of him was a table, then another chair and on the far side was the only door in or out of his interrogation room. Gone was the two-way mirror and the obvious cameras of his era. It was a little unnerving knowing he was being watched but not to know how he was being watched.

For the first time in the couple hours he had been here, the door opened and in walked younger woman. Rather plain, she wore no make up and had her brown hair pulled back into ponytail. Unlike the man's professional bespoke double breasted suite, the woman wore a plain knee length pleated skirt, and a thick Aran knit jumper. A impression of a dotty librarian about her, just missing the big glasses to complete the image.

The alpha purred in a deep gravelly voice, “Alice I believe? Or is it I?”

“Yes,” the girl said and took the chair for the Interrogator. “Both in fact.”

“There is no reason for me to be held. I am a trustee of MI6, the Deputy Director too... not to mention I was once Double O Seven,” the man said in an absent way. “What are you doing?”

“Waiting Mr Butler, waiting,” the girl said and lifted up a book, 'The Psychopath's Crossword'. She said, “Double O Five does so like his little jokes. Please don't tell him I find it quite entertaining.”

Butler watched the girl open the dog-eared paperback to a puzzle partly completed. She took out a metal bodied pen, clicked it then tapped on one of the empty squares for a letter.

Against his training and better judgement, Butler engaged with his interrogator. There was just something about her being an omega that put him at ease against his will. Being the more experienced and wishing to share that experience he said, “One should not bring in an implement like a pen when the prisoner is unbound. It can be taken and used as a weapon.”

“It is a weapon,” Alice said and held out the pen. This time Butler listened to his better judgement and refused to take the pen. Alice said, “A good idea. Q-Branch issued it to Mr Addison and after the mission he gave it to me. You see these little dots along the body, terminals for the taser. So long as it registers my fingerprint it's safe.”

“Good to know.” The older man responded. This was odd to him. He had been held by Drug Lords, the KGB, the Chinese, Afghani fundamentalists, and like now even the British. Here and now, being confined in a room with a calm omega was effecting him.

“Seven-down. Ten letters?” Alice whispered to herself while tapping the clue with her pen. “Clue: Others? I-r-r-e-l-e-v-a-n-t. ”

Butler scoffed. “You're not intimidating me.”

“I'm not here to intimidate you,” the girl replied while still concentrating on her book. “Twelve-across. Thirteen letters? Compassion? Starts with, V.”

Butler had twigged, a psychopath would view compassion as a, “Vulnerability?”
“Yes,” the girl said filling in the little boxes. Butler noticed the girl’s hand tremble slightly and how it became harder for her to keep the letters inside the box.

Reaching across the table, Butler laid his hand over the girl’s. She was like M, her ques were very muted because they had to suppress so many instincts. He could tell something was wrong though, beside being whisked to interrogation the second he stepped into the building and left for hours until Alice arrived.

“Tell me,” Butler said looking directly into the girl’s brown eyes. “You’re nervous.”

The girl leant forward to whisper. “In old slaughter houses you would find a Judas Goat. It was trained to have no fear of humans or their intents, and once it integrated with the herd it would lead it where it was trained to. It would walk from the pen right into the slaughter house, where it knew it would be fed well. The sheep, they would follow the Judas Goat because if it didn’t fear the smell of blood and strange noises why should they.”

Butler stood sharply and his head swam, it was more than just omega pheromones in the air. Planting his hands on the table to stop from falling, he sat back down with a heavy thud.

“How could you...” Butler stood more slowly this time. Fighting through the growing disjointed feeling he shuffled towards the door.

“I had to. M’s gone. Double O Seven is gone. You wouldn't have told us about the loyalty exercise.”

Reaching the door Butler tried the handle, the knob refused to turn. What he would give for a two way mirror now. It took an immense effort to say, “There is no loyalty exercise.”

“M said that wasn’t an acceptable answer,” The girl’s head lolled and she slumped over the table.

He felt stupid to not have noticed before he stood. Butler should have realised it wasn't just a stuffy room, he realised he might have if it wasn't for the strange omega who distracted him. Didn't she admit that was why she had been here though. He slid down to the floor and darkness took him.

Waking, Butler reached up to the throb at his neck. He felt a bandage. This was bad, very bad.

Opening his eyes, the imposing form of Q was at the foot of his bed, M’s attack dog was to his right and to his left was the ex-Double O Six/attack dog/trainer/internal affairs/triple agent. Alec shouldn't look so normal for all he had done, but that is what gave him the edge in all those rolls and titles.

“You have been summoned to a meeting of the trustees,” Q said, glaring down at him. “You will go, and find out about this loyalty exercise that has seen Double O after Double O being targeted. Fail and you will be considered part of the conspiracy that has hurt MI6 and threatened the safety of the Country. Understood!”

Butler reached up to his neck, his short leash. A small capsule that sat near his jugular with charge just powerful enough to rip the artery to shreds.
“And I thought I got out of the game,” Butler said.

Alec smirked at him, “You're never out of the game.”

Selene lay the dark pinstripe suite across the bed, “Get dressed. You're running late.”

--

Sitting in the back of a black cab, the two men who couldn't look at each other approached London. Danny, the black man, looked down to his own hands still imagining the blood on them. His old buddy, Rory, sitting beside him with glassy green eyes just looked off into the middle distance. They had come up against the legendary M and...

Danny looked out to the passing streets of London. That image on M's phone of the old woman with silvery swept up hair, his mum, still playing on his mind. She had a brilliant and innocent smile on her round face. The dementia had made her child like in a way, she tended to reflect the emotion of others. Whoever held the camera had to be nice with a big smile on their face to get the reaction from his mother. Then from the bottom of the frame a gun raised up and aimed at his mother, from the angle Danny could see down the sights, the bullet would hit her in the forehead. His mum had just looked t the gun, no longer knowing what it was so wasn't frightened of it. Pointedly a thumb pulled back on semi-automatic pistol's hammer for emphasis, and his mum had giggled at the strange clicking sound.

“If you threaten an innocent, why should not I,” M had said and in the green eyes behind the thick framed glasses Danny saw a cold blooded killer. Very quietly M gave his orders and the consequences should they disobey. Rory had been as quiet and accepting as Danny himself. He wasn't sure who M had threatened with Rory, he had a wife and a little girl so it wouldn't be a long list of guesses on who M targeted.

On his return to England, Danny tried to contact his mother's care home. The receptionist transferred him to the on duty nurse, a nice sounding man told him she was safe... so long as he obeyed M. Rory had sent some of their old war buddies to his home, and they had not been heard from since, nor was his wife picking up.

Taking a shuddering breath, Danny came back to the here and now. He pulled out his phone and dialled the contact: 'Boss'.

“Yes?” said the voice on the far end.

“Boss, the Spotter at the airport says Double O Seven has arrived,” the Spotter at the airport was dead. “We have the kid.”

“Good, I'm just going in to see the Trustees. You have permission to brief Bond, his time at MI6 is over. Congratulations, Double O Seven.”

“Sure thing boss. Thanks, M.” Danny said and hung up. To Rory he said, “He will be there when we arrive.”

--

Entering a boardroom, part of the classical buildings that made up part of the Foreign Office. Butler saw his fellow trustees milling about the large traditional room including some not normally here like the tall and slim Alpha, the Foreign Secretary, and Hodder's counter part the Home Secretary whose presence was very odd. Domestic and International departments tending to keep to themselves.
From the earwig, Butler heard Q, “Turn to your left.”

Butler turned, making sure the red carnation in his lapel got a view of everyone. A tiny camera concealed in the frilly petals of the flower.

“Ah, Victoria,” Butler called and approached the chairwoman of the Trustees. Leaning into the silver haired woman, herself an ex-Double O, Butler asked, “I've heard something about a Loyalty Exercise.”

“I've heard the rumour too,” Victoria said. She turned so she could subtly nod towards Rufus, “He asked me as soon as he arrived, and has been asking everyone else. Without speaking to Rufus you've asked me the same as soon as you arrive, I noticed.”

The older woman reached out to him, to gently brush the small bandage on Butler's neck, “Are you going to tell me you cut yourself shaving?”

“I wouldn't dream of lying to you, Victoria,” Butler touched his carnation, hoping by straightening it the microphone would only transmit rustling and scraping as he said, “Something's happened. M's gone and Q is in charge.”

Victoria smiled, perfectly. Having noticed Butler's tells, he had now confirmed he was compromised. She said, “Well if I hear about a Loyalty Exercise I'll let you know.”

“What about this meeting?” Butler asked following the woman to the wide table at the rear of the large room.

“That Geoffrey Dromgoole called it,” Victoria answered. “Hopefully another Double O hasn't been on a murder spree with their Alpha.”

Noticing the tall, rectangular faced Alpha arriving, Victoria called for everyone to take their places. Heading round to the far side of the wide table, Butler passed the MI6 Archivist. Catching Rufus' arm he whispered, “You hurt?”

The younger blond Alpha glanced up at him and shook his head silently. Butler looked for a popper, but could see no incision or bandage on the Alpha's neck. Butler said, “I wish to speak with you after this.”

“Of course,” the softly spoken man responded. Rufus then took his chair at the end of the table, while Butler took his just to the right of Victoria's.

“Mr Dromgoole,” Victoria said. Still a few were shifting, to find a place to stand out the way. Geoffrey himself stood in the open space in front of the table.

“Yes, Victoria,” Dromgoole said. A confidence seeping out of him as he stood casually with a smile on his wide mouth. “I must inform you of another dire event from one of MI6's Double Os. While investigating an organisation, code name: SPECTRE. We can confirm Double O Seven abandoned his assignment, disobeyed orders and threatening the safety of the United Kingdom. As for M he's not been…”

In response to the angry voice in his ear, Butler asked, “Have you heard of a loyalty exercise?”

