

MEMOIRS OF A MOBSTER

JUDY SERRANO



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PRAISE FOR JUDY SERRANO'S BOOKS

“Love, love, love this series. The author really sucks you in and makes you feel the story come to life.”

—Gina Butler, <http://www.ginaslibrary.info>

“It is a series of books that I'll not forget.”

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“Judy Serrano deserves to be on a top seller list right up there with Nora Roberts, James Patterson, John Grisham and more. She brings so much emotions, excitement, and chaos into her stories. The whole Easter Lilly Series will keep you at the edge of your seat with each series being better the last.”

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“This is one series that I just adore! Heart pounding, blood pumping, it just screams sexiness. It has everything from passion, romance, love, danger, and excitement. Judy Serrano really knows how to keep a reader on their toes throughout the entire story!”

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Prior Books in this Series:

Easter's Lilly

Brother Number Three

Relatively Close

Author's Note

I'd like to thank my husband, Miguel, for always supporting me. I would also like to thank him for creating yet another wonderful cover.

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MEMOIRS
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Chapter 1

I'll never forget the day I put a bullet in my uncle Hector's brain. I was 16 years old. He had a gun to my pregnant mother's head and my uncle Max, her husband at the time, couldn't bring himself to pull the trigger. Iron Man, they used to call him. He was a great shot and impossible to kill. But not that day. That day my uncle Max froze. Too afraid Hector would kill my mother. Too afraid he couldn't live with the guilt of killing his brother... he was afraid. My mother lost the baby: Hector's baby. And Uncle Max was both distressed and relieved that the rein of Uncle Hector was finally over.

I had never seen her happier. I must admit that I had trouble understanding why she ever turned to Hector in the first place. She and my uncle Max were crazy in love. They were always touching and loving on each other. I don't know if it was because they finally appreciated what they had or if it would have always been this way if they had just been faithful to each other from the start.

My uncle Diego, the oldest of the brothers still living, was still in love with my mother, so she and Max had to finally move out of his house: The family house. Uncle Diego was my mother's first husband. It was a business deal of sorts since her father was the chief of police back in the day.

Max was undercover FBI along with Uncle Hector and he stole her away from Diego. Uncle Hector... well he was an affair that grew out of control. Unfortunately, when my uncle Diego was married to my mother, he didn't treat her well. She hated him back before his religious conversion. When he became a Christian, they became close friends. My mother has a very genuine heart.

Diego's wife, Julia, couldn't watch him long for her anymore. Diego and his wife moved back to Las Vegas and Max and my mom moved to a house on the lake in a place called Quinlan, Texas. It was a great place for me to set up shop, so I did just that.

Now Max teaches high school math and runs a little accounting firm on the side while my mom runs the worship team for the church. I run Diego's organization for him. He isn't quite retired yet but he is loosening his ties.

My brother Chris, the next oldest after me, helps me with my legal issues. Amelia, our little sister next in line, runs my finances and Sam, the baby; well... he is my enforcer. I live in a ridiculously large home and Sam shares it with me. We are the perfect reflection of Max and Diego back in the day. Diego owned the house and ran the organization and Max, the baby of the four siblings, was his enforcer.

Although we all have the same mother, most of us have different dads. My mom's judgment wasn't always clear when she was young. Chris and Sam are full brothers with Max as their father while Amelia's father was our late Uncle Hector.

My dad is Johnny Malone. He was recently released from prison and tried to get me to run his organization for him. Max and my uncle Hector were responsible for locking him up in the first place. I don't think he ever forgave my mom for not stopping them. I turned him down, of course, and this put some distance between us. I was his only son and am not *really* related to my uncle Diego, but I grew up in his house and he took care of my mom no matter who she chose to be with at the time. He always wished it would be him. Although it never was, he never turned his back on her. His brother Max, my mother's husband, was like a father to me. He raised me. I call him Papi and I think he prefers that to Uncle Max.

