

"[An] intense, edge-of-your-seat whirlwind." —*Booklist* on *Liar's Key*

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR

CARLA NEGGERS THIEF'S MARK

CHAPTER #1 PREVIEW

A SHARPE & DONOVAN NOVEL

CARLA NEGGERS

THIEF'S MARK



1

Dublin, Ireland

Colin Donovan eyed his wife of almost two weeks, a glass of champagne in front of her on their low table at the crowded, upscale bar at the landmark Shelbourne Hotel in the heart of Dublin. Since he knew Emma Sharpe as well as he did, he noticed the slight pull in her eyes that indicated tension. “Last night of our honeymoon,” he said, leaning back in his comfortable stuffed chair.

She smiled. “We’ll make the most of it.”

He returned her smile. “We will. You look good, Emma. Rested, happy and rosy-cheeked.”

“The rosy cheeks are due to the champagne.”

“And the tension I see in those green eyes of yours?”

She picked up her champagne. “I’m in reentry mode.”

Colin got that. They would be back at their offices on the Boston waterfront in a few days. Right now, they could enjoy the views out the tall Shelbourne windows across to St. Stephen’s Green as the long June day slowly wound down. Every seat at the polished bar and the tables was occupied with laughing shoppers with their Brown Thomas bags, tourists in sensible shoes and young office workers with loosened ties.

CARLA NEGGERS

“Then there’s Granddad,” Emma added. “He’s up to something.”

Wendell Sharpe was always up to something but Colin knew he didn’t need to tell Emma. “Speak of the devil,” he said, nodding to the entrance off the lobby.

She followed his gaze, sipping her champagne as she watched her octogenarian grandfather, who lived in Dublin, make his way toward them in his rumpled khakis, sport coat and bow tie. He was semiretired, but no one believed he would ever fully give up his work as a private art detective. Not willingly, anyway. Meeting for drinks at the Shelbourne had been his idea.

He shuddered as he arrived at their table. “Could you two at least try to look less like FBI agents?”

“We *are* FBI agents, Granddad.” Emma set down her glass and rose, smiling as she and her grandfather embraced. “It’s great to see you.”

Colin got to his feet and he and Wendell shook hands. “Good to see you, Wendell.”

“Welcome to Dublin. How was the honeymoon?” He grinned. “Don’t answer.” He pulled out a chair and sat with a heavy sigh. “I walked from my place. Beautiful day. When did you get in?”

“About an hour ago,” Emma said. “We walked in the park and got here about twenty minutes ago. It’s the last day of a perfect honeymoon.”

“Your secret Irish honeymoon didn’t stay secret for long, did it?”

Emma laughed. “It didn’t stay secret at all.”

THIEF'S MARK

"Everyone knows we're here," Colin added, glad to see some of Emma's earlier strain ease.

"You chose Ireland for Emma," Wendell said. "Tough to think of you as romantic."

"Not going there, Wendell."

"Are you making a stop in Dublin on FBI business?"

Emma shook her head, strands of her fair hair falling onto her forehead. She reached for her champagne and sat back with it. "We're here to see you, Granddad."

Colin picked up his Smithwick's. "What're you drinking, Wendell?"

"Sparkling water. I like to keep my head about me with you two."

A typical Wendell Sharpe exaggeration, but Colin ordered the water. He drank some of his beer and contained his impatience. He'd been on alert since Wendell had texted Emma two hours ago and suggested they meet at the Shelbourne instead of at his home a few blocks away.

The sparkling water arrived, and Wendell drained about a third of his glass before setting it on the table and taking a breath. "We're getting looks. I've lived in Dublin for fifteen years but I don't recognize a soul here. I'm an old man. It's got to be you two."

Colin made no comment. They weren't getting looks. It was a diversion tactic. No one near their table was paying attention to them much less sneaking looks at them. He and Emma were dressed comfortably but suitably for their surroundings, not in the hiking clothes they'd worn much of the past ten days in the Irish countryside.

CARLA NEGGERS

“It’s nice of you to invite us here, Granddad,” Emma said casually. “Any particular reason for the change in plan?”

Wendell glanced around the elegant bar. “I haven’t been here in a while. I thought we should celebrate your marriage at a special place. I didn’t make it to your wedding. Least I could do is buy you a drink.” He settled back in his chair. “Glad you two didn’t order expensive whiskey. I’m retired.”

Emma gave him a skeptical look. “Semiretired at best.”

