

Morrigan

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A very Irish girl moves to america, meets a very american boy, hates him starts a band with her new friends and tries to get her step-dad kicked out.

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1 - Chapter 1

Morrigan St Clare did not like change.

Her needs were simple. She required consistency and normalcy to function properly, and she had a pretty much, normal life.

She lived with her mother Maeve, with whom she had a stable relationship and her step-father Lucien who she disliked and made her best effort to stay away from him. She got along with her older sister Ally and her little sister Keeley and was best friends with her twin brother Ciaran.

She liked playing her guitar, she liked gymnastics, she liked running and she liked gardening.

She liked her house in Ireland, she liked the farm next to her house and she liked the vegetable patches outside her house. She liked her cat Salem, her puppy Coco and her pony Midnight.

Her life, with the exception of the breakup of her parents a few months ago, was as close to perfection as she could ever hope for.

Until one day her happy little world was rocked to its foundations.

“Sweetheart, we’ve got a surprise for you!” her mother had said brightly with Lucien standing behind her grinning like an idiot. Morgan instantly put her guard up. “Was she pregnant?” Morgan had thought, “She had been looking a little peaky for the past few weeks and although she didn’t want a baby brother or sister, it would be good for Keeley, who was getting spoiled.”

“Are you pregnant?” Morgan asked.

Lucien spluttered, his glasses fogging up and his face going pink. “Not much of a surprise then.” He muttered. Maeve was undeterred. “Yes and, well, since Lucien is American,” She broke off to give Lucien a loving smile which Lucien returned with a pathetic grin like a love sick puppy. “We thought that we would get in touch with his or her roots.” Morgan’s mom finished.

There was a sinking feeling in Morgan’s stomach but she ignored it and said cheerfully “Well you two, or should I say three, have fun!” Lucien laughed and said in a dopey voice, “Ha, ha! You’re such a kidder Morgan! You’re coming with us!”

Then Morgan, whose life had just taken an abrupt turn for, the worse, blacked out.

*

When Morgan woke up she was in her pyjamas.

“It was just a dream,” she told herself soothingly. “A horrible, horrible dream. I really don’t have to leave my perfect life.”

Just then, her brother Ciaran strolled into the room. He was always a comforting presence and with his tall, lean build, amber eyes and dyed black hair, he was the hottest boy she had ever seen, so much so that the fact that he was her brother was the only thing that stopped her from jumping him some days and at times even that was not good enough.

“So twin sister,” he began plonking himself in a chair, “are you going to pack, or must I do it for you?”

The sinking feeling returned to Morgan's stomach with a vengeance. "Pack?" she asked nervously, "pack for where?" Ciaran swivelled round in his chair and said incredulously, "Come on Regan, don't be silly! We're going to the States!"

Morgan's face slowly went pale.

In a second she was out of her bed, striding into her mother's room.

Her sister Ally was there and seemed to be in deep discussion with Maeve.

"Mother, I will not go to America with you!" Morgan said quietly, but her voice carried around the room threateningly.

"What are you talking about?" Maeve yelled. "Of course you're coming." Morgan shook her head solemnly "I'm going to go and stay with dad."

Now it was Maeve's turn to faint.

As she hit the ground Lucien ran in from the bathrobe in a turquoise terrycloth dressing gown and a bright pink shower cap. There was blond chest hair curling out from the gown.

Morgan felt like throwing up.

"You go to your room and pack young lady!" Lucien screamed.

Morgan faced him off.

"Make me, Curly." Morgan said, pointing at the offending hair.

Lucien went crimson.

"Why should I have to go? I can go and stay with dad!" Morgan complained to her mother.

Lucien cleared his throat.

"I said my dad, not some chick with a dick and a bad case of chest hair." Morgan said slowly, like she was talking to someone who was not completely there.

Maeve gasped.

"Don't you talk to him like that!" she screamed, from Lucien's arms.

Morgan sneered, "I bet the kids teased him rotten! I bet they beat up his wimpy butt. I know I would have if I had had the chance. Lord knows I still want to."

"I'm not having this discussion. You are coming with us whether you like it or not." Lucien said as firmly as he could, which (surprise, surprise), was not very firmly at all.

Despite Lucien's lack of firmness, nothing could sway them. She did everything short of begging, but it was to no avail.