Dromgoole gave an emotional sigh, looking troubled if you were stupid enough to believe him. He said, “I must admit, yes. For a long time there has been deep and real concern about M and his Double Os, and the length he will go to protect his Double Os. He moved heaven and earth to get ex-Double O One, Suzie Kew off murder charges in Japan. You are aware of Stuart Thomas...”
Butler noticed the door on the left at the far end of the room open. A younger black man in the lead, with a taller white guy behind. Instantly he recognised a threat, as did Victoria beside him. The two stood together, tipping the table over as they did so to create cover. Butler vaulted the table the others were using to hide behind. The two ex-double Os rushing the two threats.

The black man reached Geoffrey first. The white by passed them to tackle Butler. As he fought, Butler heard what he assumed to be the black man speak, “M told me to say: I AM DOING THIS OF MY OWN FREE WILL!”

A single gun shot deafened them. The man Butler was fighting relaxed, letting himself be pinned. When Butler looked round, Victoria had a gun aimed at the black man who knelt with his hands interlaced on his head. Geoffrey Dromgoole was laying face down, the floor splattered with the contents of his skull. A shocked stillness had overtaken everyone else.

Chapter End Notes

Next week we see James and Falkirk. I wanted them in this but it was getting way too long for me to edit and proof. So we will see James first thing next chapter, arguments ahead.
The Seat Leon was not James' usual style. He just took what Hertz had available right away when he arrived in Turkey. The hatchback was under powered, cramped and driving him nuts. Although that could be the slow progress through the city and the stops he needed to make on his way. It was a major inconvenience when he couldn't access Q Branch.

The city of Istanbul had grown to merge with what was once a one street village. James pulled to a stop on the main street of what was becoming an affluent suburb of the city. Going down an alleyway between a barber shop and a bakery, he reached the residential streets backing the commercial area. He wanted to scout out the area so was avoiding going directly to his destination.

James walked the street of small houses, each one detached and set in its own small plot. Each two story house was done in pale yellow plaster, with slopping roofs of wavy terracotta tiles. Standing at the boundary wall between two properties, James could just see the house he was looking for through the gap. He could only see the window of the rear bedroom and the roof from where he stood. Looking up one way then the other, James saw no agents here. He had a choice cut through the gardens of the neighbours to enter at the rear of the property or to go round the front.

Not being one for subtle, James headed for the end of the road. Reaching the main road at the end with a field beyond, James followed the road as it curved round the corner. Now he saw them, oh so very subtly dressed. Black combat trousers tucked into their boots. Two of the agents had taken off their shirts so only wore vests, two had opened their black combat shirt, and two wore their shirts tied around their waist. They really did look like normal civilians!

From the holster at the small of his back, James pulled out a Glock, with silencer attached. The black market in Istanbul wasn't Q-Branch, James could only take what they had rather then what he preferred.

A throat cleared behind him. With lightning speed James rounded on the person, while bringing up his gun. The straw blond man with sharp face raised his hands as James aimed at the guy's forehead.

“Andre?” James said, recognising M's primary Bodyguard. Slowly lowering his gun, “What the hell are you doing here?”

“Following M. Protecting M from anyone who wants to kill him. Hoping I don't get killed in the crossfire. Preying M doesn't start World War Three. In short, the usual Double O Seven.”

“M's here,” James said starting to walk down the street, lined with houses one side and a field for future development the other.

“Yes,” Andre answered. “I even got to try out M's glasses, the ones with the HUD and Facial Recognition system. He really is blind as a bat, I couldn't see a thing through them. It took me three times to get a good scan of the guys faces with them.”

By now they had reached the house the MI6 Tactical Unit was guarding. There James waited looking up at the small house of three small bedroom. The master bedroom had the balcony above the front door's porch. Two main room on the ground floor, a lounge/dining room the length of the house was on the left of the front door. A kitchen and the only bathroom were on the right.

“Are you going in?” Andre asked when James just stood and looked at the house. “M's waiting.”
James opened the low gate in the wall, the path going up the right of the garden. Passing some form of low palm tree which took up most of the space in the front garden. Reaching the dark wood door, James turned the handle and entered the narrow corridor. He could hear voices coming from the second door beyond the stairs: the kitchen.

Slowly James made his way along the red tiled floor to the door-less archway into the kitchen. At the small round table sat Adja, the dark haired woman whose son pulled James from the river years ago after Eve took ‘the bloody shot’. Then there was Falkirk. Lastly and the only one facing him, the boy, younger then Rupert, older than Andrew. His pale blue eyes, the most striking thing Azlan had inherited from him.

“James,” the boy said while forcing himself to stay composed.

Falkirk looked over his shoulder to him. Then standing said, “James, let's talk in private.”

James nodded and indicated the door at the back of the kitchen, that led out into the back garden. Falkirk went first, with James following into the paved area with kidney shaped pool taking up most of the space. Following Falkirk to the far side of the pool where a fence separated them from the neighbours. Without looking back the Omega suddenly held up his hand, “Stop, stay there. If you get closer I won't be able to say what I need to.”

“You came?” James said. Watching his mate's back, from several paces away.

“OF COURSE I BLOODY WELL CAME!” Falkirk controlled his voice so he didn't shout the next bit, “James? Did you hear Azlan, he called you James...”

Shifting, to stand with feet shoulder width apart and hands clasped at the small of his back. James spoke in shot clipped response, “He does usually call me dad.”

“So it's because of me? I'm the big bad monster keeping Azlan's dad from him,” Falkirk shot angrily.

“No...”

Falkirk turned round, he was trembling from what James could see. The open air and distance meant the ques were useless for the Alpha. Suddenly Falkirk frowned and anger flashed in his green eyes, “My god James, you're at a parade rest stance! Are you even comprehending what I’m trying to tell you!”

“Yes...”

“Was there meant to be a sir or M at the end of that James? This is not a debriefing, we are discussing your son. Can you do anything but be a brick wall when your emotions are concerned!”

James crushed down on his emotions, and stared out directly ahead. “No...”

“No, Sir?” Falkirk wiped his face. “Fine, you're in toy soldier mode we'll deal with it that way. I have spoken with Azlan, I have invited him for a visit so you will encourage this. We will come visit some time too. Azlan is part of the family, his mother and brother too. It's time they were treated as such.”

"Yes..." James responded. His emotions shutting down under his iron will.

Falkirk sighed and shook his head. James noticed the omega coming towards him. Falkirk briefly touched his arm as he said, “I only had one emotion at that time. Relief! My Alpha came back..."
when I thought he was dead. That was all I ever cared about.”

James watched the omega move on, heading for the house. There was a note in the wake of his passing, a sour smell of grief. No spicy note of anger. As soon as James noticed it the dusty arid wind had ripped the que away.

Returning to the house, James stood at the kitchen door. He watched Falkirk shake Azlan's delicate hand, the omega then shook the hand of Adja. The three followed Falkirk to the front door where he waved to them and got inside a mini-bus with the other members of his Tactical Squad.

James scrubbed his hair as he turned away. Going back to the kitchen he paused before pulling the fridge door open. Stuck by a magnet to the door was a photo of himself and Azlan from last summer when they went mountain climbing. Pulling open the fridge he took out a beer, and popped the cap against the counter.

“Use the bottle opener!” Adja snapped at him.

Ignoring her, James shouted, “Azlan?”

The gangly teen appeared at the archway. James jerked his head towards the back door, expecting the boy to follow.

Sitting on the back doorstep, James was joined by his son. James said, “Were there strangers? I don't mean Falkirk or the ones with him.”

The boy's round face, another inherited feature from James turned to him. Azlan nodded, “Two. They didn't follow us back.”

“There's a good chance they were here to hurt you, because of me. Falkirk saved you.”

“So I should be grateful?” Azlan letting some of his anger seep into his words.

Falkirk's words rang in James' ears. It could be so easy for his son to misinterpret events and lay blame on the wrong person. He shook his head, “Do you hate Falkirk?”

Azlan nodded.

“Shit! I hate it when he's right,” James chugged a mouthful wishing it was something stronger than beer. “Its me! Understand!”

Azlan shook his head, still hugging his pulled up legs. James noticed how closed off the boy was, “You remind me of me. I never wanted a family, or omega or wife any of it. I got saddled with it all.”

Taking another swig, James ruffled his son's hair, “Best advice I can give you, don't listen to me and try not to be like me.”

Looking to the boy, James forced himself to confront this. He asked, “Do you want to meet your other brother?”

Azlan answered with a shrug and looked away. James really wished he had something stronger to drink for dealing with this. James said, “I do... care for you. If you want to meet Andrew and the others you can. Falkirk's going to tell everyone about you...”

James saw his son cringe, he took a swig of the beer. On some level he knew Alzan realised he had
been a mistake. James blasted, “Would you shout, punch me, something! I'm the arsehole in this situation!”

The teen stood an walked away. Just like James wanted to do.

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Arriving home, Hudson pulled the door open for him. Falkirk thanked the butler as he entered.

“I shouldn't be surprised you're up,” Falkirk said.

“Of course sir,” Hudson responded, closing and locking the door. “I'm not the only one.”

The older Alpha nodded towards the lounge door. Falkirk didn't need to go, Rupert came to the door the moment he heard their voices. The boy's dark eyes scanned Falkirk up and down.

“I'm quite safe,” Falkirk said. Holding out his arms and turning around, letting Rupert see him. Looking back to the unimpressed boy, “What's wrong?”

“A team takes us out of School. Uncle Keading started talking to us like we're five years old, all high and excited while ignoring everything going on. Aunt Selene, Uncle Alec and Daniel all asked if we've spoken to you. And there was a murder at the Foreign Office.”

Falkirk lifted his arm and gestured for Rupert to come closer. Hugging his son, Falkirk entered the library. Pressing his head to Rupert's, “It was personal.”

Making sure they were alone, Falkirk said, “James has another son who was in a bit of trouble.”

Rupert stood back to look at him. “Really?”

