



**TRANSFORMATION**

**MIA RABB**

# TRANSFORMATION



# TRANSFORMATION

---

MIA RABB

Copyright © 2012

All rights reserved – Mia Rabb

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, or by any information storage retrieval system, without the permission, in writing, from the publisher.

Strategic Book Publishing and Rights Co.  
12620 FM 1960, Suite A4-507  
Houston, TX 77065  
[www.sbpra.com](http://www.sbpra.com)

ISBN: 978-1-62212-037-6

# CONTENTS

---

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Chapter 1: New Beginnings.....                      | 15  |
| Chapter 2: The Counsel .....                        | 28  |
| Chapter 3: Broken Men.....                          | 44  |
| Chapter 4: Singing Like a Canary .....              | 64  |
| Chapter 5: Frank's Pain.....                        | 82  |
| Chapter 6: The Ceremony .....                       | 104 |
| Chapter 7: Over the Edge.....                       | 127 |
| Chapter 8: Happiness Is a Vacation .....            | 150 |
| Chapter 9: Federal Agents .....                     | 169 |
| Chapter 10: They Say Suicide Is Painless .....      | 194 |
| Chapter 11: Men Will Play .....                     | 214 |
| Chapter 12: A Wedding to Remember .....             | 222 |
| Chapter 13: Money Talks .....                       | 245 |
| Chapter 14: The Start of the Fall of an Empire..... | 266 |
| Chapter 15: The Ultimate Betrayal .....             | 291 |
| Chapter 16: A Fresh Start.....                      | 318 |
| Chapter 17: Silent Protection .....                 | 338 |
| Chapter 18: Mistaken Identity .....                 | 349 |
| Chapter 19: Fatherhood.....                         | 379 |
| Chapter 20: A Royal Wedding .....                   | 407 |
| Chapter 21: Legacy of Lies.....                     | 432 |



To my mother, Rita, brothers Gary, Robert, and Steve, and sister, Lyn, for all of your unconditional love and support for me doing one of my greatest passions: writing.

A special thanks to David Manke and David Palubiak for their support, friendship, and help with this book.



## FOREWORD

---

### Where Book One Left Off

Anton and Frank were back in DC for three weeks now. Anton had been in a grumpy mood since his return. He and Rina hadn't been intimate in weeks; Rina was beginning to wonder what was wrong with her husband.

Frank's cell phone rang, and the voice on the other end said the deed was done; he was swinging and stated his body would not be found for three days yet. Frank thanked him for his services and would pay him next time he would be in Sicily.

Maria, Anton's mother, called him four days later with the news that Giovelli was dead. He had committed suicide by hanging. She requested her son to come to Sicily for the funeral. Anton protested even though he would be in Sicily in a week to check on Rob's status. His mother begged him, and he finally gave in. He told her not to have anything done with the body except for embalming; he wanted the body kept in the mortuary so he could be sure that Giovelli was indeed dead.

Anton, Rina, and Frank flew to Sicily for Giovelli's funeral. They met Maria at the mortuary, and Anton looked at the body. It was Giovelli, and he was definitely dead. All Anton said was "good riddance." Maria cried over the body of Giovelli, holding his hand. Anton asked her why she was so broken up about the loser. "He was a good man, Anton, he brought me companionship after your father died," stated Maria. "Father hasn't been dead that long, and you can't wait to bed his brother. All you are is a cheap whore," said Anton. Maria, incensed with what Anton said, slapped her son across the face. "Don't you ever talk to me like that again," said Maria. "I will talk to you how I want, a whore is a whore," exploded Anton. Maria raised her hand again to slap her son only this time Anton caught his mother's wrist and squeezed it tightly. "You are hurting me, Anton," cried Maria. Frank would not interfere; he held on to Rina and told her to let Anton and his mother be. "You can't calm him or soothe him when he's in this frame of mind," stated

Frank. “Cremate him, now!” shouted Anton to the funeral director. Maria protested, stating Gio would not want that. Anton was only more enraged. “Put him in the furnace now and cremate him. He will not be buried next to my father or daughter. Not one ounce will be near them,” yelled Anton at his mother and the funeral director. They did as Anton ordered and gave him the ashes after the body disintegrated. He slammed the urn of ashes in his mother’s chest and said, “Do with them what you please. If you place them next to my father or daughter, I will disown you and you will be penniless.” and Anton stormed off and went and sat in the limo. He didn’t know how much more he could take.

Frank and Rina joined him a few minutes later. Rina hadn’t seen him this upset since the day he pushed her to the ground. She was afraid to say anything to him. She was afraid of him period. Frank had her dropped off at the hotel; he would talk to Anton alone for a while and see if he could find out what was bothering him. Anton only scowled at Frank as Frank talked to him. “I’m going to tell you this as a friend first and a capo second, you need help, Anton. You need to talk to someone. You can’t go on this way. You are destroying yourself and your family. Rina is afraid of you. I am having the pilot divert us to India, and you can see the monks there. You need help, Anton, and you know it,” stated Frank, not giving Anton any room for objection. Frank called the monks and told them of his plan. They would arrive there by tomorrow early afternoon.