Finally she decided to boycott everyone excluding her pets.

The real blow came one day when she was grooming Midnight. “Come on sweetheart, I know we’ll hate America together, you and me.” She crooned softly to her.

Her mother came in supporting her growing belly, and said sympathetically, “Are you saying good bye sweetheart?”

Morgan whipped round, the boycott forgotten.

“What do you mean SAYING GOODBYE?” she all but screamed.

Her mother cowered, realizing that she had inadvertently let the cat out of the bag. “Well sweetheart, we’re moving to a suburb and... well... you can’t exactly ride your horse to school...” Maeve broke off.

At the best of times, Morgan loomed slightly over her mother, but just then, she towered over Maeve, stretching past her 5’11 height.

“I—I—I...” she began, her voice becoming shrill.

Then she stopped and said in a low voice. “I hate you. I hate you so much.”

And with that she threw the curry comb into a bucket and strode out.

*

For two weeks Morgan did not speak a word. Instead of the heated looks that usually accompanied her silences there were just unnerving blank stares. Not a single word did she say to her family and Lucien.

Two weeks passed into two months and still not a single word came out of her mouth. It was like she had lost her ability of speech.

At first everyone tried to ignore her and hope that she would cool down eventually but, Morgan stuck to her promise.

Ally, Keeley and Ciaran all asked her why she was boycotting them, seeing as they had done nothing, but she just gave them empty looks and walked away.

Finally the day of departure came.

Morgan had packed everything of hers into a suitcase, a carrier bag, guitar case and two pet carriers, one containing Salem, the other, Coco. As she loaded her luggage her mother nodded appreciatively, saying “Oh, you’ve packed light. So good of you to make things easier for me.” Morgan rolled her eyes. She couldn’t help it. So far she had done nothing to make life easier for her now obviously pregnant mother.

Morgan was debating whether to apologise but then she saw Lucien’s golden head bobbing towards them over a stack of boxes he was holding.

Morgan scowled but her mother had already clambered into the van.

Lucien whistled cheerfully and said happily, "So Morgan, you ready to start a new life?" Morgan thought about how to respond to such a stupid question.

"Of course not!" she wanted to yell. She wanted to scream and kick and punch and throw the sad excuse for a man standing in front of her into a wood chipper.

But how could she? Lately, she'd gotten silence down to a fine art. It would be how she would cope in America, so she couldn't blow this on this worthless human weakling.

She just couldn't.

What she did do though, was to lean in trying as hard as she could to burn the words "I hate you and I will make you pay for what you did to my family. One way or another."

Lucien didn't get the message.

"I think it is wonderful weather for flying,"

Morgan said nothing.

"-And sailing," Lucien continued,

Silence.

"-And swimming,"

Silence.

"-And horse riding,"

Silence was over. Morgan looked Lucien in the eyes and there was no mistaking the malicious gleam.

The blood roared in Morgan's ears and next thing she knew, she was on Lucien's chest holding on to his throat and trying to choke the life out of him.

Then she was being lifted off him and silent tears were streaming down her face.

"What is going on?" Her mother was yelling, Ally was picking Lucien up and Ciaran was hugging Morgan and Keeley was oblivious, listening to Ciaran's iPod which he had lent her in a desperate attempt to stop her from realising what was going on.

Her mother then stopped squawking like a chicken.

"Get into the car everyone; we will sort this out in the states."

The all scrambled into the car. The ride to the airport was a solemn and silent trip.

About twelve hours later, the six of them were standing in front of a big yellow house with a blue roof, a white shed, a mixture of flowers and weeds growing beside and in the cracks of the path.

There was a great big fence, about six feet tall, with ivy and honeysuckle creeping over it.

A perfect house.

Morgan was going to hate it.

2 - Chapter 2

Jared was in the garden doing some weeding for his mother, when he saw them.

He knew that they were family because of the red hair. It was dark red, with rich brown mixed in. Everyone apart from the man. He had blond hair and looked like he had been at the bottom of the food chain in high school, like the boys that the football team beat up three times a day for fun.

Then there was a slight woman with blue eyes and a heavy belly.

Next there was a small girl, slim and tanned; her poker straight hair was pulled back by an Alice band.

A tiny girl followed the first. Her hair was in bunches and she was in pink flowered dungarees and a white t-shirt.