Colin stayed out of this one. In the months he’d come to know Emma—as he’d fallen in love with her—he had learned to steer clear of meddling with or even trying to understand her deep-seated, often impenetrable relationship with her eccentric family. Wendell had launched Sharpe Fine Art Recovery sixty years ago in the front room of his home on the southern Maine coast. After his wife’s death, he’d returned to the land of his birth and set up a Dublin office. When Colin had planned their Irish honeymoon, he’d included a night in Dublin for Emma to see her grandfather. Wendell had invited them to stay with him. It had seemed like a good way to start the reentry process back to their normal lives. Family, friends, their work with the FBI. No more boutique hotels, cute cottages and long walks in the Irish hills, at least not for a while.

“You two go back to work...when?” Wendell asked. “You’re flying back to Boston tomorrow, right? They’ll let you get home first, do a load of laundry, buy some milk and coffee?”

“We’re flying to London tomorrow,” Emma said. “We’re

THIEF'S MARK

taking advantage of being on this side of the Atlantic and meeting with a few people.”

Wendell frowned. “So you’re back to work *tomorrow*?”

“We’ll return to Boston for the weekend and be at our desks on Monday.”

“I thought Colin didn’t have a desk.”

“I don’t,” Colin interjected. “They let me nap on Emma’s couch once in a while.”

They being HIT, the small Boston-based team Emma had joined early last year and he’d been shoehorned into last fall. He wasn’t a good fit, but for the past ten days, he’d had one focus and that was the woman on the other side of the table. It was Wednesday. They had an early flight to London. Emma would meet with her UK counterparts in art crimes, her area of expertise, and Colin would focus on... whatever Matt Yankowski, their FBI boss, wanted him to focus on. He and Yank would talk tomorrow. Colin had completed an undercover assignment before the wedding. Yank no doubt would be chewing on a new assignment.

Wendell took another big drink of his sparkling water. “I have a surprise for you. I’m treating you to a night here at the Shelbourne. Figured it’s a better choice for the last night of a honeymoon than my guest room.”

Emma folded her hands on her middle, eyeing her grandfather with a cool steadiness Colin had come to know and appreciate. “Thank you, Granddad, that’s generous of you, but we’d have been happy in your guest room.”

“You’ll be happier here.”

Emma unfolded her hands and touched a fingertip to the rim of her champagne glass, nothing casual about her

CARLA NEGGERS

move. "Are you sure this is a wedding present and you're not having your place painted, or you didn't suddenly discover mold in the walls? It's not a problem if it's inconvenient for you to put us up. We could find somewhere to stay. The Shelbourne is gorgeous, but having a drink with you here is a great wedding gift. We don't want you to go to any big expense."

Her grandfather looked around at the bustling bar. "Princess Grace stayed here back in the day. You've seen pictures of her. She was a beauty. Tragic end to her life." He shifted back to his guests. "This place was built in 1824. I saw that when I booked your room. These walls ooze Irish history."

Wendell was engaging in pure, in-your-face evasiveness. No wonder he'd stuck to sparkling water. Colin snatched up his pint glass and nodded to Emma. "Do you want to get the truth out of him or do you want me to...or just forget it and pretend drinks and a night at the Shelbourne are a last-minute wedding gift?"

"They're a surprise wedding gift," Wendell said, unruffled. "They're not last-minute."

Emma sipped her champagne, returned the glass to the table and turned to her grandfather. "But Colin's right, isn't he, Granddad? You *are* hiding something."

Wendell leaned forward, plucked the slice of lemon out of his glass, squeezed it, then tossed it back in and took a drink. "You two missed your jobs while you were on your honeymoon, didn't you? You're rested and ready to pounce on an old man. I shouldn't have mentioned expensive whiskey and being retired. Put you on alert."

"When someone does something out of the blue, out of

THIEF'S MARK

character, most people will notice,” Emma said. “It doesn’t take being an FBI agent.”

“Helps, though.”

Colin gritted his teeth. “Spit it out, Wendell. Why don’t you want us at your place?”

The old man locked eyes with his new grandson-in-law. “All right. I give up.” He paused. “My place is a crime scene.”

Emma stiffened visibly. Colin noticed a renewed strain in her Sharpe green eyes. “What kind of crime scene?” she asked quietly.

“Break-in. Someone slipped inside while I was out for a walk after lunch. I didn’t have much time to think before you two arrived in town. Putting you up here was the easiest way to handle you until I could figure out what to do.” He waved a bony hand. “One of the hazards of having FBI agents in the family.”