Frank got Anton settled and told him to talk to them, “Let them help you,” and Frank flew back to DC. Anton was there two weeks, and he couldn’t get his mind to relax. The monks told him to let go of the guilt—grieve for what you have lost. No matter how hard Anton tried, he couldn’t get over his infidelity to Rina. He couldn’t let go of the guilt, plus he had the scars that never healed as a boy that were inflicted upon him by Giovelli and his mother. Anton called his lawyer and had him draw up divorce papers. He thought once Rina knew of his infidelity, she would divorce him. He called Rina and told her the divorce papers should be arriving within the next day or two. Rina was speechless; she didn’t get a chance to ask Anton why since he hung up on her. She went screaming and crying to Frank, and he asked her what was wrong. “Anton is serving me with divorce papers. Oh, Frank, what is wrong with him? I love him so much, I don’t want a divorce.” As she lay on the floor and just bawled for her husband, Frank called Marie to come over and help with Rina. Marie was able to calm Rina down, and Rina finally asked Frank, “What is it, Frank, that’s going on with Anton that he wants

a divorce?” Frank swallowed hard and said, “You are not going to like what I tell you. First Anton has been unfaithful to you, and second, he has a hard time talking his business to you. He would rather not have you involved.” “I’ve known about the affair for some time now,” said Rina. “All I want him to do is let me into his world a little, talk to me so he doesn’t keep everything in,” said Rina, starting to cry again. “Please, Frank, take me to him. I have to be with my husband, please, Frank,” pleaded Rina. They boarded the jet and flew to India.

Anton was more and more agitated; he kept telling the monks, “I can’t do this anymore.”

The monks were in the room when Frank and Rina arrived. They would not interfere in a life-or-death situation. They felt it was the work of Buddha, only they knew Anton.

Anton turned and faced Frank and Rina. He started to cry. “I can’t do this anymore.” It’s all he kept saying as he pulled his 9 mm out of its holster and placed it to his temple. Rina screamed, and Frank yelled *no* as he dashed over to Anton, but he wasn’t fast enough as horror poured over his face as he saw Anton’s finger pull the trigger. Frank thought his own heart was going to stop. The gun clicked; there were no bullets in the chamber or magazine. The monks, knowing what Anton is capable of, removed all the bullets and replaced the empty magazine. Frank tackled him and got the gun out of his hands. Anton just lay there, crying, stating, “I can’t do this anymore.”

Rina was over there in an instant, knowing her husband was alive. She hugged him and comforted him telling him it was okay. Anton looked at his wife. “Rina, I can’t do this anymore,” he said emphatically. “What can’t you do, baby?” she asked. “I can’t lie to you anymore. I’ve been having an affair. I made her get an abortion. It kills me to be unfaithful to you. I can’t live with myself anymore. I figured once you knew of the affair you would want a divorce. I miss my father so much and Antonia too,” he said as he started to cry again. Rina just let him talk and talk more and cry. She let him get it all out. She told him she knew of the affair, and it hurt her but she forgave him. The monks encouraged her to continue to ask him questions. “Tell me about Giovelli.” Anton looked at her, and she could see the pain in his eyes. “When I was a small boy, five or six, my father was gone a lot. My mother thought I was bad and had Giovelli punish me. He would beat me with a switch or his belt until I bled. My mother would hold me down while he tortured me. He did things to me a child should never go through. This lasted until I was fourteen,” said Anton as he sobbed at the vivid memories.

The monks looked at Rina. “Now we can help him to heal, please stay and we will have both of you heal.” Rina took Anton by the hand and had him sit in front of the monks.

She thanked Frank for all of his help; he was still shaken by what Anton did. He couldn’t get the image out of his mind. The monks invited Frank to stay and heal with them. Frank kept looking at Anton, not knowing what he would have done had there been bullets in the gun. His boss would have been dead, and that unnerved Frank beyond feelings.

Frank flew back to DC two days later knowing that Anton and Rina were on their way to healing and the discovery of who they are.

Frank did all the paperwork while Anton was gone. That was an overwhelming job in itself. Anton needed to hire help, and Frank would suggest that. He flew to Sicily and dealt with Cass. He was pleased to see the progress Cass was making. Cass had asked why Anton wasn’t there; all Frank said was he was in meetings for the next few weeks.

It was three weeks later that Anton and Rina flew back to DC. Rina had given him his edge back. She encouraged him to be the sly cunning wolf he once was. He was intimate with Rina again, and his lovemaking was out of this world. She knew she had her husband, the wolf, back. Anton asked Frank for his 9 mm back; it was fully loaded when Anton looked at it. It made Frank a little nervous. Anton reassured him nothing like that would ever happen again. Frank still couldn’t get the image of Anton holding the gun to his head out of his mind.

Anton told Rina and Frank there was one more thing he had to do. It was ruthless and cunning, but Anton had to close this chapter of his life once and for all. Rina was a little scared at the calculated coldness with what Anton told her he must do. She stood by her husband and would support him any way she could. Anton started to lay the plans. He called his mother and told her he was sorry for the way he treated her at the mortuary. He would like to see her and make things right between them. He said he would be in Sicily in a week and would see her then. He had a lot of work to do before that time. He called the cemetery where his father was buried and had Giovelli’s ashes and headstone moved to the pauper’s field. He contacted a real estate agency and had his mother’s house put up for sale. That wouldn’t happen until he arrived in Sicily though.

