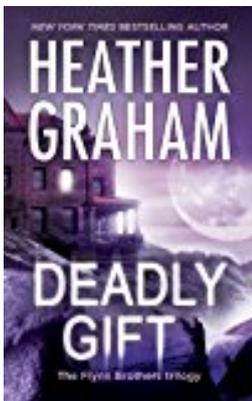


# [PDF] Deadly Gift (The Flynn Brothers Trilogy)

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#### Books Details:

Title: Deadly Gift (The Flynn Brothe

Author:

Released: 2013-10-15

Language:

Pages: 400

ISBN:

ISBN13:

ASIN: B00EM36HHG

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pdf, mobi, epub, azw, kindle

#### Description:

**About the Author** New York Times and USA Today bestselling author Heather Graham has written more than one hundred novels, many of which have been featured by the Doubleday Book Club and the Literary Guild. An avid scuba diver, ballroom dancer and mother of five, she still enjoys her south Florida home, but loves to travel as well, from locations such as Cairo, Egypt, to her own backyard, the Florida Keys. Reading, however, is the pastime she still loves best, and she is a member of many writing groups. She's currently the vice president of the Horror Writers'

Association, and she's also an active member of International Thriller Writers. She is very proud to be a Killurette in the Killer Thriller Band, along with many fellow novelists she greatly admires.

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*Dublin, Ireland*

Clear!"

"What's happening? Oh, my God, my husband! Let me get to my husband!"

Caer Cavannaugh was aware of the woman screaming beyond the emergency room curtains, just as she was aware of the triage nurse speaking to the woman in a calming way, trying to keep her from interfering with the doctors who were working desperately over the man.

He had come in with strange symptoms that had apparently appeared within twelve hours of his arrival in Dublin. According to his chart, he was in his seventies, was usually in good health, and he and his wife had checked into their hotel, shortly after which he'd become desperately ill. First he'd complained of terrible pain in his stomach, then of a weakness so overwhelming that it was close to paralysis sweeping over his limbs. And then he'd started having problems with his heart.

By the time he'd reached the emergency room, he'd collapsed. The doctors, not finding a pulse, had started treatment instantly.

"Charge!"

The man on the bed bucked, his back arching, and then a reassuringly regular beeping began. His heartbeat was back. Orders were shouted; Caer obeyed them. She'd been summoned to the emergency room just minutes before the man had arrived. In her work for the Agency, she never knew quite where she would be when, or what she would be expected to do, but she'd been well trained to deal with whatever she faced in any new situation.

This, however, was unusual, even for her.

The pulse on the screen jumped erratically for a few seconds, then steadied. The man blinked and looked at her, then smiled weakly. "Angel," he said, and then his eyes closed again and he slept, attached to an IV, a heart monitor and a blood pressure gauge.

The team in the room congratulated one another. A moment later, Caer heard the man's wife, sobbing and still upset, as a doctor explained to her what had just happened, even though they still didn't know the cause of the problem. He told the wife that she needed to calm down and give them some answers. Caer, waiting as orderlies were summoned to take the patient up to intensive care, watched and listened, putting together the details.

The patient was Sean O'Riley; his wife was Amanda, and she was substantially younger than he was.

She was going on and on about their wonderful day and how happy Sean had been. He'd been born here in Dublin, but been living in the States forever. He was always strong and healthy; since he was a charter captain, he had to keep himself fit. When asked what he had eaten, she said they'd had breakfast on the plane, lunch at the hotel, and dinner at a place on Temple Bar. They'd eaten the same thing, and she felt perfectly fine, but it was soon after dinner that he'd taken ill.

"I have to see my husband!" she insisted then.

Soon, she was promised.

Caer studied the woman through the opening in the curtain. She was petite, with a nice figure and disproportionately large breasts. Caer couldn't help but wonder if they were real. Blond hair, pretty hazel eyes, but a slightly sharp look to her. Gold digger? And if so, was she somehow responsible for her husband's condition? But could anyone, even the best actress, fake such a look of tragic hysteria?

The doctor suggested sedation. Amanda nodded, and a nurse gave her a shot.

A police officer arrived. *Interesting*, Caer thought.

"Cavanaugh."

Caer started and swung around to face the male charge nurse who'd called her name.

"You're on. He's assigned to ICU for the next few hours, and you're with him."

"Right. Thanks," she murmured.

He looked at her curiously, as if he wasn't sure he recognized her.

No surprise. It was a big hospital. Anyone could wind up working with anyone else on any given day.

He smiled, as if deciding he'd seen her before after all.

"I'm on it," Caer said, greeting the two orderlies who showed up to move her patient, checking lines and his oxygen intake as they made their way down the hall from emergency to the elevators to intensive care.

He was to be kept alive. There seemed to be no reason for his life to be in danger, but it was, and he needed care and protection.