Falkirk nodded and sat on the settee by the fire. Patting the space beside him he invited Rupert to sit too.

“Why are you telling me?” Rupert asking while joining his papa.

“Because James doesn't do emotion.”

“I thought he was quite good...”

Falkirk sighed and scrubbed his own face. He said, “James is better with other people's emotions. James did do the right thing when he found out a woman who saved had a child to him. He supported them and even visited as often as he could. But I let him bury his head in the sand on the matter, I let him live in two worlds that didn't cross until now.”

“Is he...” Rupert hesitated, giving a waving gesture unwilling to say the words.

“No,” Falkirk answered. “James and Adja are not involved. It was for Azlan James maintained contact.”

Falkirk paused a moment he didn't want to go too in depth with his son. He did see the small smile Rupert hid, Falkirk seeing something character defining in Rupert. He respected James for not abandoning his son, despite keeping it a secret.

Taking Rupert's hand Falkirk said, “I'm sure Andrew might blow up a bit. He's been lied to for his whole life, so I see James and I taking the brunt of his anger. When we do tell him, we want someone who's more emotionally mature.”
“That's me? Emotionally Mature?”

Falkirk nodded. “One of the most in the house. Third most, possible second most, higher than James lower than Hudson.”

Getting a small smile for the weak attempt at a joke, Falkirk pulled Rupert close to kiss his forehead. “I'm back, James will be back in a few days. It's late, Goodnight!”

“Night,” Rupert said. He headed for the door.

“Wait!” Falkirk called. “What killing were you talking about?”

“The one that's all over the news. They say the Foreign Secretary and Home Secretary were there. I even saw Uncle Alec in the back ground of the news report.”
“All I wanted was to go home, and go to sleep after a long day with two *fucking* flights. But nooo! I have to go deal with,” Falkirk pushed open the heavy metal door, “WHAT ARE YOU DOING!”

The standing girl jumped and looked at him. At her feet was a person with hood over their head tied to a chair which was laying on its back. A suddenly bashful Interrogation guard near the prisoner's head subtly hid the half empty bucket of water behind his back.

Going over to the chair, with the back rest against the floor and the prisoner's arms tied down the sides. The Prisoner's legs tied to the front legs. Lifting off the hood Falkirk frowned I confusion, “That's not, Devon... Derek.... Daniel! DANNY!”

“M?” the man on the floor gasped and choked a bit. Falkirk grabbed the back of the chair and lifted, tilting it back up until it was on its four legs again.

Falkirk snapped his finger and pointed to the prisoner's arms, the guard with the bucket jumped to untie the prisoner. Taking out a handkerchief Falkirk dabbed at the man's damp face. Long and sagging something about his gaunt features were familiar. The usually piercing eyes were red and bulged slightly.

“Vice Admiral Sir Christoph Waltzer?” Falkirk asked beginning to recognise the older gentleman.

“Yes, M,” Christoph rasped in a rough voice. “Would you kindly tell me what I am supposed to have done.”

“I'll speak to all of you in my office,” Falkirk turned from the Trustee to glare at Alice. “Get him cleaned up and take him to my office.”

“M,” Alice responded. Then joined the guard to release the prisoner.

Stopping at the door, Falkirk looked back, “Were is Danny and the other one?”

“Prison, M,” Alice said. “Given their service history they would be resistant to acceptable, grey area, enhanced interrogation techniques...”

“Acceptable! Grey Area!” the retired Admiral blasted. “That was torture!”

“Just a little water boarding,” Alice said with a confused frown.

The older man loomed over the girl, his alpha pheromones not so strong under the ques of his own fear. “Maybe if you had experienced it, you would consider it torture.”

“I have,” Alice said to the taller man, letting her eyes go glassy and staring. “My instructor insisted I know what something felt like before I leaned to inflict it.”
“M!” blasted Christoph. “You tortured this girl?”

Falkirk shook his head, “Alice came to us fully trained and experienced.”

M left, Alice turned to the older man, and smiled. “I am grateful to M. He gave me a new life. I'd do anything for him... or to anyone who hurts him and threatens my new life.”

The Alpha backed up, not noticing the MI6 guard backing up with him. Christoph accused, “Madam, you are a lunatic!”

“Thank you,” Alice replied, opening the door, “This way please.”

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Soft and reassuring, the deep gravelly voice called, “Rufus, how are you.”

The blond sitting in the cell looked up, “I'm fine!”

“Butler!” came the voice of a woman from the row of cells across from Rufus'. “Stop pestering the boy.”

Rufus was surprised there wasn't a raising inflection at the end of the last word making it, boi. Yes he was 'sensitive' as people liked to say but was an alpha, he wished he was treated like it by his fellow trustees.

“Victoria,” Butler said. “You know, not everyone is fit for the front lines.”

Not a proud moment, Rufus let his anger get the better of him and shouted like a teenager, “SHUT UP THE BOTH OF YOU! OR I'LL TAKE A LEAF OUT OF M'S BOOK, MRS SIMONOVA!”

“Simonov, I know that name,” Butler said.

“Don't worry about it,” M said striding down between the row of glass fronted cells. Passing Rufus' he said, “Nice one. Always play to your own strengths.”

Rufus watched M stop at the cell across from Rufus's and one down. Victoria came to the glass, a deep scowl marring her face. She demanded, “Did you tell him?”

Falkirk shook his head, “Rufus in 'A', the Archivist of MI6. I dread to think what's in his head. Now why didn't you know about a Loyalty Exercise being conducted by one 'Geoffrey Dromgoole’?”

“I heard about it today- yesterday now given the time, from Rufus first, then Butler,” Victoria answered with an air of annoyance. “Then two men busting in, guns blazing and...”

“The only time I met Geoffrey Dromgoole was with the trustees. To do with Stuart Thomas.”

“First time we met him too,” Victoria said. Falkirk looked over his shoulder, Rufus nodded in confirmation.

“I shall be extending the benefit of the doubt,” Falkirk said. “This is a conditional offer though. There will be trouble ahead, I expect the same support and trust I have shown.”

Victoria gave a single nod in answer. Turning away, Falkirk headed back down the corridor of MI6's Brig. Called to a stop as he walked passed Butlers cell he looked to the Deputy Director.

Butler said, “Could I have a word with Q.”
“After me,” Falkirk said and called to the prison guards, “Release them.”

“Been having fun,” Falkirk said pushing open the heavy glass doors to Daniel's office.

“WHERE THE HELL DID YOU BUGGER OFF TO!”

“Classified,” Falkirk said going round the deck beside the bigger Alpha. Pulling open the bottom drawer, he found a change of clothing and a bottle of fine Scottish whisky. He pulled out the wooden top with the cork stopper. Pouring some into Daniel's empty coffee mug Falkirk took it and sipped some of the cask strength A'bunadh.

“Bad?” Daniel asked, watching Falkirk settle into the chair across from him.

“Aye!” Falkirk said. “They knew just where to hit James.”

“I did hear the message: M says we are doing this of our own free will. A most emphatic point laddie, turning the turners.”

Looking round, “Alec not about?”

Daniel shook his head, “One of us have to be there for Yulian.”

“Spill it Laddie, I see ya want te,” Daniel said pitching his voice soft and more rolling than usual.

“It's for James to say,” Falkirk said. Putting the mug down and standing, “I think Butler wants to kill you.”

“It's just bit of dick swinging,” Daniel dismissed. “He dug the popper out his neck five minuets after we let him go. If he was really man he would have turned on me then. He wanted to know what was going on as much as us.”

There was a dull pining knock on the glass. Tanner like everyone else still dressed in yesterday's suit, pushed it open, “M, Double O Three has reached Austria. He thinks your presence will be necessary.”

“Shit! Shit! Shit!”

Daniel asked, “I take it that was where Bond was meant to be?”

Falkirk nodded. “Tanner, get Mycroft and Mallory out of bed. I want them to start applying pressure to the government. The Home Secretary and Foreign Secretary have interfered in a major investigation. I want them terrified of what could happen to them.”

“Yes, M.” Tanner responded and ran to fulfil the orders.

“You will save James from anything,” Daniel said.

Falkirk nodded, “One more stop before I have to get on another fucking plane.”

Standing at a nice tower block of executive flats with building wide balconies, many big enough to have flowers and greenery. Falkirk looked at the panel by the security door, finding 'Denbigh' he pressed it. Then pressed it again, and again.
The little screen lit with a face, eyes being forced open, “Wha’!”

“It’s M, I’d like to talk to you.”

“Oh, then do come in... fuc-” the screen went blank cutting off Denbigh mid complaining insult. The Glass security door buzzed and Falkirk pushed it open. The door on the fourth floor was open in invitation, inside the flat he found Denbigh in an Everton dressing gown, heavy eyed and poring hot water into a French press.

“You didn't have to make coffee,” Falkirk said looking at the man at the large island counter that seemed to be the entire kitchen.

“Not offering,” Denbigh said, pouring only one cup. “Why am I not asleep?”

“I think I owe you a thanks.”

“Woo-hoo! M survived....” Denbigh turned his little dark eyes on him. “Ah, the Murder just over there?”

Falkirk looked out the wall made of glass looking out over Westminster Palace. He thought Denbigh was actually pointing to the Foreign Officer a bit further back from the river and to their right, out of view.

Falkirk only hummed in response. He then said, “So you have earned one favour, care to earn another.”

“Favours, I didn't think you knew how to do them,” Denbigh looking him up and down like bug. “I'm listening.”

“Just stand with us. Say what you said in my office when the time comes. That you followed a legitimate order from the Home Secretary and later learned it could lead to compromising National Security so had to inform me.”

“You want me to publicly admit to disobeying an order,” Denbigh paced a bit, he sipped from Hydra mug with the curling octopus picture on it. Falkirk seeing the Marvel trade mark on the bottom when Denbigh threw back the last of the coffee in it. Denbigh said, “Three favours, one to be fulfilled now.”