He called his mother as the plane landed in Sicily and told her to put on her best clothes. He had something special in mind for her. He went to his father’s grave and meditated for a half hour asking for his advice, direction.

Frank and Rina stayed in the limo, occasionally seeing a fog rise from Tony's grave. Anton was at peace and finally felt in control.

They went to his mother's house; she looked beautiful and all dressed up. Anton kissed her and said he was sorry for the last time they were together. "Tell me, Mother, why did you and Gio treat me so bad when I was a boy?" asked Anton. His mother couldn't give him a good explanation; it was just because. Anton accepted the answer. They got back into the limo and drove to the cemetery. Anton took his mother to Tony's grave. "You see, you defied me and buried Giovelli's ashes next to my father's and daughter. It has been removed, and I will show you where I put him," stated Anton totally in control of the situation. "He is a Balistrano. He deserves to be placed next to your father," protested Maria. Anton said nothing. They got back in the limo and drove to the pauper's field. Maria was taken aback that Anton would place Giovelli here. There was another grave dug next to Giovelli's. Anton had the men raise the casket out of the ground. Rina had stayed by the limo, and Frank was beside Anton. The men opened the casket, and it was empty. Anton uncovered the headstone. Maria gasped at what she saw. It read,

Maria Carducci

February 2, 1957-June 23, 2007

Whore

"You see, you will be joining your lover today. You have disgraced the Balistrano family for the last time. I have stripped you of my name," said Anton as he motioned the men to place Maria in the casket. She screamed and cried, begging her son for forgiveness. "I am your mother, Anton, please don't do this," she begged. "As far as I am concerned, you are the woman who gave birth to me, nothing else," said Anton as he helped tie his mother down. He closed the casket and heard her scream and cry. They lowered the casket into the ground, and the men covered it with dirt until only muffled screams were heard and then none as the dirt was piled to the top. Anton looked at the fog rising just beyond Maria's grave and said, "Thank you, Father," and Anton turned and left. He had no regrets. He hugged Rina when he got back to the limo.

"Let's go see Cass," said Anton, relieved of the burden he carried for so long.



---

## New Beginnings

Anton was very pleased with the progress Cass was making. He had been in Sicily for five months now. He was fairly fluent in Italian, occasionally having trouble with the meaning of a word here and there. He gave Anton the respect he deserved. Anton had made golf reservations at II Picciolo Golf Club to show Rob his appreciation for his hard work.

Rina and Anton played couples against Frank and Rob. Rob was awed at the beauty of the golf course and the skill by which Anton played the game. Rob didn't expect any less from Anton; he excelled at whatever he did. They played eighteen holes and then went to the club for dinner. Anton picked up the entire tab.

Rob was happy with his life at the present time. He missed the navy from time to time, but as more time elapsed, he was more content with the life he had now. The only killing he had been in on was the time that Tony Romano killed Mario and Carlo. He didn't look forward to the next killing. He knew sooner or later that he would be exposed to it though.

They were halfway through their meal at the country club when Anton's phone rang. It was the chief of police in Paris. Anton listened intently as the chief told him what happened. Anton gasped and got up out of his chair and headed toward the door. Frank was right behind him. The chief told Anton how there was this horrific accident involving a car and a tanker truck. Another car had pushed the other car deliberately into the tanker truck. It exploded upon impact, and there were no survivors. It took a few days to identify the remains through dental records. It was Francesca and Junie. Anton felt like he was going to vomit. Anton asked the chief if AJ knew about his daughter. The chief hadn't called him yet; he wanted to tell Anton first. Anton asked, "I trust you will dispose of the man responsible for this?" The chief told him he had already killed the man; he was shot several times trying to escape from jail. Anton thanked him for the deed. "And what about her children?"

asked Anton. "They are with my wife, you can pick them up tomorrow," said the chief. The chief said there was one more bit of information he needed to know. When Anton heard what it was, he vomited. Frank helped him to the men's room, and Anton told him what the chief said. Frank was heartbroken over the news. The men returned to their table ten minutes later. Rina asked Anton if everything was okay. He looked a little pale and told her everything was fine as he squeezed her hand, reassuring her he was okay.

Frank, trying to change the mood at the table, said, "Rob, how about a piece of fresh meat tonight?" Rob looked at Frank not sure what he meant and said, "I'm a vegetarian." The whole table erupted into laughter at Rob's naivety. Frank and Anton couldn't stop laughing as Frank said, "I mean a piece of flesh, pussy, get it, Rob?" as Frank continued to laugh. Rob laughed at how stupid he must have looked in front of them. "I'll pass," said Rob. "No, you won't, I'm capo and I'm telling you, you will do this tonight," said Frank. Rob looked at Anton for some help. Anton nodded at Rob and said, "He's capo, and you need to follow his orders," stated Anton, unsympathetic with Rob. Rob looked at Rina and pleaded for her help. Anton was livid. "You leave my wife out of this, and don't you ever ask her for help dealing with Frank or me. Is that understood?" scolded Anton to Rob.

Frank looked at Rob and said, "Get used to doing things you may not want to do. Rule number 1: don't piss off the boss, and rule number 2: do as your capo says." And Frank left it at that.

