



The Flesh Cartel #18: The Long Road

Rachel Haimowitz , Heidi Belleau

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In the exciting final season of the Flesh Cartel . . .

With the help of the FBI, Mat Carmichael has let himself be re-taken by the Flesh Cartel. Objective? Rescue his brother, exact revenge, and destroy the entire organization from the inside.

FBI Special Agent Nate Johnson will be playing backup, of course, but to get Dougie out alive, Mat will need to make sure his brother is out of Allen's clutches before calling in the troops. Now that Mat's back in bondage, though, there's no way he can do it alone. He'll have to ask for help from the only man within the Cartel who cares about Dougie's welfare: Nikolai. And even knowing it will destroy him, Nikolai delivers.

Bringing down the Cartel should have been the hardest part, but it doesn't take long to realize that the real challenge has only just begun. Dougie doesn't know how to be free anymore, and Mat is forced to admit that he may no longer be strong enough to help himself, let alone his brother. But with loved ones in their corner and their love for each other banked but not extinguished, Mat and Dougie learn that you can come home again, no matter how desperate the circumstances you've left behind.

The Flesh Cartel #18: The Long Road Details

Date : Published July 7th 2014 by Riptide Publishing (first published July 5th 2014)

ISBN : 9781626491229

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Format : ebook 56 pages

Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Erotica, Bdsm, Dark, Contemporary, Adult Fiction

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From Reader Review The Flesh Cartel #18: The Long Road for online ebook

Debra says

In this penultimate episode of the series, Doug is spiraling dangerously out of control and taking out his frustrations against Mat. Mat and Nate are trying to work out their relationship in light of the upcoming trial and Nate's uncertainty about what Mat wants and needs.

This episode was emotionally draining. Focusing mostly on what is going through Doug's mind as he tries to work through Nikolai's brainwashing, it was hard to read the toll Doug's self-destructive behavior was taking on both himself and Mat. The brothers go through a lot in this one, but it seems at the end that there is finally some hope for their future.

AGandyGirl says

Chappy says

Now living in their own apartment, Mat and Doug are trying to settle in. Mat does make some progress with Nate...which I'm ecstatic about ;D

Doug, however, takes a few steps back and tries to find solace in "serving" again. This is a bad move that has dire consequences.

Martin says

This installment is absolutely breathtaking! It makes perfect sense too! Even after escaping their ordeal, both Mat and Dougie are unable to find back to their old life, despite the therapy.

While Mat finds strength in his soon-to-be boyfriend Nate, Dougie feels left out and tries to find purpose in the things he knows best, hurting himself over and over again by letting abusive men take advantage of him - very much to poor Mat's horror.

This installment has some of the most powerful scenes between the brothers in this whole series. They really shook me to the core.

Mat stood stock-still. Frozen in place. Doug thought that meant permission, Mat's acquiescence, but when he leaned in again for another kiss, Mat snapped back to life.

Roared.

Kicked him right in the center of his chest and sent him sprawling into the coffee table. He couldn't breathe. Couldn't— couldn't— He wheezed, tears streaking down his face, back a line of fire where he'd hit the table, chest as fragile and crumbling as the walls Mat had hit.

“What the fuck is wrong with you?” Mat shrieked. “God fucking damn you! I can't, I can't—” He paced in circles, shoulders shaking, hands fisting and unfisting.

How had Doug gotten everything so wrong? “Mat,” he whispered, or tried to, as hard as it was to suck in air.

This series is literally among the very best fiction I know! I don't want to see it end. I can't imagine going back to 'normal' books after this...

And, oh my God...Roger.

5 stars!

Lucy says

[Roger's suicide(RIP Rog!) makes me hate Nikolai more. Poor Roger, I hope Nikolai spends the rest of life feelin

♥J ♥ says

That was absolutely brilliant. So much emotion, so much pain, so... I am almost speechless. This series is really coming to a close now and the way these authors have handled the change from what started out as a car wreck that you couldn't look away from (because it was soo dark, not because it was bad) to the closure end of the story is perfect. I don't know how they have managed to master these emotions from one spectrum to the complete opposite. These boys have been through so much.

One book left, and I look forward to it as much as I am dreading it. I never want this to be over.

I cried so hard in this one, but for completely different reasons to the previous books.
(view spoiler)

Therese says

[

Pure happiness - Mat and Nate together on the sofa.

Sexual arousal — Shower scene..mmmm.

Sexual frustration- No penetrating sex...again. I think it would help Mat's recovery extremely, if he could just top our little Nate. That's all I have to say about that. Mmmhm.

Worry- About their relationship and the conflict of interest.

A bit angry- At Doug's reaction to seeing Mat and Nate together.

A lot of fucking ange

A Girl Has No Name says

4 stars!

Close to the end of the series, this book is exactly what the title says - **The Long Road**. Both, **Mat and Doug** have a difficult path in front of them in order to recover from the terrible ordeal they had to go through.