“I'm leaving for Austria now,” Falkirk pointed out.

“Not this exact second! I want access to your network.”

“You have GCHQ,” Falkirk pointed out.

“No no-no-no Noooo,” Denbigh sang. “Your network. The one you've been building since you were called Archimedes. The one that spans out like a spider's web, into every dark and distant corner of the internet, no matter how secure.”

Falkirk stopped from saying his first thought, mostly a string of very naughty words and calling Denbigh every type of stoopid he could think of, followed by calling in a special favour. Having been silent for a moment to gather himself he said, “There may be a possibility, the technicalities would have to be ironed out.”

“Iron quickly,” Denbigh said going to the door. He pulled it open, “My memory is quite bad after all, I wouldn't want to forget what I said when the time comes for me to speak.”
Stepping though the door. Falkirk waited until he was in the car before he started swearing. He thought about having the twat shot, but to confront the government it would look better if He, Mallory and Denbigh were a unified front.

"Ah shit! I was meant to see the trustees in my office..." Tapping out a message for Tanner to deal with the Trustees, to the driver Falkirk said, “London City Airport, again.”
Falkirk ducked his head so he could look up through the car window to see the portcullis they were passing under. Beside him, Tanner was telling him that the castle was owned by shell company. Who owned the shell company was still being investigated.

The long executive Mercedes circled round the large courtyard, and pulled to a stop near the steps up to the arched double doors. From the dark Gothic building a lean man, with dusky skin and neat short bared trotted down the steps. He reached the car just as the rear door opened and Falkirk stood.

“Double O Three,” Falkirk greeted, while looking to the ramparts where patrolled men in black uniforms of a militaristic style. The Austrian police baring a striking resemblance to MI6's tactical squads.

“M,” Dawes responded. “I wasn't sure what to do when I saw the letter. It's addressed to you. So I kept the locals away and called you.”

“Letter?” Falkirk asked. Following the Double O in, seeing more police securing the castle.

“I found it in there, I'm pretty sure you were meant to see it in its setting, M,” Dawes said leading them into an anti room, a set of stair cases either side, and a double doors directly ahead. Four police stood at the corners, on guard, their eyes tracked them while remaining ramrod straight.

Falkirk entered the great hall beyond the anti chamber. Spotlights shone from the dark ceiling, no windows or other natural light sources in the room. An overlooking mezzanine level above them. Two rows of chairs faced the aisle up the middle of the great hall. The central aisle led to a desk and throne like chair at the rear. All very dramatic and villainous.

All the chairs at ground level and what Falkirk could see of the overlooking balcony were occupied. He would have to walk passed an audience of the dead, their unseeing eyes watching him head for the the desk at the rear.

Tanner broke from Falkirk's side to approach the body of a heavy set man sitting slumped in the high backed wooden chair. An execution shot to the temple, just where his silver hair was receding. No exit wound and with scorching near the entrance wound an indication of a close shot by a low calibre gun. Tanner looked to Falkirk, “This is Don Falcone. New York Mafia.”

Tanner moved to the next chair, identical cause of death for tall Asian man. “Sao Feng, Shanghai Triad.”

“Mistress Ching,” Falkirk said, pointing at the round faced woman slumped in the next chair along. “Responsible for every woman, girl and boi trafficked from the far east to Europe for the sex trade.”
Dawes pointed up to spot on the balcony, “Oswald Good, AKA the Penguin is up there.”

“Where's the empty chair,” Falkirk asked.

“The big one,” Dawes said pointing to the one at the rear of the room. Then swinging his finger to the balcony opposite of the penguin, “Up there is the only other one not occupied.”

Falkirk chose to ignore Tanner confirming with Dawes the empty chair up on the mezzanine was James’

Falkirk continued on to the desk. A single piece of ivory paper sat on it, covered in cursive script in the thick blue ink of a fountain pen. Coming round the desk he sat in the large very upright chair, more ornate an larger than the one he himself used at MI6. The soft leather cushion rather more comfortable than the chair back in his own office though, which was just hard wood.

Clasping his hands, he leaned his forearms against the edge of the desk to read the letter.

Dearest M,
How fortunate am I?
I can't imagine many can say they survived thee James Bond 007.
I do wonder what could have happened to have Bond running off so fast.
No matter. I see I must be more careful from now on.
Yours Sincerely,
Until we meet again,
Number One.

With a flick of his wrist Falkirk threw down the letter. Shifting back in the chair, he crossed his legs and rested against the hard back. His elbows Falkirk wedged on the arm rests so he could steeple his fingertips over his lap. He surveyed the hall with two rows of chairs facing each other. While contemplating the disaster of a mission, he noticed he was on a plinth so he was higher than the other chairs.

Dawes observed, “You look unusually comfortable there, M. The scowl really sells it.”

Falkirk just hummed in answer. He looked to Tanner who was a bit more nervous standing in a hall of the dead. His green eyes then slipped to the heavy older man sitting slumped in a chair on Falkirk's right.

“Tanner, contact our friends in the Mafia. I have a sinking feeling the Falcone Family won't exist much longer.”

“Already done, M. I made contact the moment I saw Don Falkone. I'm waiting to hear back,” Tanner passed the front row of chairs, to stand by a short round man, with sagging round face. “His name is Herr Engelbert von Smallhausen. He owns the castle. Legitimately he's a property mogul, with vast land wealth. He own seaports, offices, farms, mines... until this there was no hint of criminality on the scale of SPECTRE.”
“Sounds a useful person though,” Falkirk said. “Do I need to ask you to find out who inherits all that?”

“Three sons, being investigated as we speak,” Tanner said then looked to his phone in response to a beep, looking up he said, “Don Falcone's son was killed in a drive by four hours ago. His Daughter is fleeing to South America. There is gang warfare.”

“Start searching for the rivals, natural successors and next best at what they do for everyone in this room,” Falkirk said. “I have a feeling SPECTRE will be on a recruitment drive.”

Tanner responded it was already being done. An excellent chief of staff, able to anticipate Falkirk at every turn.

Standing, Falkirk took the letter with him as he left. For the flight, and the rest of the day he slowly got report after report. Organisations, even ones not known to be affiliated with SPECTRE were in trouble. Being destroyed by enemies. Tearing themselves apart from a sudden power vacuum and subordinator wanting to be the new boss.

Exhausted, in the car home his greatest desire was for some uninterrupted sleep, Falkirk's phone rang. 'Ryan, J' flashing on the screen. Forcing out the mewling whine from his voice, Falkirk was a bit sharp as he snapped, “Jack?”

A bit annoyed, Ryan said, “I hear a Double O screwed up the SPECTRE Operation?”

Falkirk had to stop himself from blowing his top, this wasn't Ryan's fault. He said, “There was political interference on our end.”

“M, that's an excuse...”

“Mister Ryan,” the line went silent on Ryan's end, realising M was not in the best of moods. “I am explaining the situation, not excusing it. If you don't want to hear that's fine. If you've phoned just to give me into trouble, I've been up for about three days now so I'm not in the fucking mood. Now you were saying, politely, despite your justifiable anger?”

“The CIA... requests all material related to SPECTRE. We will be taking the lead from now on.”

“You'll have it by tomorrow,” Falkirk said. “MI6 will assist in any way possible. Happy Hunting.”

“Yes, M. Thank you for cooperating,” the nervous man said and hung up.

Falkirk made his phone calls, Tanner being the main one. All material and evidence was to be packed up for shipment to the CIA. At this point it was a relief to dump it all in someone else's lap.

Arriving home, Falkirk heard Rupert and Andrew arguing upstairs, with a slammed door for emphasis. He didn't think Rupert had spilled the beans, there had been an, “I was just borrowing it!” from Rupert. And a “Stay out of my room” from Andrew with the slamming door as the punctuation mark of the sentence.

Carrying on into his library, Falkirk picked up the slim chrome lighter from his desk drawer. Taking out the letter naming James Bond as the Double O who abandoned the mission he lit the bottom corner, letting the orange flame spread up and over the page. He'd already told Tanner to redact James' name and service number from all material. Reaching into the fireplace, Falkirk let go as the flame neared his fingers, letting the final flame blacken and consume the paper.
This chapter is a bit shorter than usual. A few hits at spoilers follow but it might help clarify something. I was worried things are getting confused, so I've decided to try and separate Spectre from The Loyalty Exercise over the next couple chapters. There were some crossover between the two events, but I'm trying to clarify Spectre knew of and was using the Loyalty Exercise to protect itself but wasn't responsible for it. Hopefully over the next chapters I can show this rather than just tell you as we follow Falkirk working things out in the aftermath.
The grey Land Rover tuned off the road leading to Vauxhall Bridge. Everyone in the know, knew this street was as much a part of MI6 as the building on the far side of the bridge. The car followed the steep downward gradient and bend of the entrance into what was labelled a car park. The car was plunged into darkness as the road became a tight box tunnel not much bigger than the car.

Sitting beside his driver, the dark eyed man was on tenterhooks. The tunnel widened at the dead end. The high boxy Land Rover pulled in beside a lower, sleeker and longer Jaguar saloon.

“Sir,” said the driver. “You want me to come in?”

“I think not,” Denbigh said to his diver/bodyguard. “If M wants me dead there won't be anything to stop him. No point risking your life needlessly. Just swear bloody vengeance on everyone if I don't come back.”

“Will do, Sir!”

Denbigh flung open his door and stepped out of his car. Only M's driver was in the saloon, and because MI6 was the more prestigious M got two police outriders too. The two motorcycles had their officers sitting on them, close enough to talk to each other while they waited on M.

They paid him no notice while going to the metal door, the only way out of the dead end other than going back along the box tunnel. Denbigh hammered the door and with a deep clunk from inside it was pulled open. He was welcomed by a guard, dressed in all black combat gear and armed with the preferred firearm of MI6's guards, an M4A1 Carbine held close to his chest.