The men and Rina got up and left. Frank would drop Anton and Rina off at the hotel while he and Rob went to the local whorehouse. Anton told Frank to be back to the hotel by 7:00 a.m., he wanted to leave by eight.

Phyllis, the owner of the Clan des Sicillens, one of the top whorehouses in Sicily, called Frank earlier that day and told him she had a young piece of meat for him. Frank enjoyed a young girl now and then.

They walked into Clans, and Phyllis met the men at the door. "Who's your friend?" she asked. He told her and asked that he be given one or two of the girls with experience, that he may be a reluctant participant. Phyllis asked him, "Blonde or brunette?" Rob replied, "Brunette," and Phyllis sent two young women with Rob to a room. For Frank, Phyllis brought out a girl no more than seventeen. He wet his lips as he envisioned the night he was going to have.

Anton slipped out of his clothes and took a cool shower. He still felt sick at what the chief had told him. There was nothing he could do about it. Rina joined him in the shower. Anton was just standing there letting the

shower run over him. Rina asked him, “Baby, are you sure everything is okay?” Anton looked at his wife, not quite sure how to handle the situation. “Why did you have to have her killed Rina?” asked Anton, his anger under control. She shut off the shower and said, “I had to make sure you would never go back to her again. You don’t know how much that hurt when I found out you were having an affair with her, let alone she carried your child,” said Rina, her eyes tearing up. “I love you, Rina, I just wish you didn’t kill her. You know we just added two more children to our bunch. Her children carry my name, that was the stipulation when she adopted. If something happened to her, the children are mine,” said Anton. “What’s two more children to our big bunch already?” said Rina as she turned on the shower and started nibbling on her husband, arousing him. He made love to her right there in the shower. Anton knew that was a risk he took if Rina found out about his affair. It was unfortunate that Francesca paid with her life as did an innocent bystander Junie. He continued his lovemaking and moved to the bed. He made love to Rina over and over again until she asked him to stop, telling him to take a breather. “I don’t want to stop, Rina, I can’t get enough of you,” he pleaded. Rina smiled as she had him lay on the bed as she teased him, getting him aroused only to stop. This went on for a few times until she had his body convulse with a climax. He did the same to her as each took their turns with each other. It was four in the morning when they drifted off to sleep, each exhausted. They would be hard-pressed to board the plane at eight.

Frank and Rob had a wonderful time with the girls. Rob was a little reluctant at first, but as the women undressed him and he saw how beautiful they were, he relaxed and participated. He never had two women at once before. Indeed, life in the Balistrano family opened up many doors for Rob, some pleasant and some unpleasant. This was one of the many perks Rob would enjoy being employed by Anton.

Frank and Rob were back at the hotel by 7:00 a.m., both with big smiles on their faces. They joined Anton and Rina for a quick breakfast. Frank said to Anton, “I can see by the tiredness in your face, you didn’t get much sleep last night” as Frank smiled at Anton. Anton smirked back. Anton looked at Rob and said, “And how was your night last night did you enjoy yourself?” “Immensely” said Rob, also smirking at Anton and Rina.

“Feel like coming back to the States for a while, Rob?” asked Anton. Rob’s mouth was agape. “Do you really mean that, what about my stuff at Stefano’s?” asked Rob. “It can stay there for now, you will be coming here again,” stated Anton, and they all boarded the jet and headed to Paris.

Anton told Rob of Francesca's death and that AJ didn't know yet. Rob was devastated not only for himself but also for how this would affect AJ. "You will not tell him, I will take care of it, is that understood?" Rob protested that Anton would wait to tell AJ of his daughter's death. "He has a right to know as soon as possible, Anton," said Rob as he flipped open his phone to call AJ. Anton grabbed the phone from him. "Don't you mess with me, Rob, this is hard enough already. I know he's your friend, he's mine also," stated Anton as he bore holes through Rob with his dark eyes. "So what's the plan?" asked Rob.

Anton told him of Francesca's two children and how they carried his name. They were stopping in Paris to pick up the children. Anton filled him in on all the details of the children's adoption and why they carried the Balistrano name. Anton and his generosity awed Rob. Frank stood by and watched the two men spar.

Anton went on to tell Rob, "I expect a fight from AJ over her children. They are legally mine. I have the papers depicting that from the Italian, French, and U.S. courts. AJ doesn't have a legal leg to stand on," stated Anton. "You would deny him his grandchildren?" asked Rob. "Of course not, AJ can see them anytime he wants. They stay with me. AJ will never have custody of these children," said Anton, unsympathetic with Rob's concern for AJ.

They arrived at Pierre and Petra's home. A modest home, any chief of police would be proud to own. Pierre opened the door and welcomed them in. Petra was right behind him and greeted Rina. The women cried over the tragedy and hugged each other. She took Rina and went to another room in the house. The men stayed together. Pierre and Anton talked for the longest time. Frank and Rob were looking on, not saying a word. Anton introduced Rob as a new man in his ranks. Pierre welcomed him to Paris. A short time later, Pierre brought the children and told them their father was here to get them. The children, upon seeing Anton, ran to him as he bent down on a knee to hug the running children. They both threw their arms around their father and started to cry that they missed their mother. He comforted them and told them of their new lives they would have with him and Rina in DC. Rob looked on with a newfound respect for Anton. How loving of a person he could be with children, and how coldhearted and ruthless he could be with men, enemies. Rob vowed never to underestimate the wolf in sheep's clothing that was before him. Anton introduced the children to Rina and told them when they were ready they could call her "mama," as she would now be their mother for years to come.