He then saw a tall lean boy, whose muscles could be seen through his black shirt.

The last of them was a tall girl with her hair pulled back in a ponytail, and then curling wildly behind her. She came out of the car once she was sure the rest of them had gone inside.

He might not have written her up as anything special, seeing as he had just asked out the hottest girl at his school, but then she turned.

She was pretty he supposed, not really that much out of the ordinary way except for her eyes.

Her family's eyes were all blue, even the blond weedy one. Hers were amber kind of like a tiger's which contrasted oddly with her hair.

Red hair, orange eyes.

He didn't know why exactly, but he found himself yelling "Hey Red, what's up?" The girl jumped then put a hand over her heart.

Then she saw him. She narrowed her eyes wrinkled her nose, then grabbed a guitar case and suitcase and ran inside her house.

Zack felt a small twinge of annoyance. All right it was not the most polite way to address someone you didn't know, but he was being friendly.

He stomped back into his house, just in time to hear his mother, Renata Harrison, on the phone with some random person.

"...no WAY Tandy! I won't believe that he...now really...well, well...yeah there IS some new family moving in...yes, they're supposed to be moving in today..." his mother nattered oblivious to the fact that her son

had just walked in.

Zack walked upstairs to his bedroom and peered out of his window. There was a window directly across from his room. He saw a silhouette of a girl with a guitar case.

“Red!” he thought, filled with unwarranted excitement. At first he thought of yelling across to her but then he decided against it.

He saw her go into the bathroom and instantly ran into his, but unfortunately the shower wall was blocking his view of the window. He sighed and went back to his room.

He was relieved to see she had come back and was dropping a cat on her floor and buttering his paws like toast.

Then she set him down and he began to lick the butter off neatly.

Zack was so engrossed that he didn't hear his mother calling until his little brother Pete came running up the stairs and into his bedroom.

“Mom's calling, Zakky!” he said in a sing-song voice as he jumped onto Zack's back. “Get off me,” Zack said, not really meaning it.

All his brother did was cling tighter.

Finally, Zack charged down the stairs with his brother clinging on for dear life.

“Zachary McGregor! I have been calling you for FIVE minutes, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?” His mother bellowed as he reached the bottom of the stairs. The grin that Zack had worn on his way down faded like a rainbow in a storm.

“Sorry mom,” he muttered.

“Sorry is not good enough!” his mother barked. “I have-”

But Zack never found out what she had, because then his doorbell rang.

Zack's mother gave him a look that said plainly, “STAY HERE”, but the moment his mother turned her back, he began to creep up the stairs to his room, but the door was open and he could vaguely hear a conversation.

“Hi,” said a lilting musical voice. “We're new in the neighbourhood, and we thought we'd come and introduce ourselves, if this is a good time.”

His mother turned to see her son fleeing up the stairs and said slowly, “Well...”

“Oh I see you're busy,” the lilting voice said with a hint of a laugh.

“Yes,” Renata said distractedly, giving her son the evils.

“All right, would you like to come over for dinner? My husband makes excellent tagliatelle carbonara”

“Yes, yes. Now if you’ll excuse me.” Renata said rudely, slamming the door in the visitor’s face.

The guest smiled as she heard Renata get into full steam. “SO YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD ESCAPE DID YOU?! WELL I AM ABOUT TO PROVE YOU WRONG!”

3 - Chapter 3

Morgan was lying across her bed, with her cat lying across her. Her eyes were closed behind her circle glasses, hiding her tiger eyes.

She hated the horrible uniformity of the neighbourhood and the complete lack of creativity. Her mother had promised to re-do the house but it didn't matter.

No matter what they did to the house, whether they sprayed alcohol over it and flambéed it, it was still not home to her.

All of a sudden her sister, Ally, burst into her room.

"Ohmigosh!" she began breathlessly, "Did you know that there is a total HOTTIE next door?"

Morgan groaned and flipped herself onto her feet, then answered in Gaelic, *"I don't care if he's bloody Chace Crawford! I want to go home."*

Ally faced her and replied *"We are home Regan! I know it's tough to change but you'll learn to love this place!"* She paused as she jerked her head towards the window which saw directly into the boy's room. *"And it doesn't hurt that there's a complete hottie next door."*

Just then, they heard their mother call them from the bottom of the stairs.