Zach Flynn was sleeping deeply when his cell phone rang. What might have proven to be a tragedy, the case of a missing boy, had been neatly and happily solved in a matter of days. Sam, the ten-year-old, had been angry. His mother had remarried and had a baby, and the baby had been getting all the attention. He hadn't been kidnapped, despite the open window and the mess in the room. He'd staged the event and gone to hide out in his father's old hunting lodge. When Zach had found him—tracking him down through his emails to an Internet buddy in China—he'd been ready to go home. No heat, running out of food—it hadn't been half the fun he had expected. All had worked out well. Sam's mother and stepfather had been so relieved that they'd welcomed him back with tears and enough love to make him believe he was as cherished as the new baby.

And so, with the "real" business—the private investigations firm he ran with his brothers Aidan and Jeremy—in good standing, Zach had planned on spending a chunk of December on his side business, checking out some of the musicians hitting the Boston clubs. Years ago, he'd begun investing in music studios, producing promising acts on his own label and watching with pleasure when they were picked by the major players. It had made a nice break from his job with the Metro police in Miami, and it was still a good way to wind down from his day job.

He was exceptionally good with computers, and had become their three-man firm's tech guy for his ability to hack into all kinds of systems. His street instincts were good, too, though, and he found his life fulfilling, even if not every case ended as well as Sam's had.

Then again, some of their cases would have made a statue smile, like the time Mrs. Mayfield, of the Mayfield Oil Group, had hired them on for a fantastic sum to find Missy.

Missy was a cat.

Easily done. Missy was found with six little puffs of fur, and the Flynn brothers were all offered kittens.

Music was his love, though. Music was something that pulsed in his blood and echoed in his mind, not to mention the way it eased and cleansed his soul. It was something beautiful when he saw so much that was ugly.

So he'd claimed December for himself—a chance to get back into that other world where no one went missing and no one died.

Last night, after arriving in Boston, he'd started relaxing with a vengeance. Not that he got drunk, because he didn't drink to excess, having learned long ago that the temporary high wasn't worth the loss of control. But he'd run into a bunch of old friends at a pub on State Street and downed a few Boston lagers. Still, he was instantly aware at the sound of his ringer, and he answered the phone automatically. "Flynn."

"Zach, oh, Zach, thank God you're there. Eddie has disappeared, and now Dad is in the hospital over in Ireland. I was going to fly over there, only Bridey said I shouldn't, but Dad—"

"Kat?" he asked, cutting across her uncontrolled flow of words.

"Yes, it's Kat. Oh, Zach, it's awful, you have to help. We don't know what's going on, and my father is all alone over there with *her*. You have to go over and see what's happening, Zach. I need your help, and so does Dad."

"Okay, slow down and start at the beginning. What's wrong with your dad?" Zach asked, coming thoroughly, instantly awake. Sean O'Riley had been one of his father's best friends. Even after his dad had passed away, though Sean had been in Rhode Island and the Flynns had been in Florida, Sean had been there, like an uncle, ready to offer a hand to Zach and his brothers. Then Zach had gotten involved with Kat. Not romantically, but she had the voice of a lark, so he'd given her some help professionally, put a band together for her, and now she was starting to soar. She was like a longdistance little sister, most of the time.

"She did something to him." Kat went on frantically. "She's a monster with a bad dye job and veneers over her fangs." She paused for breath and managed to calm down a bit. "Bridey said you should go over there right away and see what's going on. She's afraid for me to go. You know how she is, worrying that something will happen to me. Probably afraid I'll wind up in jail for killing Amanda. Zach, please. You have to go and bring Dad home safely."

"Whoa, wait a minute. There are excellent hospitals in Ireland, and I'm sure—"

"He needs to be *here*. So we can all be with him. Please. I'll hire you. Zach, I'm scared. Eddie is

missing, and I'm afraid he's dead, and now someone's after Dad, I'm sure of it. It's got to be *her*. You know I've never trusted her, and now I think she's really done something." She had worked herself into a frenzy again and practically sobbed out the last words.

"Kat, if Sean is in trouble, I don't need to be *hired*. I would do anything for him. But you've got to calm down. And Bridey is right, you can't start wildly accusing Amanda."

"But I'm right!"

"Then you need proof."

"My father won't believe me."

Zach understood Kat's feelings about her stepmother. Amanda wasn't much older than Kat herself was. But he hadn't seen anything himself to suggest that Amanda meant to do away with Sean. Sure, she enjoyed the fact that he was well off and probably wouldn't have given him a second look otherwise, but that was a far cry from murder.

Frankly, he just didn't think the woman had the brains to be capable of planning a murder.

By the time Kat finished talking, he knew she was right about one thing. She should *not* go to Ireland—she might well wind up in jail—and he should. Actually, he thought, he should be heading straight to Rhode Island, where Eddie Ray and his boat had gone missing. But Sean was alive in a hospita...

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