Rina hugged the crying children and felt so bad for what she did to their mother. Anton saw the guilt in Rina and went over to her and hugged her and told her it was okay. "We'll get through this together," he reassured her. No one but Frank would ever know what Rina did.

Pierre and Anton talked more. It was time to make the sad phone call to AJ. Pierre called AJ and told him of the horrific accident that claimed his daughter's life. He did not tell him of the car that forced her into the tanker truck. He told him that Anton was here and had the children. AJ was glad that the children were not killed. He asked to speak with Anton. AJ and Anton spoke for a long time; Anton could hear AJ sobbing on the other end of the phone. He wished he were there to comfort his friend. Occasionally, Anton's voice would crack with emotion as he spoke with AJ. It wasn't his daughter that was killed, but it affected Anton just as much. Anton made the funeral arrangements under AJ's guidance; Francesca would be buried in Paris, next to her mother.

The funeral was the next day. AJ was distraught and inconsolable. He couldn't believe that his only child was dead. Anton stayed with him, comforted him. AJ would never know that Rina was behind his daughter's death.

It would be the first time he saw Rob in almost six months. *He looked good*, thought AJ. Working for Anton certainly had tamed him somewhat. The two men talked for a long time, Rob giving AJ his sincere condolences. AJ spoke with Rina. Anton was a little apprehensive at first, but AJ, too consumed with his grief, was oblivious to Anton's apprehension.

Pierre brought the children in; they didn't recognize AJ as their grandfather, as he had seen them so seldom. Anton took the children by the hand and introduced them again to AJ.

"This is your mother's father, your grandfather," said Anton. AJ was down on a knee, and the children went and hugged him. He kissed both of them and said, "I can't wait until you come and live with me." The children looked confused as they looked at Anton. He had Petra take them and go play with the other children. Frank heard what AJ said and decided to stay close to Anton.

Anton looked at his friend and said, "The children will live with me." AJ looked at Anton, feeling like he just got the wind knocked out of him. "Like hell they will, they are my grandchildren, they will live with me!" yelled AJ at Anton, pushing him a little. Anton understood his friend's grief and

anger. "I'm sorry, AJ, but you are wrong. They will live with me. They carry my name, and I have all the legal documents stating they are mine. I'm sorry, AJ, you can't have them." AJ, not believing what he was hearing, slugged Anton. Anton let AJ hit him; he knew he was reeling not only for the loss of his daughter, but now the loss of his grandchildren.

Cass had heard the loud voice from AJ and headed over to see what was wrong. Frank stopped him and told him what was going on. Rob couldn't believe Anton would eviscerate AJ like that at his daughter's funeral and would tell him so.

Anton tried to stay calm while AJ berated him, until Rob stepped on the bandwagon and also started berating him for what he was doing. Rob went as far as to push Anton, and a free for all erupted between all four men. The chief of police broke up the fight and asked Anton and his men to leave; it was the best for things right now. Frank grabbed Rob roughly by the arm and hauled him out. Anton turned and looked at AJ and said, "I'm sorry, AJ, for your loss," and Anton. Rina and the children left and would fly back to DC.

Anton had Rina and the children get in the limo. He motioned Frank to follow him, and he yanked Rob by the arm and took him to the side of the building. Anton threw Rob into the building with such force he almost knocked Rob out. Anton was clearly angry. Frank would only intercede if he absolutely had to. Anton punched Rob in the stomach, knocking the wind out of him. Next he pummeled him in the ribs, breaking a few. He grabbed Rob around the neck and pinned him to the wall and said in an angry voice, "Don't you ever take sides against me. You will support me no matter if it is right or wrong. I don't care what your belief is. You support me no matter what. Is that understood?" He relaxed his viselike grip from around Rob's throat. Rob coughed and held his throat and ribs. He nodded yes to Anton, and he understood. It was one more lesson he learned, the painful way of sticking up for a friend.

They arrived in DC early morning. Anton introduced Carlo and Gina as new members of his family. The rest of the children welcomed them with love and open arms. It would take a little time, but they would make the transition easily.

Anton had Rob look at the legal documents on Gina and Carlo. Indeed, AJ would not get custody of the children. Anton knew he was in for a fight that may end up costing him his friendship with AJ. But a Balistrano child is a Balistrano child, and when it came to that, Anton would do everything in his power to protect his children, his heirs.

Ten days later, Anton was served papers requesting he appear in court for the custody of the children. He knew he would win; he just wished it wasn't against AJ.

Anton had his lawyer along with Rob to defend him. He instructed Rob to put aside his feelings for AJ at the moment. He had a job to do, and he better do it right.

The judge looked at the legal documents Anton had and what AJ had. Judge Morris apologized to AJ and said there was nothing that could be done; the children were Anton's, and everything was legal and binding. Rob didn't have to say much; the documents did all of the talking. Anton looked down at the floor with a glum expression on his face as he saw AJ's reaction to the news.