“You didn’t call the police,” Colin said, making it a statement.

“No point. Nothing they can do.” Wendell gave another sigh. “Damn, I’m getting old. Fifty years ago I wouldn’t have spilled the beans this fast. *Ten* years ago. I should have just had you over to the house and handed you a broom to clean up the glass.”

Emma’s chin shot up. “Glass?”

“Guest-room window. That’s how they got in. Do you have a car? Where are your bags? You can check in after your drink. I booked your room under Donovan. I assume you’re using Sharpe professionally?”

CARLA NEGGERS

“Unless you land in prison,” Emma said. “Then I might reconsider.”

“I wouldn’t blame you.”

“We turned in our rental when we arrived in Dublin and took a cab here. We left our bags with the bellman while we had drinks with you.” Emma leaned toward Wendell and put a hand on his thin wrist. “Why don’t we finish our drinks and then walk over to your place and have a look?”

“Check in and get settled first. I’ll take a cab back to my place and meet you there. A one-way walk’s my limit these days.”

“You can call the gardai in the meantime,” Colin added.

Wendell scowled at him but turned to Emma with a smile. “Take your time. I won’t touch anything, but I’m not involving the gardai and the FBI has no jurisdiction here. Just so we’re clear.”

“Have you told anyone else about the break-in?” she asked.

“No, and I don’t plan to. I didn’t plan to tell you but Colin here had his thumbscrew look on and I caved.” Wendell raised his glass. “Bottoms up, kids.”

“Granddad could be overdramatizing and the break-in isn’t a big deal,” Emma said as she and Colin approached her grandfather’s town house near Merrion Square. They’d decided to walk after checking in to the hotel. Wendell had staked them to an elegant, third-floor room with a view of St. Stephen’s Green. “It’s still possible we can have a good last night of our honeymoon.”

“We will no matter what,” Colin said.

THIEF'S MARK

She smiled. "You've turned into a romantic."

"The Ireland effect."

"Not being with me?"

He winked. "We'll see what happens when we get home."

Home was her tiny apartment in Boston and his house in his hometown of Rock Point, Maine. Now *their* apartment and house. She loved being married to him and had relished every second of their time together in Ireland. She looked at him now, her broad-shouldered, dark-haired undercover-agent husband with his ocean-gray eyes and sexy smile.

But her mind was on her grandfather. "I don't like the coincidence of a break-in and our arrival in Dublin," she said.

Colin gave a curt nod. "I don't, either. Do you think he has a suspect in mind?"

"I don't know. He's being slippery, that's for sure."

"I'm not touching that one."

"Best we stay on our toes when Granddad is in full obfuscation mode."

"Not regretting joining the family business instead of the FBI at the moment, are you?"

"Not at the moment, no. Not ever, actually." She sighed. "Granddad didn't look hurt or freaked out to you, did he?"

"No, but he never does."

True enough, she thought.

When they reached her grandfather's redbrick building, he pulled open the door before she could knock or ring the bell. "I suppose you want to go straight to the crime scene," he said. "Come on in."

CARLA NEGGERS

Without waiting for an answer, he led them through the entry and front room back to a ground-floor bedroom. He moved aside, and Emma stood on the threshold, Colin to her left and a bit behind her. The room was small and square, with two twin beds, a nightstand, a dresser and photographs of Skellig Michael on the wall opposite the window, which looked onto a terrace at the back of the house. The only sign of a problem was a spiderweb of cracked glass emanating from a fist-size hole in the window.

“Bastard unlocked the window and came right in,” her grandfather said behind them. “Used a gnome statue on the terrace to break the glass. You remember it, Emma. It belonged to your grandmother. Otherwise I’d have left it in Maine. It’s a homely little thing. Anyway, I think he went out through the back door. I don’t know if it was a man. Could have been a woman.”

Colin pointed at the bare tile floor in the bedroom. “No glass.”

“I went ahead and swept it up. There wasn’t much.”

“You shouldn’t have touched anything,” Emma said.

“Yeah, I know. It would have been easier if I’d left the doors unlocked and he walked in and out again. Less of a mess to clean up and I might never have known anyone had been here. I’d never have looked if...” Wendell stopped abruptly. “Never mind. Doesn’t matter now.”

“If what, Granddad?” Emma asked.