My sister Amelia has two half siblings: Octavio and Tess. Similar to our family, they all have the same father but different mothers. My uncle Hector and Olivia had Octavio just after I was born. Uncle Hector didn't know about him until Octavio was 12 and Hector died shortly after that. Tess was three years old when

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Hector died. She lived in our house for the first three years of her life and then moved in with Olivia and Octavio. Her mother was Uncle Hector's late wife Regina and of course, Amelia's mother is my mother. I was responsible for both Hector and Regina's death. Living with Diego all those years hardened me a bit. It was like nothing to me, watching her die. She was mean to my mother. I was 15 years old.



It was a significant birthday for my mother. I can't tell you which one because she was very vain, but I can tell you it was an important one: Important enough for Uncle Diego to make a trip out to see her. We hadn't seen him for a few years. He was trying to stay away so he could make a real life with his wife and leave my mother alone. He and Julia have three children. Two were Diego's and one was Oscar's. Oscar and Julia were married many years ago. Oscar is married now to Octavio's mother, Olivia. Diego named his children Max and Maggie. Margaret is my mother's middle name and Maggie is short for Margaret. I don't think Julia knows that.

We've always kept our relationships relatively close. If I have learned anything from this life I have lived, it is that you never share a girl with your brother. So whoever she is, I have to be sure that my brothers would never want her. I have a very handsome family, so I knew this would be tricky.

At 31, I still had never had a serious girl in my life. After what I had gone through as a teenager and what I had watched my mother go through, I made an important decision. I would never let a girl close enough to hurt me again. I used them and discarded them as I had watched Uncle Max, Uncle Hector and Johnny do my whole life. The love for my mother caused so many deaths. There were the men who wanted her and couldn't have her, the men who took her anyway and then the men she chose. All are dead now except Max, Diego and John. If I'm going to fall in love, it has to be worth the collateral damage.

The party date was set. The only person who couldn't be there

was Amelia. Although she did my books, she also did some work for some local businesses on the side and she couldn't get the day off. That's what she said anyway. Chris, Sam and I were all planning on being there along with Uncle Max and Diego. Diego was a surprise. I didn't expect him to come. Julia wouldn't come with him and I can't say that I blame her. He hugged and kissed us all as he came inside. I could see his eyes searching the room for my mother. "She's not here yet," I told him. "It's a surprise party, and papi took her out for a cocktail first."

"I hope he goes light on the tequila," he said, laughing a little. "You know what tequila does for her."

"I'm sure a glass of champagne is all," I told him. "You should see them together. He's very protective. He never leaves her side unless he has to go to work."

"If I didn't know how happy he made her, I would swoop down and take her away."

"Aren't you married, Diego?" I asked.

"Yes, but," he paused and took a breath, "Lilly comes first."

"Always," I told him. "Some things never change."



We waited for my mom and talked some idol business chatter. Diego spoke of Oscar Garcia and how they had become quite close over the years even though he was married to Oscar's former wife. But Oscar and Olivia were quite happy now and that seemed to lighten the sting enough for them to continue a friendship. My cousin Octavio ran the Garcia organization for Oscar. He, like Diego, was trying to loosen his ties. Oscar's natural children wanted nothing more to do with him, so lucky for Octavio, he got the whole ball of wax. Just like I did.

They finally arrived. Chris, Sam, Uncle Diego and I all yelled, "Surprise!" as they opened the door. She cried and kissed us all, one by one, as Max handed her a glass of champagne. Then she laid eyes on Diego. She put her glass of champagne down and smiled at him. I could feel the warmth that generated through them both.

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“Go ahead,” Uncle Max said to her. “Give him a kiss.” She ran to him and threw her arms around his neck. He pushed her back just a little and took her face into his hands. He gently pressed his lips to hers and then gradually released her. “That’s enough,” Max warned. They smiled at each other.

“I think I miss your messy hair in the mornings the most,” he started. “The way your body moves... your pretty smile... just to name a few things that I miss about you. It’s been a long time, Lilly. Too long.”

“Diego, I miss you too. We all do. Life isn’t the same without you spreading your protective wings around us.”

“I don’t think that’s what he wants to spread around you,” Max said laughing.