AJ protested, arguing with the judge that there must be something he could do to get custody of these children. The judge told him no. Anton had covered all bases, the children were his, and the case was dismissed.

AJ stormed out of the courtroom and headed back to his office. He couldn't believe the judgment. Anton instructed Rob and Frank to stay where they were; he needed to talk to AJ alone.

AJ was in his office, silently sobbing to himself. He couldn't believe the loss he just endured when Anton walked into his office and closed the door. AJ looked up and saw him standing there. "Get out!" he shouted at Anton. "No, we need to talk about this," said Anton. AJ, livid with his friend, got up out of his chair and was eye to eye with Anton. "I have nothing to say to you, now get out. I don't ever want to see you again," said AJ so consumed with anger that the tears started rolling down his face. "I will not leave until we talk about this," stated Anton. AJ pushed Anton with force throwing him into the door. Anton understood; he would let his friend vent and take it out on him. "How could you do this to me, Anton?" asked AJ. "You knew from the first time Francesca adopted those children that they might someday be mine. You knew that, AJ, you knew that possibility," pleaded Anton, trying to comfort his friend. "You are welcomed to see them as often and as much as you want, AJ. Don't punish them because of the arrangement," said Anton. AJ broke down and just cried. Anton held his friend and left him grieve. "Come for supper tonight, see the children," requested Anton. It took AJ a little while to compose himself, and he finally agreed to the invitation. "I'll send a limo for five thirty," said Anton as he turned and left, glancing once more at his friend.

Anton had informed Carlo and Gina that AJ was visiting them tonight. When AJ arrived, Carlo and Gina ran to him with open arms, exclaiming,

“Grandfather” as they hugged him with all their might. It warmed AJ’s heart and Anton’s to see the interaction between them. Later that evening, Anton and AJ had another chance to talk. “I’m still not happy with you, Anton. It will take time for me to get over the hurt I feel toward you,” said AJ as he changed the subject, and they talked about Cass. Anton told him on how well Cass was doing, and he had big plans for him. He encouraged AJ to spend time with Cass and see the change in the man he once knew. AJ was impressed with the turnaround in Cass; they spoke for the longest time.

AJ was sitting by a table by himself for a short time when Sophia came over and tapped him on the knee, pulling him out of his deep thoughts. He looked at the girl. So beautiful with her olive skin, brown eyes and hair, she reminded him of Francesca when she was that age. His eyes started to mist. She crawled up on his lap and hugged him. “I’m so sorry that you are so sad, AJ. Can I tell you a story that might cheer you up?” asked the girl. AJ nodded, and Sophia proceeded to tell him story after story that made him laugh at the girl’s imagination. Anton heard him laugh and joined him at the table. Sophia continued to spin tall tales for AJ as he and Anton laughed at the healing that Sophia was providing. “You have a very special daughter, Anton,” said AJ as he hugged the girl and sent her on her way. Anton walked AJ to the limo and told him they would do this again soon.

Right before AJ crawled into the limo, he looked solemnly at Anton and said, “You have taken a lot away from me, Anton—Cass, my grandchildren, and maybe my daughter. I hope someday I can find it in my heart to forgive you.” And AJ left. Anton didn’t reply to what AJ said. He felt like an ice pick had just been put through his heart, his words stung so much.

Anton sat at a table overlooking the pool, his head resting on the palm of his hand. He was deep in thought, wrestling with the hurtful words AJ had said. He never heard Frank pull up a chair beside him and talk to him. Anton was too quiet, and that bothered Frank.

Anton got up and walked away from Frank, never acknowledging him. Frank got up and followed Anton, grabbing him around the arm and turning him so he was face-to-face with him. “What’s wrong, pal?” asked Frank. Anton looked past Frank and murmured “nothing” as he shrugged off Frank and walked away. Frank grabbed Anton again; this time he slapped him across the face to get his attention. It worked. It brought Anton back to his reality. “I’ll hit you again, start talking,” demanded Frank. Anton said nothing, and Frank decked him. That was all it took. Anton plowed into Frank, and the two went at it, fists flying, obscenities being hurled. After a few minutes,

Frank had Anton pinned to the ground when Anton finally said, “He said he can’t forgive me for what I did, and that really hurts, Frank,” said a dejected Anton. Frank and Anton talked in length about the grief AJ was feeling and that what he said was out of grief. Anton believed him.

They were walking around the grounds when they heard Cass and one of the other men in a shouting match. Soon another fight erupted. Cass and Gino were going at it. Gino had been taunting Cass, and that was all he could take anymore. It took everything Anton and Frank could muster to break up the two. At times, one would break free from the hold Anton or Frank had on them and would land a punch while the other was being restrained to stop the fight. Pretty soon, all four men were involved in the brawl. Anton slugged Gino and told him to go stand a short distance away but stay around. He did. Now it was Anton and Frank against Cass, and Cass had that look in his eyes that he wasn’t going to stop. Cass plowed into Frank, knocking him down, and Anton was on top of Cass, pulling him off. Cass landed a punch that sent Anton sailing across the grass. Cass had so much anger pent up inside of him, and he let it fly. Anton had never seen Cass like this. *Christ was he strong*, thought Anton. Cass swung at Anton and missed. Anton was glad, surely if he would have connected it would have broken Anton’s jaw. Frank and Anton seized the opportunity and tackled Cass and pinned him to the ground. Cass struggled against the two men, almost knocking them off him. They held strong and kept Rob pinned to the ground, taking all of their strength to keep him there. “Now what the hell is this all about?” growled Anton. “None of your fuckin’ business!” yelled Cass. “I’m not going to let you up until you tell me what’s going on between you and Gino,” said Anton. “Well, then you’re going to be here all night,” said Cass.