While Mat has **Nate** on his side, Doug feels completely lost. He has difficulties figuring out who he is and what he wants. It was easy to read about Doug's decisions and I was definitely suffering with him. But I was also feeling heartbroken for Mat who can't do much apart from picking up the pieces.

Apart from all the problems and difficult situations the brothers have to handle, I really enjoyed seeing how they both try to get their lives back. With every page we are finally getting closer to the **light at the end of the tunnel**.

Only one my installment to go before this series comes to an end ... I have definitely **mixed feelings** about this fact.

JustJen "Miss Conduct" says

A review by The Blogger Girls.

At this point in the game, there really isn't that much more than can be said about how these are written. If you've made it this far, you are, like me, riveted to see these boys through to the very end. Surely, that says enough about the writing in this tale. It is a tight, well put together product.

As for the story, being the next to last book, almost seems like the calm before the storm. After all, the big finale is coming up. The story still moves along a bit, with Doug still having many issues with his identity and where he fits in the world. One thing I found odd was that it felt as though Doug should have been in some majorly heavy duty therapy after his rescue, but he seems to just be set aside awaiting trial. Granted, the extra therapy didn't seem to go so well for Roger, but still, it feels as though Doug should be getting more professional attention than he is.

Mat is still struggling as well. He is dealing with his own PTSD issues, as well as how to handle Doug, and

he seems to be getting to the breaking point just before he finds more strength from God knows where. He and Nate are realizing they want to get closer but things stand in their way for now.

This has been a long, sometimes very difficult, road, to be sure. All I know is that even though I don't want it to end, I cannot wait for the conclusion.

Elena says

5 oh-so-emotional stars!!!

It should be all OK now, it should be all *rainbows and unicorns* and one new shiny happy family for Mat and Doug, right? Now that all the Cartel members are in custody, it should be all nice and easy...

Well, it isn't!

Doug can't find his place in life. He still doesn't know what to believe and what to do with himself and his newly-found freedom. He feels uncomfortable in the new city and, most of all, he feels uncomfortable with Mat... On the one hand, he wants to cling to his big brother, to lean on him and pull strength from Mat's protectiveness...

On the other, he still waits for the other shoe to drop. He waits for Mat's shouting and punishing him, he *craves* Mat's punishment so he can take it calmly and move on. When Mat doesn't do it, Dougie freaks out and pushes his brother away. And boy, does he push hard!

Mat is just so MAT - he's fearless and so very brave! He's still close to panicking every time Doug goes out but he forces himself to let Doug wear his new, "slutty" clothes, his make up and cuff-like watch and go to leather bars and get drunk. He knows his *little brother* is there somewhere, buried deep down in Doug's tortured soul...

It's also Mat who makes a step towards **Nate** . He doesn't let the agent get away with any bullshit and just pushes - pushes Nate to look at him as at a man, not a *victim* , and pushes away his fears and nightmares about being close to someone again. And Nate, in turn, gives Mat back soooo much...

I cried, a lot!

My overall review and sum-up of the entire Flesh Cartel serial will be posted with the last, 19th book's review.

Kristie says

I knew this would become more difficult before it got better. I did. But, wow... This was so hard to take. There are some very tender moments, loving and kind. There are also some horrible things, stuff that probably needed to happen for these guys to begin to move on with their lives. That didn't make it any easier to get to the end. Mat and Dougie are the strongest, most brave and resilient brothers I've ever read. I really can't believe there is only one more episode left to go.

One little note for those of you who want to be slightly spoiled: (view spoiler)

I really like where this episode ended, despite everything I had to read. But I still can't help but still feel so

sad. It's like there's this hole in my heart. I hope the last episode fills it with happiness.

Skye Blue ?*~??(‘`?)~*? says

It's so good to see Dougie starting to make progress. He's finally realizing that he needs to find himself, even if he doesn't know who that is yet.

Only 1 more episode to go...NOOOOOO! I could follow these boys around for years.

Cory says

Aw Dougie....I feel so bad for you...but I think there might be a light showing at the end of the tunnel. Poor Roger!

Elaine says

4.5 Brotherly Love Stars

Mat and Nate try so hard to deal with their feelings for each other whilst they wait for the trial to finish.

Under witness protection, Doug now being called Sam is finding it harder to deal with the aftermath of his ordeal.

Resentful and confused he starts to wander into gay bars and clubs leading him into dangerous situations.

Will a chance meeting with a certain person and news of Roger finally be enough to bring Doug back to Mat and so they can move on with their life again?

As we come nearly to the end of this fantastic series, the authors have done a brilliant job of writing these final episodes and to give us some hope at last for these brothers...

Shile says

Damn! this was a difficult one.

-Doug is a douche, i wanted to smack him so hard for being such a dick to his brother Mat, then i remembered the hell and brainwashing he had been through and felt sorry for him. Doug doesn't know how to survive without a master, since Nikolai is no more, so he goes looking for a master and damn! the results are brutal and so hurting.

-Mat is still Mat, the one who tries to hold it together, good thing he has Nate now to lean on.

Full RTC after book 19.