“Shut up and come here,” Diego said, throwing his arms around his brother. “You have no idea how much I have missed you.”

“We miss you too, bro,” he answered. “But I don’t miss having to share my girl. It has been so great being alone with her.”

“I’m sure it is,” Diego responded, winking at my mother. She came back over and wrapped her arms around him again. He touched her face with his hand. “God you’re beautiful.”

“Diego, I’m not the sweet, young thing you found in distress all those years ago, you know,” she told him.

“To us, you will always be that girl,” he reminded her, smiling at Max.

“Amen brother,” Max replied in agreement as they slapped hands in the air.

“Cut it out you two,” mom responded, moving back over to Max. He kissed her lips tenderly and she moaned a little. Diego made a sour face.

“I know,” I told him. “They’re like that all the time now.”

“I’m glad you’re happy, baby,” Diego said to my mom. “I’m glad you finally have what you want.”

“Even if it did take putting Hector in the ground,” Max answered. “It was worth it.”

We all hung out in the living room drinking champagne and

shooting the breeze when the intercom went off. It was Tess and Octavio. I hadn't seen Tess since she was three, but Octavio and I had been in close contact ever since he called me to tell me where Uncle Hector was holding my uncle Max captive. Hector was using back then and was out of control. He left my mother so that he could be with Octavio's mother, Olivia, but was not happy to discover that my mom and Max had gotten back together. He almost killed him that day. Octavio's phone call saved my uncle Max's life. That experience bonded us together like brothers. But nonetheless, I was surprised they arrived unannounced. That was out of character for him.

I opened the door and Octavio was standing there with his sister. She was the most gorgeous creature I had ever seen. I was literally speechless, which was unusual for me. "Put your eyes back in your head," Octavio spouted. "Junior this is my sister, Tess. We need to talk to you. I'm sorry we didn't call first." She had long, curly blond hair, much like my mothers and milky, white skin. Her eyes were as blue as a September sky, with red, full lips, forming a forced smile. She was thin but curvy, and I felt a pull... an unexplainable, magnetic connection.

"Come in," I told them, trying to appear indifferent. They walked inside and we immediately heard a glass break. When we looked up, my mother was staring at Octavio and her glass had shattered onto the floor. He had a striking resemblance to my late uncle Hector. He's about the same age that Hector was when they were intimate. I can only imagine how that would startle her.

She walked over to where he was standing and put her hand on his cheek. She looked over at Max. "It's him. It's Hector."

"Max..." Diego warned.

"I know, I'm on it." He walked over to where my mom and Octavio were standing. "Baby girl. This is not Hector. This is Hector's boy, remember? We met him when he was 12 years old in Las Vegas." She continued to stroke his face. He put his hand on her wrist and rubbed his cheek against her palm before slowly removing her hand.

"Aunt Lilly, I am so sorry for what my father did to you. But

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Junior and I are friends. I probably should have come to see you sooner.”

“No, you’re him. You have to be. You’re the right age and everything.”

Max came up behind her and pulled her back a little by the shoulders. “Hector would be older, Lilly. Octavio is too young to be Hector. Remember, he was older than I was. I’m the baby.”

She looked back at Max, and it was clear that Diego was visibly beginning to get concerned. “Max...” he warned again.

“I’ve got her,” he said as she collapsed into his arms. He scooped her up and laid her on the couch. This was not uncommon for my mom. She used to have a lot of panic attacks back when I was young. She would collapse or black out. Sometimes she would totally lose track of reality. She got stronger as time passed but after Uncle Hector raped her, she never really recovered. Truth be told, she never really got over him. They fought their attraction for many years and lost every time. When he turned to drugs, and hurt her, that was it; it was finally over. He left, and turned to Olivia. A sort of void began to grow inside of her. When he came into our house and had a gun to my mother’s head, it was a no-brainer. Shoot first, ask questions of the dead for all the good it would do. Uncle Max rushed me out of the room and the FBI was there, cleaning up the mess, before I had time to catch my breath. My mother’s whole personality seemed to change that day. She lost her unborn child and the only man she couldn’t hold on to, all in one day. Whatever independence she may have gained, shriveled up and died like an autumn leaf, dismissing its tree and getting taken up by the wind.