With a nodding gesture, the guard indicated the other end of the corridor. With only one way to go, Denbigh started walking. MI6's old war bunker was... well exactly like how Denbigh imagined an old disused bunker that was part of the tube network to look like. A few squeaks in the dark shadows and the occasional scuttling of an arched back rat just to top things off.

Emerging into a better lit open area. An office on what appeared to be the old platform looking down on him with a glass wall to give it some privacy. Desks and chairs, even some papers still occupied the makeshift E-Branch.

“This way, please,” M called.

Denbigh joined M at the rear of the fall back E-Branch where M opened a metal door into a tiled room. Sitting in the centre of the stark tiled room, a single army-green, arcade style cabinet with a metal stool in front of it. Denbigh approached the steel cabinet from the fifties. On the cabinet's flat shelf, a keyboard of thick protruding keys stuck up through the sheet metal of the shelf. A CRT Monitor set at a slope in front of the keyboard, with a hood to block the fluorescent lights to make it easier to see the screen.
“Is this a joke?” Denbigh asked. “A cold war surplus dumb terminal?”

“Yes,” M said seriously. “My networks are dangerous. I trust me with them, no one else. This is the only way I will let you have access to them.”

A bit annoyed by the 'kiddy table' and showing it, Denbigh demanded, “Does it at least access your networks in real time.”

“I don't have a network as you seem to understand it,” M said. Sitting on the small stool, he tapped the 'Query' key, it giving a deep click sound. He then used the thick keys, making a mechanical clunking sound to type out, 'Denbigh, M' and hit the 'Return' key.

The green screen flickered, the blinking cursor strobe across the screen filling it with dark green text on the lighter green background. A dozen Denbigh, M appeared with date of birth, address and occupation. Denbigh seeing he was the third one listed.

“The power in my system,” said M, “Is not the network but my Database Indices and heuristics. For example, there's no point searching criminal records when I suspect the target is military. No point searching American personnel when I suspect my target is British. I have developed thousands of shortcuts by now. Only when I select the record is the most current data automatically retrieved from the source server. In most cases I only hack to set myself up a username and password with remote access privileges, then subsequently access networks and systems just any legitimate user would. This terminal will give you full DML capabilities.”

“Let me try,” Denbigh said. Replacing M at the terminal he went for something, a test. A piece of information he himself had planted when first called. Typing in Lucia Sciarra, amongst the records returned there was one for an address in Italy. Having to use the arrow keys he navigated to the record he wanted and tapped return to bring it up. He said, “The interface is very cumbersome.”

“Less chance of a mistake being made,” M said. “And forcing you to take your time will make you less likely to execute frivolous queries.”

Denbigh smiled, there it was. Just a small inconsequential transaction in Lucia Sciarra's bank records. For an account that wasn't officially hers. It proved the information was live, the transaction having been done only two hours ago. Now came for another test, Denbigh exited back to the main screen, where the cursor blinked out as he typed, 'M C L A I R, T H O M A S'

M made a huffing sound behind him. There was a record, Date of Birth 1989, London address, Director of SIS(MI6). Navigating to the record, Denbigh brought it up.

Names
McLair, Thomas(1989-1994)
Bond, Falkirk(2004-Present)

Known Aliases/Titles
M(MI6 Title Designation)
Q(MI6 Title Designation)
McLair, Thomas(MI6 Professional Cover Name)
Archimedes(MI5 Intelligence Source)
The Omega(NYPD/FBI Criminal Alias)

Coming the a stop at that one, Denbigh looked to M. The omega snapping. “Don't look so happy, Director.”
“What do the NYPD want with you?” Denbigh asked. M reached round him to tap the down arrow until it was beside the 'The Omega' alias and pressed the return key. A wrap sheet appeared, Denbigh's eyes going wide, Murder, Racketeering, Prostitution...

Denbigh looked up at the omega, “Prostitution?”

“Not personally,” M said. “I took over some brothels from a minor crime lord. Now is this sufficient.”

“I suppose,” Denbigh said. His annoyed tone at odds with the smile on his face.

“Then have fun,” M said. “We will be calling in the Prime Minister and The Foreign Secretary and Home Secretary on Sunday, so if things go bad we can hit the Monday Morning papers with a smear campaign.”

“I'll be there, on your side,” Denbigh said. Focusing on the screen and his new favourite toy.

“As I said,” M warned. “You can execute full Data Manipulation Language. You can read, write and edit all records. I implore you not to write or edit the records without telling me. Changes need to be more than just surface alterations for them to pass without scrutiny, and there are usually redundant and corresponding records held in other systems and databases that will also need to be altered.”

“Yes-yes, I'm not some geriatric idiot with their first I-pad,” Denbigh said absently. Spinning on the stool to look at M, “Can I have a printer.”

M pointed to the rear wall, “There. Ribbon and paper are your responsibility. We haven't been able to find a supplier.”

Denbigh stood and looked round the bulky steep cabinet. On a small table against the wall sat a very old printer, the type with a carriage that uses Daisy wheel and hammer, like an electric typewriter. A missing Ink ribbon between the wheel and the roller for the paper. Denbigh noticed the cogs on the roller at either side, for the type of (old)printer paper with holes at the edge. Looking behind the printer sitting on the table, Denbigh saw an armoured cable for data and power which went into the wall.

“Well M you're not making this easy,” Denbigh looked round to find the omega was gone. Nor was M in the adjoining E-Branch. Only an MI6 Guard stood at the door to the Computer Terminal room.

Denbigh went back to the Terminal. On a hunch he pulled out his mobile, confirming there was no signal and when he tried to take a photo of the screen the camera couldn't cope with the scanning lines of the monitor so only got a strobing on his screen. Putting his mobile back, he started to really test what he could access with this antiquated heap of junk.

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Opening the wide panelled door, the dark haired woman stepped into the dimly lit conference room. Coming to a halt, her dark eyes looking over the empty chair around the large round table with desk lamps at each place to highlight a leather blotter. The door swung closed behind her, taking with it the only natural light in the windowless room. The lamps on the table became the only light, a deep ring of darkness surrounded the periphery of the room.

“Hello?” the woman called cautiously.
“You are not alone, Miss Elbaz,” assured a soft voice. The silver fox, Sir James stepped closer to the table from a very dark corner. Still mostly in shadow he spoke, “By rights I shouldn't be here though. I was resolutely expelled from this little conspiracy after my fall from grace. I couldn't be so rude as to leave you to an empty room though.”

“What is going on?” the dark haired woman demanded. “I heard about Geoffrey Dromgoole.”

Sir James placed his hand on one of the low backed leather chairs, reverently, “Ah yes. Good old Geoffrey, he was loyal to the plane right up to the... his end.” Moving his hand to one chair then the another as he walked around the table, “His most loyal turned in a matter of moments, such is the power of M. Everyone else decided to retire, or go into hiding to wait and see if M comes after them or not and return if it's safe.”

Standing in front of Elbaz, Sir James said, “I remember when this room was full. All of us eager to get rid of M all for our own reasons. Some didn't like him, for a few it was the power he held and yes some didn't like his sex. Geoffrey, he was simple he wanted M's job. Me, I wanted to save myself. Why should I not! My god who cares about some plebeian reprobate scum and bastards that their own parents didn't want. I was doing my duty protecting the country! Good honourable men, who worked hard and served this nation. What did it matter if they exercised their power over some... nothings that no one cared about or wanted. But no, Sir Thomas had to give that bunch of scum a voice and I was to pay the price, the publicly pilloried scapegoat.”

The agitated Sir James paced. Waving to the empty table, “Well my esteemed friends were all too willing to throw me under the bus in the end. I was pushed to some humiliating post in an inconsequential department until my retirement...” Sir James stopped and looked back to the woman, “Now, I'm the only one still standing. The only one not fearing for my life.”

“So you're not going to continue,” the woman demanded.

“Miss Elbaz, have you heard of a substance, Red Mercury?” Sir James saw the woman's long face go cool and her eyes harden. “Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned?”

“The devices are fake!” Elbaz insisted.

“I know you saw one of those devices explode. I know that of the devices found, the viability is in question. One was a fully functional device yet was filled with only red dyed water. Another had genuine Red Mercury but didn't have a functioning detonator. In short Ms Elbaz no one knows the truth because M is playing game with all of us. What we do know is M is psychotic and controls those things,” Sir James said. “You didn't tell us about Red Mercury. Is it not why even the most radical elements in your own government vetoed your plan, even after M killed your lover with one of those devices. Everyone views M as too dangerous to provoke, even your own people which is the real reason you're a pariah and played us for fools.”

Turning on her heels, Elbaz grasped the door handle. She stopped to glance back at the older man, “You hate M. Why aren't you continuing, and don't give me Red Mercury Bullshit!”

A sly smile formed on Sir James' face, “That question can only be answered if you're willing to set aside your vengeance.”

“Never,” Elbaz answered and ripped the door open, slamming it closed behind her.

“A shame,” said a soft voice from the deep darkness in the corner. Denbigh stepped into the narrow band of light near the table. “She had so much promise.”
Denbigh placed a hand on the same chair as Sir James had, “Goodbye Geoffrey, you didn't know it but you were useful. For that you will have our gratitude.”

“Spectre is no longer the responsibility of MI6?” Sir James asked.

“No,” Said Denbigh. “Number 1 and Number 2 won't have to be so careful, no one at the CIA remembers them. And soon what records there are on them will be inaccurate even to M.”

“Won't it be dangerous to use M's... thing?”

“Of course it will,” said Denbigh getting a bit frustrated with the old man. “It will however, tell us what M could potentially look up. We will then change what he looks up so if he ever does it will come back with the wrong information.”

Denbigh opened the door, silently cursing pompous old man who could only schmooze for a living and didn't know their arse from their elbow. It really was no wonder M could run rings round them, they truly didn't know how the elements of the real world worked yet tried to control them.