He rubbed the back of his neck. “I spotted a piece of broken glass on the kitchen table when I got back from the pub. That’s why I checked in here. The intruder must have taken the glass with him after he climbed through the win-

THIEF'S MARK

dow. If I'd been here and put up a fuss—well, you know. He could have threatened me or slit my throat.”

Colin angled a look at him. “But you didn’t see anyone?”

“No one in here or outside. I wasn’t here when he broke in and I didn’t get my throat slit. And,” he added emphatically, “the glass could have been a practical consideration. A tool rather than a weapon, in case he needed to cut something.”

Emma frowned. “Cut something?”

He motioned with one hand. “Come.”

Emma felt Colin’s tension as they followed her grandfather to his study, now his home office and where he spent most of his time. When the weather was dank and chilly, he’d have a fire going, but not today, given the lingering warm, dry June weather. It had rained only a few times during her and Colin’s stay in Ireland, but the occasional lazy, drizzly day hadn’t gone to waste.

“I turned over most of my physical files to Lucas when I shut down my outside office,” her grandfather said. “He went through them when he was here last fall and took what he wanted back to Maine with him.”

Lucas, Emma’s older brother, had taken over the reins of Sharpe Fine Art Recovery and worked out of its offices in Heron’s Cove, a picturesque village on the southern Maine coast. He’d just completed a massive revamp of the offices, located in the same Victorian house where a young Portland security guard had launched his career as a private art detective. Six decades later, Wendell Sharpe was world-renowned, and Sharpe Fine Art Recovery was a thriving business, but still small in terms of staff. His only son—

CARLA NEGGERS

Emma and Lucas's father—had cut back on his role with the company after a fall on the ice had left him in chronic, often debilitating pain.

"Lucas is considering reopening a Dublin office now that I've retired." Wendell shrugged, waved a hand. "More-or-less retired, anyway. I work when he needs me or I land on something interesting on my own. The rest of my files are here." He tapped his right temple. "I told Lucas what he needs to know for the business. Everything else can go to the grave with me."

"The stuff you want to hide," Colin said.

Wendell snorted. "Damn right but not from the FBI. You and your lot wouldn't be interested. Neither would my family. Most of it's memories, ideas, suppositions, speculations, conspiracy theories...mistakes I've made, people whose reputations might be harmed unfairly because of their association with me. I'm an old man. I've done a lot."

Emma sat on the couch. She'd spent countless hours here in her grandfather's study when she'd worked for him before she'd left Dublin for the FBI. She'd wanted to learn everything—about the business, art crimes, his contacts, his methods, his resources. She'd been a sponge. But she eyed him with measures of skepticism, anticipation, curiosity—the usual mix when she was dealing with her grandfather. "What do your files and memories have to do with the break-in?"

He hesitated. "Maybe I jumped the gun."

"Granddad, just tell us everything, okay? Don't make me pry it out of you."

"Rusty after your honeymoon?"

THIEF'S MARK

Colin took in an audible breath. "Quit stalling, Wendell."

"All right, all right. It's tricky timing, dealing with a break-in and having your FBI granddaughter and her FBI husband show up. It looks as if my intruder had a look around in here. He didn't toss the place, but there are signs." He pointed to a small, dark wood box on a shelf by the fireplace. "He got in there. It doesn't have a lock but there's no label saying what's inside. Never occurred to me anyone..." He didn't finish, instead plopping onto a chair across from Emma.

Colin remained on his feet. "What's in the box, Wendell?"

He clearly didn't want to answer, but Emma knew. She sighed. "It contains the stone crosses our serial art thief sent Granddad after his heists."

"Oliver York," her grandfather said. "I don't mind saying his name out loud."

Emma noticed a muscle work in Colin's visibly tight jaw but he said nothing. For most of their Irish honeymoon, they'd managed to avoid talking about, thinking about or dealing with Oliver, a wealthy Englishman with a tragic past. He was a self-taught expert in mythology, folklore and legends, a black belt in karate, a sheep farmer, a dashing Londoner with an apartment on St. James's Park and an international art thief. He'd launched his art-theft career on a bleak November night ten years ago when he'd slipped into a home in Declan's Cross, a small village on the south Irish coast. He'd walked off with paintings—including two prized Irish landscapes by Jack Butler Yeats—and an extraordinary sixteenth-century silver mantel cross. The police came up empty-handed in their investigation.