She is much more dependent on Max now and when he is home; she needs to be with him. They are always touching but in a kind of unnatural way. She is clingy and seemingly desperate. I think he likes that she is so needy. But Hector is something we try not to discuss in hopes that the memory of him will somehow dissipate into a sea of lost encounters. Unfortunately it was hard to avoid this time with him staring her in the face.

“Junior, we should have called, I’m sorry. It’s urgent or we

wouldn't have come. I'm sorry about your mom. Maybe we should leave."

"No," Max called from the couch. "She needs a reality check. I need her to know that you are not him. Come closer, son. She's okay now."

He walked over to her and she sat up. "I'm sorry, Octavio," she started. "The resemblance is uncanny."

"So I've been told."

"He was about your age when we..." She stopped and looked at Max.

"It's okay, baby girl. He's hardly a threat to me anymore. You can talk about him." He looked over at Octavio. "She loved him very much. I'm not sure I'd have her right now if he was still alive."

"Of course you would," she assured him.

"He loved her too," Max continued. "So much that it drove him mad."

"I know and I'm really sorry to interrupt your birthday party."

"How did you know it was my birthday?" she asked, suddenly suspicious of their agenda. "And what happened to your sister's face?"

Tess put her hand on her cheek when she said that and looked at her brother for an answer. I couldn't believe I didn't notice it before. "That's what we need to talk with Junior about."

"Diego," Tess said to me. "We can come back at a more convenient time."

"Diego?" I replied, almost laughing to myself. "No one has called me that since I was a boy."

"I'm sorry," she answered.

"No, no," I told her. "I like it."

"Cut it out, Romeo," Octavio said smiling. "We need to talk."

Max got up and stood beside me. When I backed up, Uncle Diego was behind me and I tripped over him. "You'll excuse us for a moment, won't you?" Max asked, as they dragged me into the kitchen.

"What?" I asked.

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“You’re already gone,” Diego observed.

“Well... come on,” I argued. “Those eyes, that beautiful blond curly hair, those lips. Ah... what I want to do with those lips.” They both had very serious looks on their faces. “No common blood flows between us,” I reminded them.

“She’s still your little sister,” Max exclaimed.

“How so?”

“She lived with us for three years. She’s Hector’s daughter.”

“John and mom are my parents,” I reminded them again. “Although to me you are my father, in reality there is nothing keeping me from having her. Have you ever seen anything so beautiful?”

Their very serious faces began to crack small smiles. Then they both burst into a spray of laughter. “What?” I asked again.

“Your mother,” they both said at the same time. They slapped hands in the air again.

“Junior, she stole our hearts and never gave them back,” Max added. “I’m sure if Hector were here he’d agree.”

My mother, Tess and Octavio came back inside the kitchen. “What are we talking about?” Mom asked, latching back onto Max.

“How do you do that?” I asked him. “At your age, she still clings to you like that.”

“Oh my,” Diego started, laughing so hard I thought he might wet himself. “At your age, Max.” Diego was considerably older than Max was.

“Shut up,” he said to Diego, smacking him in the arm. “I don’t want to waste a minute not smelling her hair or touching her skin to mine. I want her to be absolutely sure that I can love her like no other. No doubts. Not anymore.”

“What a great way to look at love,” Tess answered. “I always thought I’d have that someday.”

“You are so young, sweetie,” my mother replied. “There’s plenty of time.” Tess’s eyes filled with tears and I knew there was something going on that I needed to know about. I motioned for everyone to sit at the kitchen table.

“What is it?” I asked. “You came all this way, so spill it.”

“It’s your father,” he replied. “He’s been stealing our shipments, killing our men and ...” he squeezed his sister’s hand, “raping our women.”

“What?” I asked. “I’m sorry, what did you say?” The shock in my eyes had to be transparent.

“First they went after Olivia but Oscar got in the way. But then...”