Chapter End Notes

I hope I got the dates somewhat right, forgive me if they're wrong. Given the continuity issues with a work this size I try to keep dates abstract. I remember I set the start of Falkirk's story a year or two before Casino Royal, when he was fifteen. I did my sums from there.
The cabinet room of No.10 Downing Street held a wide oval table. The Prime Minister Charles Flyte sat in his usual place halfway down one side of the table, behind him a fireplace with a mirror above. Falkirk sat directly across from the rectangular faced Prime Minister, cool green eyes holding dark brown in a mutual gaze. To Falkirk's right was Mallory, and across from C of MI5 was the Home Secretary, Felix Durrell. To Falkirk's left was Max Denbigh, and across from him was Falkirk's boss John Hodder the Foreign Secretary. Two armies, with a battle line dawn and the balance of power going round in a circle made the atmosphere tense.

Sitting a few spaces down on the political side of the table, the Deputy Prime Minister, Tom Dawkins. Around the room were others, like Tanner behind Falkirk, while Mycroft stood with a group of Civil Servants near the end of the room were double doors led to the Prime Minister's personal office.

“Here is the order from Felix Durrell ordering me to compromise MI6's communication system with its operatives,” Denbigh said sliding a single piece of paper to the Prime Minister. “Deeply troubled by this order, I complied but also informed M. I was unwilling to be held liable should something go wrong.”

“Something did go wrong,” Mallory spoke, in a pointed move to distract and divide attention. Addressing his and Denbigh's boss he said, “For what reason did you issue this order.”

“I was advised M was a threat to the country and a 'Loyalty Exercise' was necessary,” the youngest of the politicians said. Rather handsome with a dark eyes and hair, and complexion of a possible dusky Mediterranean heritage, and a bit dopey like a puppy. Falkirk got an impression of a young Lestrade from him.

Mallory demanded, “By whom, minister?”

“Well my permanent Secretary and Geoffrey Dromgoole,” said Durrell. He glanced to an older man standing near Mycroft. With an unsympathetic look the Civil Servant threw his boss under the bus by saying, “I certainly introduced the Minister and Mr Dromgoole, what they discussed I am not aware. I believe I left the room for the meeting. I may have learned later what was said, only via hearsay though.”

What Civil Servants decided they knew and didn't know was contradictory and a twisted piece of logic that Falkirk had never been able to fathom. In short they were snakes.

“Minister,” said Mallory to his boss, “Geoffrey Dromgoole was a... a... how best to describe him?”

Denbigh said, “A Civil Servant, emphasis on the Servant. A known employee of the Government, but with no real title, position or power so anything he did could be officially condemned as someone reaching above his station if something went wrong.”
“Like Mycroft?” Falkirk said. His Brother gave him a cool look in response.

“In other words Minister,” said Mallory drawing attention to him. “Geoffrey Dromgoole could not give you advice on security matters. Did you confirm his suspicions or concerns with anyone?”

Falkirk let Denbigh and Mallory continue to attack Durrell in calm and pointed statements. When he thought Felix Durrell was where they needed him, Falkirk looked to his own boss, the tall and slim Alpha, John Hodder. A rather intimidating man who spoke softly. He reminded Falkirk of Urquhart in a way, but not quite the psychopath though.

“Mister Hodder,” Falkirk said, he had been given leave to use first name but in times like this using Mister gave him an edge, especially when he enunciated just right, like a parent or teacher would. “One of the key events of this Loyalty Exercise was a series of murders that one of my Double Os was complicit in. When this information was brought to my attention, you were in attendance. What did you know?”

“Just as much as you, M,” a sort of languid ease to the Alpha's posture and words.

Falkirk hummed, then said, “You are aware that that my Double Os were attacked as part of this Loyalty Exercise. The Grandmother of one was murdered. Stuart Thomas was targeted by an Alpha with the intent to draw him into the serial murders being committed by Dr. Daniel Harrow.”

“No I was not aware,” Hodder said, still calm and collected. “I was just told to attend the meeting of the Trustees, in the event you should fail to act.”

“Quite frankly I don't believe you, however proof is lacking, Foreign Secretary,” Falkirk said. Shuffling his papers he checked them over as he said, “Because of your collective interference, the leader of what we believe to be the biggest Criminal Organisation to exist since Sixties has evaded capture. Because of our utter failure, we have been humiliated in front of our allies and enemies. From us having the lead in the SPECTRE investigation with cooperation from other agencies, the CIA are now in charge with MI6 being designated a security risk so is only involved on a need-to-know bases. Quite frankly I deem your interference to be a threat to national security, even when lacking proof.”

The Prime Minister trying to be friendly and pally, “Going a bit far M?” A twinkle in the Alphas' dark eye like Falkirk would be flattered, “What's it going to take to sweep this under the carpet.”

“I will admit,” Falkirk said, bowing his head forward and giving his creepy smile. Not noticing Denbigh and Mallory doing something similar ether side of him. The three politicians sat up a bit straighter, the calm Hodder not looking so calm. “As I said, I will admit having Durrell and Hodder resign now would jeopardise our 'Lone bodyguard having a mental breakdown' story. So...”

Falkirk slid out blank sheets of paper, one each for Hodder and Durrell, two for the Prime Minister.

“I learned at my father's knee... that's figurative, I mean Francis Urquhart's.” Just invoking the dead man's name was enough to make the three Alphas cower. Falkirk said, “Mr Hodder, Mr Durrell, you will write and sign your letters of resignations, DO NOT date them. You will go as and when it is convenient to me. Prime Minister, you will write a statement accepting their resignations, WITHOUT DATING THEM. Understood?”

Denbigh said, “Now is not the time to be brave. Image is everything after all.”

“Press waiting,” Said Mallory. “Ready to capture the moment two of the most senior Secretaries of State are taken out of Downing Street in hand cuffs... That sounds familiar to me, I wonder where
from?"

Ignoring Mallory's staged confused frown, Falkirk added, “Every Monday Morning paper will be filled with the famous big black door and Hodder and Durrell in handcuffs. Will you or your government survive until Tuesday, Prime Minister? What will it look like if you then try to remove one or all of us from our posts? Especially when we start leaking stories about the murders of little old Grannies and helping a Serial Killer Doctors.”

One of the Civil Servants, a legal expert came forward. He leant in to the Prime Minister to whisper something in his ear. In response to the advice, The Prime Minister said, “Be good chaps and write your resignations. This could get a little sticky.”

Falkirk accepted the four pieces of paper back. Looking them over he judged them suitable.

“I say,” Denbigh said reaching out for the Home Secretary's letter. “Could I keep a hold of this for a bit.”

“Why?” Falkirk asked, curiously.

“Went a little over budget last year,” Denbigh said.

“Oh, Mister Denbigh,” Falkirk said with a bit of wryness.

“You can have it back after I publish GCHQ's budget report,” Denbigh said, slipping the resignation into a folder. The three stood, Mallory complaining he could use the letter, saying, “These politicians have no idea how much it costs to protect the country.”

The politicians just watched the three leave the room together, all still talking rather jovially. Mycroft clapped his hands loudly and everyone looked to him, “Excellent. You crossed M and unlike Geoffrey Dromgoole, you survived. I call that a good day by any standard.”

“He's a maniac!” the Prime Minister said.

“He is our Maniac, Prime Minister, please remember that,” Mycroft said. “I remind you too, you are Prime Minister because M wouldn't let others interfere in the election. Whether you know it or not, the respect we get comes out of the fear of M.”

Looking to the civil Servants pointedly, Mycroft added, “This plan was the height of silliness. It shall never happen again?”

The group of men and women shook their heads. Mycroft might not have his brother's bruit force approach, he was feared in his own right though.

“Good,” Mycroft said heading for the door. Giving a subtle reminder of M's reach, “It's so disappointing when I miss M's Sunday afternoon teas. It's the highlight of my week and the young Princess Victoria is coming on leaps and bounds.”

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Every Sunday the pack gathered at Falkirk's. The kids and most of the Alphas played outside, laser tag, target practice, wrestling. Subtle training in unarmed combat and armed combat with weapons that looked like toys. Usually followed by a kick-about, sometimes they went to the park for a cricket match. Today it had been rugby which was why Rupert was having a shower after rolling around in the mud.
For most of the day, Rupert had a girl following him around. He didn't mind Michelle following him, Luke too for the most part. He didn't know why the two omegas attached to him, it might have something to do with being the only other senior Alpha of their group to let them. Cody getting a bit annoyed when his boring younger brother and sister were about. Yulian and Andrew had similar attitudes of annoyance yet let Rosie play with them because the little blond girl was a scrapper unafraid to pounce on even Rupert or Cody, or Daniel.

Towelling the last of the dampness from his hair, Rupert headed down stairs. Rounding the landing in front of his papa's room and reaching the last flight of stairs he heard Hudson.

“...Yes? Mister Azlan Bond you say? Well Sir Thomas is not home...”

Rupert ran to the small landing where there was a right angle turn. Leaning over the railing with hand outstretched, “I'll take it!”

Hudson covered the mouthpiece of the corded phone, “The boy is not on the approved caller list.”

“I know, and tell Papa who's calling,” Rupert said. With some caution Hudson handed over the phone, having to deal with dozens of people trying to get through to Falkirk every day. He warned Rupert to be careful before releasing his grip on the handset.

“Hi,” Rupert said into the phone. Lifting the cord so the butler could duck under it. “I don't know if you know me, I'm Rupert.”

“Yes,” said the slightly flat accented, unsure voice on the other end. “You know me?”

“Azlan. I was told a few days ago,” Rupert said. “Is James there?”

“Yes.”

Hearing his Papa shouting from the library to transfer the call, Rupert jumped the banister so he could reach the base of the phone on the wall round the corner. Before Transferring the call he said, “Good speaking to you.”

