

Doon

Bonus Content

by

Carey Corp & Lorie Langdon

Doon Bonus Material

Copyright © 2014 by Carey Corp and Lorie Langdon

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Thank you to the Alan Jay Lerner Estate and the Frederick Loewe Foundation for use of the Brigadoon premise.

Doon and Destined for Doon are available wherever books are sold. Doon book 3 releases 9/2/15.

TABLE OF BONUS CONTENT

CHAPTER 1.1 – Vee’s First Calling Dream

CHAPTER 1.2 - Kenna’s Graduation

CHAPTER 1.3 – Kenna Drives to Alloway

CHAPTER 2.1 – Vee’s Second Calling Dream

CHAPTER 2.2 - Reid-Welling Production Company: Vee’s Fairytale

CHAPTER 15.1 - Duncan’s Visit

CHAPTER 16.1 - Kenna's First Dance in Doon

CHAPTER 20.1 – Duncan’s Visit after Muir Lea

CHAPTER 22.1 - King MacCrae's Funeral

CHAPTER 31.1 – The Slimy Dungeon ... Again

CHAPTER 0.1 - Kenna’s Long Forgotten Calling Dream

CHAPTER 1.1 – Vee’s First Calling Dream*Veronica*

(This dream takes place before chapter 1 of Doon. But when Vee sees Jamie in the parking lot for the first time, the dream has faded from her conscious memory.)

I glance down at my dance leotard and fuzzy slippers. Everyone in their Prom finery points and laughs, until Tall, Blond and Gorgeous strides into my dream as if late for a starring role. Everything else vanishes in his all-consuming wake. His overwhelming presence so jarring and unexpected, I no longer know if I’m awake or asleep.

As he moves toward me, I notice his footsteps glide through a swirling mist and feel tempted to look around for a fog machine, but I can’t seem to tear my eyes away from his incredible face.

The pull of his mysterious gaze, a physical force, propels me forward until I’m standing directly in front of him. We’re so close I can feel the heat of his body. Rather than back away, I surprise myself by angling my head so I can more easily gaze into his dark eyes.

A slow, lazy grin flashes white teeth against sun-darkened skin. He gently brushes my cheek with the backs of his fingers. His warmth lures me and I’m in his arms, my body fitting perfectly against his strength. We begin to dance, moving in exquisite rhythm.

I melt into him, his heat seeping deep into my bones, into my soul. His eyes burn into mine, telling me without words that I’m not alone... promising I’ll never be alone again. Something

awakens within me, bringing my dormant heart into sudden irreversible life...changing everything.



CHAPTER 1.2 - Kenna's Graduation

Mackenna

(This scene takes place between chapters 1 and 2 of Doon.)

Holy Hammerstein!—the quad was trashed. Lockers disemboweled. Nine months of scholastic entrails scattered as if the school had been set upon by a horde of ravenous weremonkeys. The institutional, post-apocalyptic wasteland baked in one hundred and three degree heat, the air thick with the mildly repulsive stench of toasted paper.

Judgment Day had not visited Taylor, Arkansas—despite all evidence to the contrary, merely the final bell of the last day of the school year. The abandoned commons served as a vivid reminder that summer break had begun. Apparently, the only ones foolish enough to linger were the janitors and me. Even the lunch ladies had hightailed it out of Dodge.

I picked my way around a John Deere ball cap fused to the moldy remnants of what looked to be a sandwich and breathed a sigh of relief that I would never walk this route again. My empty locker testified to my complete and utter withdrawal from all things high school. Once I vacated these grounds, the only evidence of my last four years would be a few ensemble cast pictures on the drama room wall and an airbrushed senior photo in the yearbook. “*Good luck with Broadway, Kenna. KIT!*”

In contrast to the deserted school, the parking lot seemed to be celebration central. The entire student body loitered with determined abandon. Some of the more daring kids set off firecrackers. A few of the girls wept while their friends patted them on their inconsolable backs. Someone with a sense of irony had defaced the “No loitering” sign so that it made an exception for male genitals.

As usual, I watched from the sidelines. Mackenna Reid, the quirky redhead from Indiana who ate raw fish and idolized Sondheim like he was the championship head coach of the Razorbacks. The theater geek who walked among them, but would never be one of them. From my vantage point, they seemed to be a single party-minded organism punctuated by sobs and mini-explosives.

Armageddon—perhaps—after all.

Automatically, I reached into my pocket for my phone—my big girl version of a security blanket. Before I could hit speed dial, it chirped to life in my hand. The custom ringtone from *Wicked* announced my best friend. Her freaky knack for coincidental timing bordered on supernatural.

I swiped my finger across the screen and started talking as I lifted the phone to my ear. “Hey Vee. Are ya packed yet?”

A comforting chuckle greeted me from the opposite end of the connection. “Wow, Kenna. Is that how they teach you to answer a phone in the sticks? In the civilized world, we say ‘hello.’”

I answered her with a rude noise I’d perfected playing Narnia’s White Witch in community theater. “Are ya packed yet?”

“I don’t suppose there’s any hope of you stopping until I answer y—”

“Nope. Are ya packed yet?”

“Yes, Kenna,” she replied, in a voice thick with the verbal equivalent of an eye roll. “I’m packed.”

“In that case...” I channeled my most proper, Southern debutant. “Well, my stars! Is this *the* Veronica Welling? Howdy do, sugar. How was your little ole last day of school?”

Her bright mood shifted into something heavier with my final question. “Oh—fine...” The hesitation in her voice told me it’d been anything but—.

Dropping the drawl, I became one-hundred percent me again. “Is Strippy still giving you trouble?”

Strippy, a.k.a. Stephanie Hartford, was the patron saint of trailer trash—every part of her fake, from her bleach-blonde hair and tarantula eyelashes, to her padded bra and orangey, spray-tanned skin. The girl was dumb as a box of packing peanuts, with the morals of Medusa.