“No,” I said in disbelief. “Please don’t tell me he raped a little girl.”

“She’s not a little girl anymore, Junior,” Diego added. “She’s a beautiful, young woman. She’s Oscar’s daughter to the rest of the world.”

“Did he...?” I almost couldn’t say it. “Did he steal your innocents?” I asked, taking her hands into mine and gently caressing them with my thumbs.

“Tavy...” she said, looking at her brother for answers.

“It’s okay, you can tell him.”

“He did, didn’t he?” I asked. “Just like he did to my mother.”

She nodded and let go of my hands. Octavio wrapped his arms around her as she wept. “We’re over-powered, Junior. We need you to talk to your father and find out what he wants. Make him leave us alone.”

“Of course, I’ll talk with him,” I assured him. “But you should know that he and I are not close. I chose Diego over him and he has never really forgiven me for that.”

“Call him, please.”

“Men who rape are cowards,” I told them. “When they get too close to my family, they become dead cowards.”

Chapter 2

“I know you consider Max to be your father, but you sure do remind me of myself at your age,” Uncle Diego said proudly. “Johnny is your birth father. There is common blood between you. It will be harder for you to kill him than you might think.”

“I’ll do it,” Max started.

“I’ll do it,” Diego insisted.

“Stop it both of you,” my mother interrupted. “Junior will handle this as he sees fit.”

“He beat you up?” I asked her, touching her cheek.

“Just enough to make me stop fighting him,” she answered, flinching away from me, obviously from the pain. “He said I looked like Lilly. He said he wasn’t going to lose his chance this time.”

“I do see a resemblance,” Diego added. “You’re both very beautiful, blond, blue eyed and innocent.”

“Max.” My mom grabbed his hand. “Why would he do this?”

“It’s a way to take power from the kingpins. They take our women and demand obedience. If they don’t end up dead, it’s a powerful bargaining tool. If they don’t end up dead,” he repeated.

“Junior, remember when I saved Uncle Max’s life?” Octavio asked me.

“Is it time to collect, Tavy?” I asked smiling. I promised him a favor that day. He never did collect, so I knew he was waiting for something really important.

“How big a favor do you think you owe me for that night?”

“It’s a big one then?” I asked.

“How big was the favor I did for you, Junior? I need to know.”

“Anything you need, Octavio,” my mother interrupted.

“Anything. I will see to it that he gives it to you.” She put her hand on Max’s cheek and Max smiled. “Where would we be Junior, if not for our Maxwell?”

“You’re only as good as your word,” my uncle Diego reminded me. I looked at my mother with uncertainty. I was beginning to become fearful of this favor.

“The next time you are with a man, he will give you a real first time,” Octavio said to Tess while shooting me a look. I wasn’t sure if he wanted me to agree with him or if he had brought her here to sleep with me. I shot him back a look of confusion but he turned away. “He’ll be kind and gentle with you, I promise you that.” Her eyes barely touched mine as she searched the floor.

“The favor, Octavio. What do you need? Whatever it is, you know I’ve got your back.”

Chris came rushing into the kitchen with Sam. “They’re here.”

“Who’s here?” I asked, jumping to my feet.

“Your uncles. Sean and Rory. They’re at the guard gate, waiting for you to let them by.”

I looked at Diego for some kind of instruction. I wasn’t sure I should let them in at all. “Make sure they’re clean and let them in. The women need to go upstairs and Tavy needs to hide,” my uncle Diego said, taking control. “If they see Tavy they will know he’s brought her here.”

“Okay,” Tess answered.

“No,” my mother said in a state of panic. “No, Max, I won’t leave you.”

“Lilly, I want you out of sight, do you understand?”

“No,” she argued. “I won’t leave you. I’m safer with you and Junior. Please Max.”

“Aunt Lilly, I’ll keep you safe,” Octavio responded. “But if you want to stay with them, you’re right, they won’t let anything happen to you.”

“Let her stay, papi. You know how she gets.”

“Fine, but behave yourself, baby girl. No getting brave on me.”