“You too. Bye.”

Saying another bye, Rupert pressed the button to transfer the call to the Library's land line. Hudson appeared behind him, “I shall pretend I didn't see you vaulting the banister.”

“Like you do James and Andrew?” Rupert said.

Giving a nod in answer. Hudson then asked, “I take it this is a secret.”

Rupert looked around to make sure Andrew wasn't near. “Not for much longer.”

“Well I was told to add Mr Azlan Bond to the authorised caller list,” Hudson said. Programming the phone to recognise the number Azlan called from.

After a moment, Rupert said, “If Papa isn't here, you can tell him I'd like to talk to him.”

A frown came to the old alpha's face. “Of course Master Rupert.”

Falkirk climbed the first few steps to the small square landing where the stairs turned to carry on up to the first floor. “Oh, there you are. I'm going up to Skyfall for a few days.”

Rupert asked, “To see Azlan?”
Falkirk nodded then looked to the confused butler. He then looked around before turning back to Hudson. Pitching his voice low so it wouldn't carry, “Azlan is James' son. We, I have given him the choice to meet his family.”

“I don't see young master Andrew being to happy,” Hudson said.

“No, none of us do,” Falkirk said. He reached out to cup the back of Rupert's neck to pull him close and plant a kiss on Rupert's forehead.

"What was that for?" Rupert asked, being let go.

Turning away and heading up the stairs, Falkirk said, "Because you're sweeter than you know. Now I need to go pack. And Rupert, no parties! I'm not having you getting waisted again!"

“I come back drunk once!” Rupert whined. “I've not even had a shandy since!”

“It won't last,” Falkirk said disappearing into his room.

Rupert sulked with his arms crossed. “So unfair.”

“Yes it is,” Hudson said. “Anything special while your Papa is away?”

Shaking his head, “Let Andrew decide.”

Hudson moved off, to go to the living room. Where Andrew was most likely to be, Sunday evening traditionally used for vegging out in front of the TV watching brainless movies.
Where Loyalty Lies: Skyfall and thoughts

Chapter Notes

Thanks for reading comments and kudos.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Filling the kettle, Falkirk looked out the window over the rugged and barren land. There was a hardy beauty to Skyfall, were colours were muted, a splash of purple heather, or a cluster of yellow whins and some places lupins looking so stark and bright compared to anything else. It was so quiet too, every pack gathering brought so much noise and life to the old building. Always at least one argument going on somewhere with so many strong personality types. Falkirk wished he could say the arguments were confined to the kids, but bored consulting detectives, spies, soldiers, terrorists and assassins and those with rampant egos all stuffed together inside the four walls was a recipe for explosions, on one or two occasions literal ones.

Shutting off the tap, Falkirk took the kettle to the far side of the kitchen where he placed it on the gas stove. With the blue flame lit, he sat at the table in the centre to wait for the kettle to boil. The chipped brown teapot sat ready, beside the tea caddy and his mug.

“Oh!”

Falkirk looked up quickly, “Wait, join me please.”

The boy edged back into the room and sat at the far end of the long kitchen table. Falkirk noticed Azlan reach for his right shoulder and massage it a bit. Standing Falkirk went to a cupboard and pulled out a first aid box ant took out a tube of Deepheat, holding it out he said, “Old hats like Kincade and James don't notice the recoil any more.”

“Thank you,” Azlan said taking the tube and reading it.

“Well that's now three full generations,” Falkirk said. “Your Grandfather, your dad and Aunt, now you and Andrew. Kincade taught them all to shoot.”

“I have an Aunt?” The boy said reaching under his shirt to rub the ointment onto his shoulder.

Falkirk focused on making the tea as he said, “Yes, we don't see much of here. When I was being dragged to society functions I run across her from time to time. I don't think James maintains contact with her or his nephew that's Jimmy you cousin. I think James was your great grandfather's name. If you want I'll take you to the church, show you the graves. James doesn't like to go there.”

Falkirk shut up, he knew he was waffling. But the following silence he found to be worse. After offering Azlan a cup of tea and then pouring it, another silence fell. To break it Falkirk asked, “A strange name, Lion I think it means?”

The dark haired boy with eyes that had come straight from his father, nodded. Azlan tried a few times before he managed to get his voice to work, “Mum said Dad was teaching my brother how to growl and it sounded like a lion.”

“Don't know why I'm called Falkirk. There's a town south of here...”
“We passed it on the way from the Airport, dad pointed it out.” Azlan said, playing with his mug rather than drinking it. Falkirk offered milk and sugar, lots didn't like Earl Grey he wondered if Azlan was one of them.

“How's Rupert,” Azlan said. “He was nice.”

“He is nice, and doing well. I think he'd like to meet you. He asked quite a lot of questions, mostly about James. I think he would have fallen out with James if he learned he wasn't taking care of you or cut off all contact.”

“Why?”

Deciding that if Azlan was to be part of the pack and family, he should know what the others knew, Falkirk answered, “Because that's what happened to Rupert. His Papa bonded with a new Alpha so sent him to boarding school to get him out of the way. There was no way I was going to let that continue, and when I asked to adopt him I got no fight from Villiers.”

Looking at the table, while flicking his crystal eyes up every so often, Azlan asked, “What about his dad?”

“Edward died when Rupert was very small, a baby still,” Falkirk said.

Slowly they continued to talk. Falkirk knew James, with hard conversations involving anything to do with emotion everything was always brief and to the point. Now with him, Azlan could ask and get fuller answers about the pack and family. Falkirk in turn asked about the times James spent with his son, learning Azlan to be a proficient mountain climber and diver, and his dad had even let him drive long before he was legally ready, feet reaching the pedals being the time James thought it was time to learn how to drive. There had even been other trips, skiing in the Alps mostly. Falkirk knew most of it as facts, he had covered James absences for years at home. It was good to get the story behind those absences, it was the only time Falkirk didn't have a knot of worry in his gut when his Alpha left.

--

Opening the bedroom door, James found his omega sitting up on the bed. A laptop open in front of him. A fire crackled in the hearth behind the guard, chasing away the chill that was pervasive in Skyfall.

“Well he's asleep, got a bruise on his shoulder though. Not looking forward to explain that one.”

“I want to ask you something,” Falkirk said without looking up. When he did, he saw James braced for an emotional talk. “You can relax its a debriefing. Did you see the leader of SPECTRE? A physical description, ethnicity, body type, age...”

“No, not well,” James said and sat on the edge of the bed. “Think 'Man from Delmonte'. His hat obscured his face. By his hands he was white, although they were heavily and scarred.”

“How did you see his hands?” Falkirk said noting this down as James spoke.

“It looked like he was writing a letter,” James said and his omega looked at him for the first time, with that sharp calculating gaze of M.

“He was writing the letter before you left?”

James nodded, and Falkirk hummed and looked back to his laptop. He really hated it when Falkirk
did that, it was like when the psychs from medical hummed. “What is it?”

“I was written a letter,” Falkirk said. “I find it strange the leader of SPECTRE wrote it before you were compromised and fled.”

James turned on his heels and marched into the attached bathroom. Falkirk rolled his eyes and called out, “I support you, you know!”

“I don’t!” James shouted back.

Falkirk rolled his eyes again and turned his attention to the Laptop. While Falkirk tended to see the individual, James wanted to be the lone wolf with only the mission as his focus. Through the slightly open door he heard the shower coming from the small bathroom. Falkirk typed out the letter as he remembered it, wishing he studied it or kept it all of a sudden because something niggled at him.

The alpha returned naked, flushed and glistening from the shower, towelling his hair as he moved about. Tanned skin, just slightly lighter around the muscular backside and hips where James wore swimsuits. Falkirk ogled his Alpha for a bit, but before letting his brain go to more base desires he said, “There's a group out east, a bit fed up of god not starting the rapture. They're moving to push-start the apocalypse. Want the mission.”

“You're trying to be nice to me,” James accused.

“Yes, a week or two for you to run around, gunfights, drinking... there's even a vulnerable woman, 'Nefertiri' the new Mary to be bearer of the second coming of Christ. If she's a virgin the pope shits in the woods, and the bear's a Catholic.”

James smirked a bit, while sitting at the far side of the bed. Falkirk said, “You need to be in Singapore next Monday. That's where they meet with a supplier of biological weapons.”

“Next week, plenty of time,” the Alpha purred while while leaning forward to crawl onto the bed, his intense eyes locked on Falkirk. Placing one hand in front of the other, the Alpha's shoulders bulging and rippling like a stalking lion... Falkirk stopped that train of thought. He didn't want to think about lions at a time like this.

Slamming the laptop shut and putting it down on the floor quickly, when Falkirk sat up again he came nose to nose with his Alpha and was pushed back. The omega's mouth was claimed as they moved against each other he tasted fresh mint covering the stale taste of a cigarette, while the smell of carborundum spiced shower gel still had a hit of gunpowder and oil underneath.

--

Falkirk had flown back to London with James and Azlan, while the alphas continued on to Turkey. Falkirk found himself standing on a street. A detached house across the road from him, with a high metal fence painted in rainbow colours around the perimeter. A mini prison but Falkirk understood the necessity of the security.

The first parents led their young children out, from babies to ones almost ready for school. Seeing the tall wild haired man and the little blond girl Falkirk approached and met them as they reached the pavement.

“Hi, sweetie,” Falkirk said with a wave to Rosie. The small girl in pink dress waved back, the other hand still holding Sherlock's hand.
“Checking up on me,” Sherlock accused while leading Rosie towards the nearest tube station.

“Sherlock... you know I don't check up on you. I watch Mycroft, when I need to find you I hack the reports he gets on your whereabouts,” Falkirk said. “I thought you had that figured out now.”

“What are you doing here then,” The detective asked. “I'm not doing anything for you.”

Falkirk glanced at the girl walking between them, with a cute little backpack on. Doctor Strange an unusual choice for a girl still too young to see the movie.

