

CHLOE WALSH

Tanning

BOYS OF TOMMEN #5

ALSO BY CHLOE WALSH

Boys of Tommen

Binding 13

Keeping 13

Saving 6

Redeeming 6

Taming 7

Taming 7

CHLOE WALSH

Bloom books

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For Caitlin.

Author's Note

Taming 7 is the fifth installment in the Boys of Tommen series, and the first book for Gerard Gibson and Claire Biggs.

Some scenes in this book may be extremely upsetting, therefore reader discretion is advised. Because of its explicit sexual content, graphic violence, mature themes, triggers, and bad language, the book is suitable for mature readers.

It is based in the south of Ireland, set during 2005, and contains Irish dialogue and slang. Terms, references, lingo, and characters' internal dialogue is in conjunction with that period in history and in no way reflects the author's personal opinions or values.

A detailed glossary can be found at the beginning of the book.

Thank you so much for joining me on this adventure.

Lots of love,
Chlo xxx

Name Pronunciations

Aoif: Eeef

Aoife: E-fa

Caoimhe: Kee-va

Gardaí: Gar-Dee

Sadhbh: Sigh-ve

Sean: Shawn

Sinead: Shin-aid

Neasa: Nasa

Eoghan: Owen

Tadhg: Tie-g (like *tiger* but without the *r* at the end)

Glossary

the Angelus: Every evening at six in Ireland, there is a minute of silence for prayer on the television.

bluey: porno movie

bonnet: hood of the car

boot: trunk of the car

Burdizzo: castration device

camogie: the female version of hurling

Child of Prague: a religious statue farmers place out in a field to encourage good weather (an old Irish superstition)

chipper: a restaurant that sells fast food

cooker: oven/stove/hob

corker: beautiful woman

cracking on: hooking up

craic: fun

Culchie: a person from the countryside or a county outside of Dublin.
Usually used as a friendly insult.

daft: silly

daft as a brush: very silly

Dub: a person from Dublin

eejit: fool/idiot

Fair City: popular Irish television soap

fanny: vagina

feis: traditional Gaelic arts and culture festival/event

fortnight: two weeks

frigit: someone who has never been kissed

GAA: Gaelic Athletic Association

Garda: policeman (plural: Gardaí)

Gardaí Síochána: Irish police force

gas: funny

get your hole: have sex

gobshite: fool/idiot

grinds: tutoring

hatchet craic: great fun

hole: often said instead of ass/bottom

hurling: a hugely popular, amateur Irish sport played with wooden hurleys and sliotars (wooden sticks and small, hard balls)

Jackeen: a person from Dublin. A term sometimes used by people from other counties in Ireland to refer to a person from Dublin

jammy: lucky

jammiest: luckiest

jumper: sweater

junior cert: the compulsory state exam taken in third year, midway through the six-year cycle of secondary school

langer: idiot

langers: group of idiots and/or to be extremely drunk

leaving cert: the compulsory state exam taken in the final year of secondary school

messages: groceries

mickey/willy: penis

mope: idiot

on the hop: skipping school

on the lash: going out drinking

on the piss: going out drinking

poitín: Irish version of moonshine/illegal, home-brewed alcohol

pound shop: dollar store

primary school: elementary school, junior infants to sixth class

playschool: preschool/nursery

junior infants: equivalent to kindergarten

senior infants: equivalent to second year of kindergarten

first class: equivalent to first grade

second class: equivalent to second grade

third class: equivalent to third grade

fourth class: equivalent to fourth grade

fifth class: equivalent to fifth grade

sixth class: equivalent to sixth grade

Rebel County: nickname for County Cork

ridey: a good-looking person

Rolos: popular brand of chocolate candy

rosary, removal, burial: the three days of a Catholic funeral in Ireland

runners: trainers/sneakers

Sacred Heart: the name of Shannon, Joey, Darren, Claire, Caoimhe, Lizzie, Tadhg, Ollie, Podge, and Alec's mixed primary school

sap: sad/pathetic

Scoil Eoin: the name of Johnny, Gibsie, Feely, Hughie, and Kevin's all-boys primary school

scoring: kissing

secondary school: high school—first year to sixth year

first year: equivalent to seventh grade

second year: equivalent to eighth grade

third year: equivalent to ninth grade

fourth year: transition year, equivalent to tenth grade

fifth year: equivalent to eleventh grade

sixth year: equivalent to twelfth grade

shades: police

shifting: kissing

shifting jackets: lucky piece of clothing, usually a jacket, when trying to pick up a girl

slab of beer: box of 24 bottles of beer

solicitor: lawyer

spanner: idiot

spanner: a wrench

spuds: potatoes

St. Bernadette's: the name of Aoife, Casey, and Katie's all-girls primary school

strop: mood-swing/pouting/sulking

St. Stephen's Day: Boxing Day/December 26th

swot: nerd/academically gifted

tog off: change into or out of training clothes

wellies: rubber boots worn in the rain

wheelie bin: trash can

yolk: nickname for an illegal drug

PREFACE

Moments before the pain in my lungs exploded and everything went dark, I saw it. A halo of light. An orb of pure sunshine.

Her.

I saw her.

And that's when I knew.

That's when I knew...

PROLOGUE

Don't Take the Girl

CLAIRE

MAY 1995

The stench of smoke was in my nose, and I didn't like it. Mammy said it was incense; the same stuff Father Murphy burned at mass on Sundays.

I didn't like going to mass. The church felt stuffy, and old, and sad.

Worst of all, you didn't get to talk for a whole hour.

An hour felt forever when you were five.

Somehow, the church was even worse today and it was Tuesday.

It was sadder.

Looking around at all the crying faces, I plucked at a loose thread on my cardigan and swung my legs back and forth, smiling to myself every time I kicked the back of the pew in front of me.

"Sit still, Claire," Daddy instructed, placing a hand on my knee. "It's almost over, pet."

"It's stinky," I whispered back, pinching my nose. "I don't like it, Daddy."

"I know, pet," he agreed, smoothing a hand over my curls. "Be a big girl for Daddy and stay nice and quiet for five more minutes."

“Then can I play with Gerard?”

He didn’t answer me.

“Can I play with Gerard today, Daddy?” I repeated, pulling on the leg of his trouser suit. “Please? I miss him.”

“Maybe not today, pet,” he replied, and then he did what the other men were doing. He leaned forward and pushed his thumbs into his eyes to hide his tears.

“But how come?” I argued. “He’s right up there.” I pointed to the front of the church. “I can see him, Daddy.”

“No, Claire.”

“But—”

“Shh.”

I didn’t understand any of this.

Twisting sideways, I looked at my brother. He was crying, too. Mammy tucked him into her side as he cried against her shoulder.

“Hey, Hugh?” I whisper-hissed, covering my mouth with my hands. “Do you want to play with Gerard after mass?”

“Shh, Claire,” Mammy sniffled, using the tissue tucked inside her sleeve to wipe her face. “Not here.”

Not here?

What did that mean?

I couldn’t figure out what was happening, but I didn’t like it. I had a strange feeling in my tummy that got stronger every time I looked at the coffins. That’s what Hugh called the boxes near the altar.

There was a big brown one and a small white one. Hugh said that Gerard’s daddy, Joe, was in the big brown one and his sister, Bethany, was in the little white one.

Because they drowned last Saturday.

Drowned was a new word for me, and it was hard to understand, but it still made me super sad. Because when you drowned you went in a box.

“Drowned.” Brows furrowed in concentration, I tried to spell out the word. “D-R...”