"We're coming ma!" Ally called back.

"We?" Morgan asked, an eyebrow arched.

"Regan-" Her sister began to plead.

Morgan sighed dramatically and nodded, then followed her sister down the stairs.

And when she found out what her mother had to say, she wished she hadn't.

The next door neighbours were coming for tagliatelle and tricks, goody, goody! What fun.

Not.

Morgan groaned and ran back upstairs.

It didn't make much difference.

A few hours later, the doorbell rang.

It was a shrill annoying sound and it hurt Morgan's ears, not at all like in Ireland. There, no one had bothered with stupid buzzers, they just knocked.

At first Morgan waited for the person to take their hand off the bell, but it went on and on.

Finally, she walked down the stairs and pulled the door open.

It was the Rude Boy.

"You," she breathed.

Then she slammed the door shut.

Her mother came downstairs, slowly stepping until she got to the bottom of the stairs. She was not doubt shocked to see her daughter, forcing the door back, and clutching a hand to her heart.

"Sweetheart what's the matter?" Maeve asked concernedly. Then the bell rang again and her mother realised that her guests were there.

"Morgan honey! Go change and be down here in ten!" Her mother said shrilly.

Morgan knew, from experience, that it was impossible to argue with her mother when her voice went all shrill and went upstairs.

Meanwhile downstairs, Maeve was fussing over Zack and Pete.

"Aw, your mother couldn't make it? What a shame! Wow so big, what school do you go to?"

"Uh the Falcon High, ma'am." Zack answered.

"Oh REALLY! Then I don't suppose you'd mind showing my children around? One of them is in your year I should think, the other two are two years below.

"Great," Zack answered.

"I'm in the sixth grade!" Pete interrupted.

Fortunately at that moment, Lucien, Ally, Keeley and Ciaran came in.

"This," Maeve began pointing to the Lucien, "Is my husband Lucien."

Lucien extended a hand.

It was smooth and well manicured. "Strange for a man." Zack thought.

Then Maeve pointed to the girl with bunches.

"My youngest daughter Keeley," the girl waved shyly.

"My son Ciaran," The boy nodded in Zack's direction.

"My oldest daughter Alicia." Maeve said, gesturing to the other girl who smiled and said, "Call me Ally."

Then Maeve turned as though she was looking for something.

"My other daughter should be coming downstairs right now." She said apologetically.

"Morgan!" Maeve yelled.

And then she came down the stairs.

Her wild hair had been pulled into a long braid that fell to her waist. She was wearing a white turtle neck, black skirt and was barefoot.

Maeve sighed. "This is my daughter Morrigan, but we usually call her Morgan."

Morgan did not even make any sign that she had seen Zack and said to her mother in Gaelic, "*Mother I am not hungry. I wish to go upstairs.*"

Maeve switched to Gaelic. "*Sweetheart I know you don't want this but we'll only be in America for a short while. A year or two, so for the time being, we need to make friends so please. For me. I know I don't deserve it but please. I'm begging you.*"

Morgan wanted to tell her mother "No way!" but she couldn't bring herself to do it, so she said quietly. "*No you DON'T deserve it.*" Then seated herself as far away from Zack as the table permitted.

Zack smiled at her, "Hey Red, how's it going?"

Morgan looked away pointedly.

Everyone averted their eyes like the scene would burn their eyeballs out of their sockets. Everyone except Pete and Keeley who were too young to get the message.

Pete announced loudly to no one in particular, "I'm in sixth grade."

Morgan looked at Pete and said clearly, "I'm glad to hear it little boy."

Everyone was stunned but Pete, who was clearly outraged.

"I am NOT a little boy. I am a sixth grader, not a little boy! Little boys go to kindergarten, NOT the sixth grade. Like ME! THAT'S why I'm not a little kid!" Pete ranted.

For the first time, Morgan smiled. Unfortunately, she had to hide that smile behind her hand.

"Oh I am sorry. I should have known that you were no little boy. My mistake." Morgan said as sincerely as she could manage (i.e. not very).

Everyone laughed and seemed to relax, but then Lucien went into the kitchen and came back with a huge dish of pasta with sauce and the moment he put a plate in front of her she froze like water in the arctic.