“Yes sir,” she said smiling, saluting him as though she were in the military. Octavio took Tess upstairs and I sent a pair of guards

with them. The rest of us went into the living room. Max sat protectively with my mom as the guards let the brothers Malone in through the front door.

“We are here with a message from your father,” Sean started. They looked around the room at Max and Diego and then back at me. “Your *real* father.”

“My real father is here. What does my biological father want from me this time?”

“Your father wants to make a deal with you.”

“What kind of deal?”

“He will leave the Garcia organization alone if you hand over the girl.”

“I don’t have a girl to hand over,” I answered, trying to sound convincing.

“We followed her, we know she’s here.”

“What I find most ironic is how similar the situations are,” Rory blurted.

“What are you talking about?” I asked, becoming agitated.

“Sam is guarding Junior like Max used to guard Diego. We’ve got the older, darker Diego, and the younger blond-headed Sam. To add to the irony is the young blond woman, who is pregnant with Johnny’s child.”

I turned around and saw Tess and Tavy standing in the kitchen doorway. I didn’t want to tip my hand and let my uncles know that I was uninformed about her pregnancy. I looked to her for some kind of confirmation and she nodded discretely. I looked back over at my uncles and then at my uncle Diego who gave me an approving nod. It was then that I knew what I had to do. I shot Tess a wink and she smiled shyly. Finally, I figured out what the favor was.

“This will be easier than I thought,” Sean started, edging his way over towards Tess. Tavy got in front of her and I pushed my uncle in the chest backwards with my hand. Sam got up and stood between us.

“He said he missed his chance the first time and this time he is going to marry his Lilly, have the baby and raise it himself. You

may have noticed that you have not turned out the way he had hoped.”

“That’s disgusting,” I added. “He’s an old man. She’s like...” I did the math in my head. “20 and he’s... I don’t know, a hundred!”

“Watch it son,” my mother warned.

“Sorry mom,” I answered. Tess and Tavy came in and sat beside my mom and Max.

“We have to leave with her, Junior. She leaves and Oscar keeps his organization.”

The room got still. Uncle Diego was smiling smugly like he knew exactly what I was going to do next.

“And if I refuse?” I asked.

“He will declare war on you and the Garcia organization; women and children first. Your mother included.” I looked over at my mother who couldn’t be more tightly wrapped around my uncle Max, unless she was inside of him. Max waited for my response.

I paused for effect. I walked around them as though I was stalking my prey. There was no way I was going to let my father get his hands on her again. I finally stood still and stared them down. “You can tell my father that I am Diego Montiago.” Everyone in the room sat up at attention. “And just like the first time, he is going to rescue the girl, pregnant with his child.”

Everyone in the room gasped and it sounded like a hissing in the air. All the men in the room stood up at that point expecting trouble. Mom and Tess were pushed behind Tavy and Max, and Sam got closer to my uncles. “Rescue?” Sean asked. “Rescue, how?”

“Tess has agreed to be my wife.” She smiled at me when I said that. “I will raise my brother or sister as my own child.”

“Isn’t she related to you?” Rory asked.

“No common blood runs between them, except the blood that runs through her womb,” my mother added.

“Are you sure?” Rory asked again. “How many men did you sleep with, Lilly?”

“Out!” I shouted pulling out my gun. Sam put his gun to Rory’s

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head and Chris put his to Sean's.

"We're unarmed, Max!" Sean shouted. "Call them off. Call them off!"

"Get the hell out of here and don't come back," Max answered. "I swear to God if anything happens to my wife, I will hunt you down like the dogs that you are. You will end up like Juan and Victor, remember them?" They were some of the collateral damage I mentioned earlier. Both are dead now.

They lowered their guns and the two began to leave. Before they shut the door Rory rushed back in. "This means war," he muttered as I raised my gun and shot him. He yelled and ran out behind his brother, leaving a stream of blood along the ground.

"No reaction time," Max said, softly.

"I just nicked his shoulder. He'll live. I wanted to make sure I let out the first bullet. Now it's war."