Anton, seeing he wasn’t going to get anywhere, called Gino over to where he was still holding Cass down. “Start talking, what’s this about between the two of you?” demanded Anton. “I just wanted to see where his head was. I made an inappropriate comment and then a pass at him. He went ballistic,” said Gino. “You made a pass at him?” asked Anton, starting to laugh uncontrollably. Anton continued to laugh, he couldn’t stop. He let go of Cass, went over to Gino, and told him to go home, slapping Gino on the back. Frank let go of Cass, and Cass was off the ground in a second. “I don’t see what’s so funny,” growled Cass. Anton was still laughing when he spoke to Rob. “You see it was a test, you just opened up your most vulnerable spot, and now people will know how to make you react, be vulnerable. You fell for it hook, line, and sinker,” said Anton as he walked

away still chuckling to himself. Frank stayed and talked with Rob for quite some time, telling him to put his emotions and feelings aside no matter what someone says to him. “Be a poker player,” insisted Frank. “There will be many tests to come, Rob, to see what you are made of, where you stand, your loyalty. You don’t want to be going off half-cocked like you did with Gino,” said the capo.

The next morning, all four men—Anton, Frank, Gino, and Rob—were in Anton’s office. Anton would provoke Rob as much as possible to get his emotions and anger under control. Gino blew Rob a kiss, and that was all it took to set Rob off again. Frank and Anton stood between Rob and Gino. Anton’s hand was resting against Rob’s chest to stop him. “Deal with it, Rob, get used to people doing things to royally piss you off. You will take the insult and do nothing about it,” stated Anton. Gino stood there with a smirk on his face looking at Rob, blowing another kiss. Rob was infuriated. “I’ll kill you, you son of a bitch!” yelled Rob at Gino. Anton dismissed Gino and thanked him. As Gino walked past Rob, he still had the smirk on his face. Rob broke away from Anton and tackled Gino, punching him, strangling him. Once again, it took everything Anton and Frank could do to pull Rob off Gino. Now Anton was clearly pissed. He threw Rob against the door. “What, did Gino hurt your feelings, Rob? Do want to run home and cry to your mommy?” taunted Anton. “Are you a boy or a man, Rob?” asked Anton. “Or should I say a sissy.” Rob tried to open the door, but Anton slammed it shut. “Can’t take it, tough man, sissy, fagot,” taunted Anton. The words cut deep into Rob, and they hurt. “Why are you doing this to me, Anton?” asked Rob. “Because I want you tough as nails in any given situation. There are going to be overtures. I can’t have you go off half-cocked when we’re in the middle of something because someone said something to offend you. You take it and don’t react to it. You smile at them like you don’t care what they just said to you. It will take practice,” said Anton and he let Rob go. “Leave Gino alone” were his parting words.

Over the next few weeks, Rob was humiliated, picked on, taunted. Anton had his men do it as often as possible, even strangers, provoking Rob until he finally turned a deaf ear to them and smiled at the insults.

Gino had caught a man snooping around the grounds. It was one of Constanza’s men that came back after the war between Anton and Joe was long over. He was looking to join Anton’s ranks. Anton didn’t believe him. He was secured in the barn with his hands tied to a beam above his head. The man would be executed, and Rob would be the triggerman.

Gino, Frank, Anton, and Rob were all in the barn with Anton interrogating the man. Rob was nervous, seeing the man helpless, defenseless. Anton pulled out his 9 mm and handed it to Rob. "Shoot him in the temple, now," instructed Anton. Rob anxiously looked at Anton. "I can't do that, he has done nothing wrong to deserve to die," said Rob. "I gave you an order, now shoot him!" yelled Anton. Frank was nervous at the situation at hand, shifting his weight from leg to leg. Anton briefly glanced at Frank, and Frank saw the seething anger coming to Anton's face. "Do it!" yelled Anton. Rob yelled no as he pointed the gun at Anton. Anton's expression turned to sheer coldness, his jaw tightly clenched. Frank had only seen that expression once before, and it had dire results. Frank walked over to Rob and put his hand on Rob's wrist, aiming the gun to the ground. Rob released it. Anton flew into a rage, tackling Rob, slugging him, kicking him, and beating him until he was unconscious. Gino and Frank took a few blows themselves trying to pull Anton off Rob. Anton picked up his 9 mm, walked over to the stranger, and shot him once in the temple, killing him. Anton walked over to Frank and unleashed his fury to his capo. Anton made a threat against Frank's life for not doing his job instructing Rob on the rules in etiquette of executions and never pointing a gun at the boss. Anton was fit to be tied as he stormed off.