Without even touching her food, she pushed it out in front of her and reverting to Gaelic, said to her mother, *“I am going to bed now. I think I have helped enough.”*

And that was that.

4 - Chapter 4

When Zack went home he had a lot on his mind. He was interested in the fact that it was only his brother who had managed to get English out of Morgan, and a smile!

It gave him hope although he had no idea why seeing as he already had a girlfriend. Before he went to bed he looked into Morgan's window.

She was there with her guitar slung over her shoulder.

She began to play, and Zack found himself listening. She played very well, it wasn't exactly what he had thought she would be good at.

Then she began to sing to her guitar.

Unlike her playing, her voice wasn't anything special, but he couldn't stop himself from listening to her.

She was singing in another language, he realised as he drifted back to his bed sleepily, not aware of the fact that Morgan had seen him and had fixed her tiger eyes on him.

But just before he fell asleep, he caught a glimpse of those amber eyes.

*

The next day, was a Sunday.

Zack's mother had gone to church with Pete and his father was still abroad.

So he decided to amuse himself by going to Morgan's house. He clambered over the fence and was surprised to see Morgan, kneeling in the dirt, wearing gardening gloves and pulling out weeds.

"Hey Red," Zack said cheerfully.

Morgan looked like she was going to say something, then thought the better of it, and turned away.

"What's up?" Zack asked, ignoring the fact that Morgan was ignoring him.

Silence.

"Do you want some help?"

Silence.

"Did you know that silence means yes?"

Silence.

“You can’t ignore me forever you know.”

Silence.

“Red, what-”

And finally Morgan’s patience snapped like an elastic band.

“Would you BE QUIET! You are so bloody talkative! Do you EVER shut up? It’s Red this, and Red that! My name is Morgan! M-O-R-G-A-N, MORGAN! You found that out last night! Or were you too high on bloody pasta carbonara to hear?” she screamed.

Zack seemed unperturbed.

“Did you know that you get a little vein in your forehead when you yell?” he asked cheerfully.

Morgan stared at him for a while, with her mouth hanging slightly open.

“I swear, only you.” She finally said, disgust mixed with reluctant admiration. Most boys would have turned tail and fled whenever Morgan got into a rage.

Then the sky darkened incredibly quickly. Then a raindrop plopped on Morgan’s hand. And another. And yet another.

She sighed and picked up her trowel and went into the shed. Zack followed her into shed.

“I’ve had just about enough out of you sir. You can just go on your way!” Morgan snapped.

“Aw, come on Red, I just-” he began,

“DON’T CALL ME RED!!” Morgan screeched, seizing a sharp edged spade next to her.

For the first time, Zack looked shocked.

“Easy now, re-, I mean Morgan,” Zack said in what was obviously meant to be a soothing voice, that was not working.

“You are going to leave me alone and never return to this house, or I swear I shall chop you into little pieces. Now off with you, before I get the rake!” She managed to say just before she ran out of breath.

Zack took a step back like he was going to concede but then he launched forward.

Morgan swore.

Zack grinned.

He had successfully pinned her against the wall (a feat not many could boast of), and Morgan was going red.

“I swear by all that’s mighty you wastrel, if you don’t let go of me, I’ll have you singing soprano from now till Armageddon.” She hissed, wriggling like a worm.

Zack laughed, “Wastrel? Do people still use that, Irish?”

Morgan looked like she was about to explode.

“IRISH? IRISH! YOU’RE MAKING ME SOUND LIKE A PASTRY!” she exploded.

Zack shrugged, “You told me not to call you Red,” he said simply.

Morgan shook her head, speechless.

Her body went limp. “Look,” she said with the air of someone who had given up. “I want to go back inside and go to bed. I would like to wake up and find out that this was some sick nightmare to make me realise how lucky I was when I was in Ireland. My mother will still be married to my father, Lucien will still be here, making other people’s lives miserable and I will be happy again.”

Zack, studied her face and studied the tiredness in her eyes, infused with something else. Probably misery.

The moment he let go he realised it wasn’t misery, it was hate.

Quick as a flash Morgan seized the spade and clunked him over the head with it, then scurried into her house slamming the door.

Zack, however, was lying on the floor. Conscious, but bemused. No one had ever touched him before, let alone floored him with a spade.

It was then that he realized that it might be quite difficult to get Morgan to be his friend.