Six months later, after a small Amsterdam museum was

CARLA NEGGERS

relieved of a relatively unknown seventeenth-century Dutch landscape, Wendell Sharpe received a package containing a brochure of the museum and a polished stone, about three inches in diameter, inscribed with a Celtic cross, a miniature version of the one stolen in Declan's Cross. More thefts followed in at least eight cities in England, Europe and the US. After each brazen heist, another package with another cross-inscribed stone arrived at Wendell Sharpe's Dublin home.

Last fall a murder in Boston put Emma and Colin in contact with an eccentric mythology consultant advising on a documentary—Oliver York, it turned out, working under an alias. He was their elusive art thief. Without question. That didn't mean he would ever face prosecution. He knew it, and they knew it. Over the winter, the stolen art—every piece except an unsigned landscape stolen on that first heist in Declan's Cross—had been returned to its owner, anonymously and intact. Oliver, in the meantime, had put his unique skills, knowledge and experience to work for British intelligence.

Given the unique relationship he and her grandfather had, Emma wasn't surprised to hear Oliver York's name, but she'd have preferred not to.

She shifted back to her grandfather. "Is anything else in the box?"

"A few photographs I took years ago in Declan's Cross."

"Would they explain to an intruder the significance of the stone crosses?"

Her grandfather shrugged. "Probably not by themselves. They'd be a clue, though. There's nothing specific in the

THIEF'S MARK

box or anywhere else in here that connects the stones and the photographs to the thefts or to Oliver. Nothing's missing. The box lid was on crooked. That's the only reason I know the intruder got into it."

"Had the box been sealed?" Colin asked.

"No. Our perp didn't need to use his glass shard to cut through tape."

Emma forced herself to stay focused. Her grandfather was restless, fidgety. "You're sure the box was opened during the break-in?" she asked. "Could someone else have opened it on a different occasion and you didn't notice?"

"I'm positive," he said without hesitation. "And I didn't leave the lid on crooked and forget."

Colin's gaze steadied on her grandfather. "You have a soft spot for Oliver."

"He's an interesting character."

"You visited him at his farm in January. You stay in touch."

"So?"

Stubborn as well as fidgety and restless. Emma eased onto her feet. "Granddad, as you pointed out, Colin and I have no jurisdiction here. We're family. We want to help."

"I know you do." He uncrossed his legs and tapped his fingertips on his knees. "I didn't want to involve you. It's your honeymoon."

"Have you told Lucas about the break-in?" Emma asked him.

"No. No point. There's nothing he can do. He's in New York on business. With the time difference and every-

CARLA NEGGERS

thing—no point bothering him. I didn't tell your father, either. I can handle this situation on my own. I'm not five."

"You need to get the police in here, Wendell," Colin said.

He rose stiffly, with a small grunt, as if he was in pain. How much was a bit of an act Emma didn't know. Colin sucked in a breath—it was a sign, she knew, he was on his last thread of patience. She pointed toward the back of the house. "Did you go straight to the kitchen when you got in?"

Her grandfather nodded. "Yeah. Maybe I heard something. I don't know."

"Was the back door open or shut?" Colin asked.

"Partially open, like it hadn't been latched properly and the wind caught it. Then I saw the glass and went into the bedroom and saw the broken window. I figured whoever it was must have heard me coming in through the front door and bolted out the back door. Someone looking for cash, drugs—maybe just getting out of the rain."

Colin shook his head. "People don't break a window to get out of the rain."

Emma appreciated the back-and-forth between them. They were both strong, independent-minded men, each in his own way. Her grandfather grunted. "You know how to sweat a guy, Special Agent Donovan."

He grinned. "You're just out of practice. That was nothing. We'll see what the gardai want to do."

"Lock me up."

"Can't say I'd blame them but they probably won't. At

THIEF'S MARK

least not tonight.” Colin dug his phone out of his jacket. “Catch your breath, Wendell. I’ll make the call.”

Emma wasn’t surprised when the gardai couldn’t do much, given the delay and little physical evidence. At this point, it was unlikely they’d locate passersby who might have seen something. To complicate matters, the broken window opened onto a small, fenced terrace with a private gate—which her grandfather had left unlocked. Someone walking through an unlocked gate wasn’t likely to draw attention.

Once the gardai left, he insisted she and Colin return to the Shelbourne. “Go,” he said, opening the front door. “Enjoy yourselves. Room’s paid for. It’s too late to get a refund.”

“I don’t like leaving you here alone,” Emma said. “You could always stay at the hotel, too.”