Frank had Gino take Rob to Mark Sloan to fix his broken jaw, several fractured ribs and black eye plus other injuries. "Keep him at my house, don't even let him in Anton's sight until I tell you so," instructed Frank, then Frank went to see Anton. Frank walked into the office. Anton growled at Frank, "Get out. I don't want to see you right now." Frank stood there looking at a seething Anton. "Didn't you hear me, I said get out, Frank!" yelled Anton. Frank turned and left, trying not to provoke Anton any more that day. He knew he couldn't talk to Anton when he was this angry. Rina was coming down the hall when Frank came out of the office. "Stay clear off him. He's madder than a riled-up hornet's nest." Frank told Rina. Rina stayed clear of her husband for the time being.

That night at the supper table it was very quiet. Anton had nothing to say. He only scowled at Frank. The tension was so thick Rina could have cut it with a knife while they were eating dinner. Anton got up and went and sat by the pool and lit up a cigar. Rina followed shortly and came and sat on her husband's lap. She ran her hands through his hair. "Do you want to talk about it?" she asked. He coldly glared at her. She was taken aback at the glare. He realized what he did and softened his look toward her. "I'm sorry,

Rina, I didn't mean to scare you." "What happened today, Anton, that's got you so upset?" asked Rina. Anton looked away from her and didn't answer. Rina softly turned his face so he was looking at her. She stroked his cheek. "What happened, please let me in, Anton," she pleaded. He finally told her how the events had transpired in the barn. She listened to her husband go on and on, tirade after tirade against Frank and Rob. "Tomorrow will be a new and better day, Anton," she said as she kissed his neck. He kissed her back but was not in the mood for lovemaking and told Rina so. She just sat there, comforting her husband.

It was five days later that Frank brought Rob into Anton's view. Anton seethed every time he saw Rob. Frank instructed Rob, "Be prepared, what you did will not be forgotten for a long time. Expect his venom."

Rob and Frank walked into Anton's office. Rob's black eye was starting to fade a little. His jaw and ribs still ached. Anton saw Rob and was immediately up out of his chair, eye to eye with the two men. Anton bore holes through Rob and said nothing at first. He just stood there, glaring at Rob, making him uncomfortable." I can't stand the sight of you. You get your sorry ass on the jet within the next half hour and go to Sicily or I will kill you. You defy me just once more and your friends are dead," said Anton through clenched teeth. Rob started to apologize, only one or two words getting out when Anton had his viselike grip around his throat. "I don't even want to hear your voice. Your apology is not accepted, now get out of my sight," Anton said as he shoved Rob, releasing his grip. Frank ushered him out and told him to go to the jet and fly immediately to Sicily and stay with Stefano. "He'll calm down in time, just don't ever do something that stupid again," said Frank as he reassured Rob that things between him and Anton would get better again.

Anton called Stefano and told him what he wanted Rob to do. "If he doesn't follow your orders or won't do an execution, kill him," instructed Anton. Frank overheard Anton's conversation and was taken aback by it. "It will take him time to pull the trigger, Anton. He has always been on the side of the law—this is new for him. Give him more time. Don't let Stefano kill him," pleaded Frank. "Don't tell me you're getting soft too," exploded Anton. The men went at it both yelling at each other until there was nothing more to say. Anton angrily flipped open his phone and called Stefano. "Don't kill him if he disobeys you. Mentor him." Anton hung up. "Let's go for a five-mile run," said Frank. "It'll do you good, clear your mind, then we can get down to some business." Anton agreed.

Anton's mood improved over the next few days. Frank was glad to see the change as was Rina.

Over the next two weeks, Anton was restless when he slept, tossing and turning much of the night. He'd wake up in drenching sweats, yelling out occasionally in his sleep. It troubled Rina. All she could do for now was cuddle with her husband hoping the demons would pass that possessed him at night. The dreams, nightmares continued. Anton couldn't understand why his father was visiting him nightly when he slept. Sometimes he thought he heard Antonia crying. He tried to understand but couldn't make head or tail out of what his father was asking him. Anton was exhausted from the lack of sleep, he looked exhausted too. Rina tried to help him find out what his father wanted, Anton didn't know. Finally, Anton asked Sophia, his daughter, if Grandpa Tony was coming to her.

Sophia told Anton that Tony had visited her many times over the last two weeks, asking for help. Anton asked his daughter, "Why didn't you tell me about Grandpa Tony?" "Because I know you don't like it when I talk about angels, Papa," said the innocent girl. Anton smiled at his daughter and ruffled her hair. "You come to me anytime with your angel stories, okay," said Anton and Sophia agreed.

That night during supper, Anton's phone rang. It was Arturo, the owner of the cemetery where Tony and Antonia Balistrano were buried. He had disturbing news for Anton. Anton left the table and went to his office to talk. He always found it rude to talk on the phone during a meal while at the table.

Arturo had sent him a video to his laptop. "Watch it and call me back with what you would like me to do," said Arturo. Anton watched the video in horror at the desecration of his father's and daughter's grave and headstone. It almost brought him to tears. Then he saw the person responsible and couldn't believe who he saw. He opened up his office door and yelled for Frank to join him. Frank watched the video and couldn't believe it. Anton was extremely calm over the situation. He finally understood why his father was haunting his dreams.

Buy the B&N ePub version at:-

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/transformation-mia-rabb/1016170795?ean=2940014561242>

Buy the Kindle version at:-

<http://www.amazon.com/Transformation-ebook/dp/B007W30ECM>