“Inspiration,” Falkirk admitted continuing to walk with his brother, his car keeping pace with them down the road and his bodyguard a few paces behind. “I read a letter and it's left me feeling concerned.”

Sherlock held out his hand, Falkirk said, “I burnt it.”

The question of why was asked and Falkirk admitted it was because the letter indicated James abandoned his mission and destroyed the investigation. Sherlock said, “Do you know what was used to get James to abandon his mission?”

“Do you!” Falkirk demanded. His brother nodded

“For over ten years he has been way for some time in July, July being approximately nine moths after his apparent death. Andrew and now Rupert's birthday being the only time he is sure to be in the UK. The deduction on the common factor is obvious.”

“I should have know... hold on. You have verbal diarrhoea about everything! How did you keep the secret so long?”

“Didn't want to upset you,” Sherlock said. “Now what made you suspicious about this letter?”

“You're a twat Sherlock, really. Well there was the use of James' service number. Modern times it's written numerically zero-zero-seven. It was written the old way in the letter using the lower case letter 'o' instead of zeros. But for a person with a nostalgia for one of the world's biggest terrorist and criminal organisation, the old oo7 is expected...” Falkirk didn't like the way Sherlock was looking at him. “Spit it out!”

“Nostalgia? Including how it came to an end?” Sherlock said. “How did it end?”

“The first Number One, was apprehended by Double O Seven in Japan after stealing space capsules to turn the cold war into a shooting war between America and Russia. The second Number One died trying to escape an oil rig, Double O Seven dropped his escape submersible fifty meters. The third Number One murdered the wife of, Jack Wilton Double O Seven, he escaped with severe injuries with the third Double O Seven, Simon Templar finished him off. SPECTRE's collapse started before Simon Templar but he was the death nail. Too many failures led to some members breaking it up into smaller criminal organisations or turning it into legitimate companies with lower profits but without the risk of prison or being killed.”

Stopping outside the tube station. Sherlock said, “Double O Seven and SPECTRE have history. Beware those who enjoy history too much, they wish to repeat it.”

Falkirk watched his brother and niece head into the brick shed that acted as entrance to the underground station. He frowned, something still not adding up.

“Then why didn't the new Number One call out James and have the battle between SPECTRE and
Double O Seven? Why did he let James go?"

Chapter End Notes

Not sure if I named George Lazenby's Bond before now. I usually use other character names from the actor's IMDB profile but that's who the Second 007 is. With Roger Moore 'Simon Templar' being the third 007. And the previous movies bing a rough background for the universe.
Closing Arc: Alec and getting older.

Chapter Notes

Believing the fear of something often outweighs the risk. I call on the important words developed for the invasion of the United Kingdom and useful for many other times.

Keep Calm

And

Carry On!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Sitting in his office Falkirk read over the reports in front of him. Moving on to the next set, Falkirk opened the reports from Evans(008) and James' return. Evans was placed on her allocated down time, while James was having his fitness assessed in the wake of his mission.

It hadn't escape the Mission Observers, Assessors or M's notice Double O Seven had struggled during his last mission. Falkirk hoped it was down to the problems of the mission that preceded it. The CCTV footage from New York's Grand Central showed a terrorist nearly succeeding in deploying a biological weapon. An ugly shot form Double O Seven had left bystanders screaming and spattered in blood as the perpetrator tried to open the bio-weapon canister. The remote farm that was the base of the doomsday cult calling itself the Five Point Trinity Church had been dealt with first, in typical Double O fashion all their stockpiled explosives went up making a big crater in the mid west of the United States.

James was five years from mandatory retirement and was now the second longest serving Double O in MI6 history. Sitting back Falkirk started thinking how to approach the subject. Although the James had calmed down a lot, Daniel was still James' handler because the Alpha still couldn't quite get over his nature and take an order from his Omega. Just as Falkirk had trouble giving his Alpha an order, especially when it could lead to conflict between them.

"I need to do it," Falkirk said to himself, thinking of James' continuing career. Or more precisely a retirement. Five years and still able to achieve the required fitness level Falkirk decided he had time. At this stage Falkirk was just making plans to raise the subject with James before it became an issue.

Darren burst into his office announcing a training accident and Alec in the same breath. Falkirk was up and moving before he realised it. Training accidents where live fire and other weapons were used could be very bad. It felt like an eternity before he reached the basement where he had to change lift to enter the understructure.

Falkirk watched as the glass doors of the lift showed the corridor of Q branch before the dropped below the floor level of the branch. Turning around, a moment later the lift stopped and opened onto the PT corridor.
Entering Alec's domain Falkirk spotted the medical team further down the large oval corridor. They were wheeling someone out of the main training hall. Falkirk relaxed, as he approached he heard Alec complaining all the way. Daniel emerged from the gym as well to accompany his mate.

"I fell down," Alec snapped at Falkirk before he could ask. Falkirk could see the annoyance and scent it coming off the other man. Daniel didn't look too agitated so Falkirk relaxed further. The medic told him Alec had a broken leg. Alec complaining he had walked off worse as he was wheeled away.

At the end of the day Falkirk arrived in medical to see Alec with his right leg in a cast. There was already graffiti littering it. The nicer messages in Alec's field of view the less nice out of view.

There was one on the sole of the cast's foot, probably from James quoting one of Alec's less politically correct phrases. One often shouted at the footballers on TV that Falkirk knew Alec and Daniel had been called to the school for after someone imitated it towards one of his class mates. That caused a bit of a problem for the school, two alpha men pitching up to deal with their son calling someone a 'Limp wristed fairy'

"Would you like me to get rid of this one before Daniel sees it?" Falkirk asked, tapping the bottom of the raise foot.

"Who the hell do you think wrote it," Was Alec's rather grumpy reply.

Falkirk saw the permanent marker on the table so picked it up. Along Alec's plaster encased shin he wrote 'Beware! Doctors approach at own risk!' and signed it with an M.

"Get well soon," Falkirk said patting Alec's good leg before wishing him a good night. Alec calling out after him, "Bring vodka! NO FLOWERS! NO FUCKING GRAPES EITHER!"

--

From the glass enclosed observation room Falkirk and Alec watched James run an assault course in the hall below them. The Alpha was definitely not as graceful as he should have been. James managed to run the course close to his average time but even from the distance Falkirk could see the fatigue clawing at his Alpha. When it was over James tried not to let his chest heave, while wiping his brow to look less sweaty missing the wet stripe up the back of his blue tracksuit.

Looking to Alec who spread his weight between his crutches and good leg. Falkirk could see the concern on the other man's face as he was sure Alec could see his.

"He passed," Alec stated.

"Yes he did," Falkirk agreed.

The third, the tall Alpha who stood with arms crossed and a frown on his face. Daniel said, “I'll give him his down time and rerun the test after.”

Falkirk nodded and turned away. That was the procedure for a Double O when fitness was in doubt. He hoped it was just the recent events though, and James would recover.

Returning to his office, Falkirk found a medical report waiting on him. Not an unusual occurrence, Falkirk read a couple a week. They brought to M's attention the things operatives would prefer to pretend weren't effecting them. Sighing when he saw who it was for, and hanging his head when he learned what Dr Dean was warning him of since Alec was ignoring her. The one good thing about being an Omega male meant he was in the lowest risk group for the condition. Selene had
been warned, Alpha woman being in the most vulnerable group with Beta and Omega woman in the middle of the road. With Alec not being fully Omega it looked like he was not going to be so lucky.

Returning to the Physical Training, Falkirk found his pack mate in the gym putting the recent intake through their paces. The pack of recruits ran around the track, all in identical blue tracksuits. Falkirk came up to Alec standing on his three legs in the centre while barking orders.

"Have you spoken to medical?" Falkirk asked. Getting an annoyed grunt and a nod in answer, Falkirk had two teenagers that often gave identical answers. He wanted to brain Alec like Andrew and to a lesser extent Rupert, and to a bigger extent James when they all did it.

"PICK UP THE BLOODY PACE YOU'RE NOT IN THE ARMY NOW GIRLS!" Alec shouted at the recruits. They were doing an exhaustion exercise running at a set pace until they literally dropped, to test the limit of their stamina.

"Do you know why they wish to do a bone density scan?" Falkirk asked. As expected Alec had heard what the doctor had told him but had not been listening. In typical Alpha/Operative/Double O fashion Alec preferred to ignore the medics until he passed out and they could get on with their job.

"Dr Dean suspects Osteoporosis," Falkirk said and got a glare from the other man.

"It's manageable," Falkirk quickly added getting a growl in response. Alec started swinging his crutches and legs in a ground eating lope. Falkirk watched his pack mate moving rather quickly around the track shouting at the recruits to move their arses.

--

Several days later Alec barged into Falkirk's offence, or tried to. A door, two crutches and a leg cast took away something of his dramatic entrance. A crutch banged Falkirk's desk as Alec slammed down a letter.

"I don't have Osteoporosis," Alec declared triumphantly.

Falkirk picked up the results and started reading. With some worry, Falkirk said, "What about the warnings? They also want you to go back in a year for another scan."

Alec growled having chosen to ignore that part.

"Take care of yourself," Falkirk said handing back the letter.

"Now for that bitch, Dr Dean," Alec growled heading for the door.

“She only had your best interest...” Falkirk shrugged, there was no point continuing. Alec was already halfway across E-Branch with a slightly demented look. Well, Falkirk didn't hire Dean because she was the soft and cuddly sort. He just hoped it didn't escalate to the point M had to get involved.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading comments and kudos.
Take care.

End Notes

Now comes the bad news. This will be long. Covering several story lines over the 15 years of Falkirk and James' life of being a parent. What the F*#% have I done. It is all written so don't worry about it just stopping. But please be patient.

Thanks for reading.

Tumblr: http://fanficfanblog.tumblr.com

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