“Three’s a crowd anytime but on a honeymoon?” He shuddered. “No way.”

She smiled. “I didn’t mean in the same room.”

Her grandfather grinned. “I bet you didn’t. Relax. I’ll be fine. If this guy wanted to harm me, he’d have jumped me when I came home instead of scooting out the back door.”

“That doesn’t make me feel better, Granddad.”

“Lock up,” Colin said. “Gate, windows, doors. We’ll give you a hand.”

“I don’t need a hand. Go.”

Emma hugged him, kissing his cheek. “Call Lucas and fill him in or I will. Thanks for our night at the Shelbourne. We’ll stop by before we leave for London tomorrow.”

CARLA NEGGERS

He returned her hug, kissed her on the cheek. “Always good to see you, Emma.” He turned to Colin. “You, too, Colin. Welcome to the family. We’ll do better than a broken window next visit.”

Once they reached the street, Colin glanced at Emma. “He’ll have the whiskey before he locks up the place.”

“No doubt. He’s tired. He doesn’t like to admit he’s not forty anymore.”

Colin slipped an arm around her. “We still have our fancy room for the night.”

She leaned into his embrace. “That we do. I haven’t heard from Oliver since he left us the champagne at Ashford Castle our first night here. Do you think the timing of the break-in with our arrival in Dublin is a coincidence?”

“I don’t think anything that involves Oliver York and your grandfather is a coincidence.”

They crossed a quiet street. “We can see Oliver while we’re in England,” Emma said.

“*You* can see Oliver.”

“You’d let me go on my own?”

Teasing time. As if Colin “let” her do anything. He tightened his hold on her, drew her closer. “I don’t know, I think I could get into a submissive Mrs. Donovan.”

She laughed. “Oh, you think so?”

His deep blue eyes sparked with humor, and something else. “We can find out tonight.”

They walked hand in hand past Merrion Square, one of Emma’s favorite spots in Dublin, with its black iron fencing, lush greenery and soothing Georgian ambience. She’d spent countless hours there during her months working

THIEF'S MARK

shoulder-to-shoulder with her grandfather, learning from him, enjoying his company, his experience, his brilliance as a private art detective and consultant. Everything she'd gleaned she'd put to use in her work with the FBI. The quiet, pristine square had been a pleasant spot to consider her past and her future. Her past had been a stint in a Maine convent. Her future was here, now, with Colin.

Her grandfather had accepted her decision to leave Sharpe Fine Art Recovery, if not enthusiastically at least with his good wishes. "You'll be Special Agent Emma Sharpe the next time I see you," he'd said with a grimace. "I'll never get used to it, but it's what everything you've done to date has prepared you to be. Go catch bad guys, Emma. Stop them. Lock them up. Keep us safe."

Colin tugged on her hand. "Lost in thought?" he asked. She smiled. "Totally."

He pulled her closer. "It's a beautiful evening in Dublin."

It was, indeed. The warm weather and the prolonged daylight of June had brought the crowds out to the streets. Shops, pubs and restaurants were bursting, and people were flowing into St. Stephen's Green. Although tempted, they decided to skip a walk through the park and returned to the Shelbourne and their elegant room.

A plate of chocolate truffles and two glasses of whiskey were set out on a small table, with a note:

To Mr. and Mrs. Donovan,

Enjoy the last night of your honeymoon.

Love,

Granddad

CARLA NEGGERS

Colin lifted a whiskey glass and handed it to Emma. “Your grandfather is impossible, but he does have his charms.”

“It was a spectacular ten days, wasn’t it?”

“Yes. Spectacular.”

She nodded to the note. “I like the sound of Mr. and Mrs. Donovan. I’ll have an easier time in Rock Point as a Donovan.”

“You think so?”

“Your brothers won’t think you’re manly if I go by Sharpe.”

“That’d ruin my reputation for sure.” He picked up the second glass. “I don’t care what you call yourself, you know.”

“I know. I’m learning to tease like a Donovan. I love being married to you whatever anyone calls me. We’ll be home soon enough. Right now, we’re on our honeymoon.”

His gaze settled on her. “Yes, we are.”

A warmth spread through her. She clinked her glass against his. “*Sláinte*.”

Colin smiled. “*Sláinte*,” he said, and he set his glass and then hers back on the table.

THIEF’S MARK
by Carla Neggers
Available August 29, 2017
from MIRA Books
Copyright © 2017 by Carla Neggers