“It’s fine.” Vee liked to pretend nothing consequential had happened between them—like the wicked witch of the Midwest had never poached her boyfriend.

“I should’ve kicked her anorexic butt when I had the chance.”

An exasperated huff of disapproval erupted in my ear. “Are you ever going to let ‘The Ding Dong Incident’ go? It was second grade—and it wasn’t even your dessert!”

“It’s the principle!” Strippy thought being head cheerleader entitled her to anything her shriveled heart desired. “First she steals your Ding Dong—then your boyfriend. What’s next?”

“Who cares? By tomorrow we’ll be on another continent, having clotted cream and crumpets. Is your dad still taking you to the airport?”

Rather than point out her not-so-subtle change of subject, I decided to give her a pass. “Yep. I can’t figure out why he’s being so supportive. I keep waiting for him to say ‘April fools.’ Or for a pod person to come bursting out of his belly.”

Vee’s short burst of laughter ended in a dainty snort. “I think you’re mixing up your horror scenarios. Aliens would burst from his belly. Pod people would grow a whole new body to impersonate him.”

Vee’s ex loved scary movies. He got off on the fear they caused my bestie. For Vee—who’d been squeamish of things that go bump in the dark since our R.L. Stine days—they tied her stomach in knots and incited vivid nightmares. Yet, for the sake of their relationship, she’d let Eric drag her to every gross, gory piece of garbage Hollywood managed to churn out.

“Earth to Kenna?”

Somewhere along the conversation, I’d become completely absorbed in my own thoughts. “Sorry. I spaced out. What were you saying?”

Silence, as Vee decided whether the subject merited a recap. Apparently, it didn’t. “It’s not important. I can’t wait to see you tomorrow.”

“About that.” I pulled the list that I’d scribbled during English from my bag and skimmed it. “I’ll meet you in Newark, at your gate. If either of us misses our connection, we’ll meet next to the car rental counter in the Glasgow airport. Not baggage claim. Okay?”

“Thank you, Miss Bossypants. I think I remember my own plan.”

How she could make me cringe from several states away, I had no idea, but she did. “Sorry.” At times, I still thought of her as the twelve-year-old whose dad had bailed without a word of explanation. “I’ll work on that.”

“Sure you will.” She drew out the sure so that it had the opposite meaning. “And I’m flattered. You may not realize it, but you only boss the people you care about.”

Out of the corner of my eye, I noticed Greg Miller leaning against his beat-up Toyota in the parking lot. His close-set eyes met mine as he stepped forward with a friendly wave. Dropping my voice, I hissed, “Hey. I’ve got to run. Greg’s about to intercept me.”

“Greg, the stage tech?” Vee’d never met him in person but she’d heard plenty of stories. “Have fun with that.” Her laugh filled my ear and then cut off abruptly as she ended the call.

As fellow Midwesterners, Greg and I were buddies of sorts. We were friendly, but not really friends. I’d only ever had one boy as a friend and he didn’t count, since Finn technically didn’t exist.

“Hey, Kenna.” Greg’s thin lips stretched into a smile that revealed slightly crooked, coffee-stained teeth.

As a general rule, I tried not to encourage him. But this year he’d been appointed head lighting designer and as a theater professional, I depended on him to make me shine. Consequently, I continued to walk the fine line between friendly and flirty, hoping it wouldn’t blow up in my face.

“Yes, Greg?”

I placed my left hand on my hip, tipped my head to the side and raised my eyebrows expectantly—a carefully cultivated gesture that I’d perfected while playing “Maggie the Cat.” Whenever I felt uncomfortable, I pretended to be someone else. Someone who wouldn’t be intimidated no matter the circumstances. Now it came as second nature—like slipping into my most comfortable pair of jeans.

For a split second, he hesitated. His Adam's apple bobbed as he swallowed and turned the color of beets. A trickle of sweat rolled its way down the side of his red face. He shrugged and hastily brushed his jaw against his shoulder to wipe it away.

"Hey Kenna. Everyone's heading down to the lake. You wanna come?" His voice broke at the end of the question in a way that would've been endearing if he'd been someone else.

"I really appreciate you asking me but I can't. I've got a family thing."

It wasn't a lie exactly—more like a teensy weensy mendacity. Tennessee William's delicious word for untruth seemed to strip all the deceit from the meaning.

"Oh—okay." He stared at me for an awkward moment. "I hope you know how much you've meant to me."

With regret for my impulsive character choice, I dropped the femme fatale posturing in favor of something more honest. "Thanks. I hope you have a great summer."

Greg blinked twice and then dropped his head in defeat. "Well, see you at graduation."

"Sure."

He wandered back to where the drama club kids were attempting to power a karaoke machine from a car cigarette lighter. Tomorrow, Greg and the rest of the senior class would file across a makeshift stage in the middle of the football field for commencement. A ceremonial beginning.

While they marinated in their caps and gowns, I'd be crossing the Atlantic—already starting the next chapter in my life. It was an epic plan. I would embark on a summer of adventure in Scotland with my best friend and return in the fall to a prestigious internship with Chicago's Adrenaline Theatre.

I dug right down to the bottom of my soul and tried to conjure up the tiniest bit of remorse, or nostalgia, for what I was leaving behind. But I felt ... nothing. For me, Arkansas had been an inconvenient bus stop on the way to Broadway.

While I headed away from Greg and the revelry of Taylor High's graduating class, I shot Vee a quick text. *Crisis averted! Going home to pack. ;)*

As usual, Vee's response was lightning quick—like she'd anticipated my message, drafted her response and then waited with her finger poised over the send button. *U better! Thank your dad for me, again.*

K.

I returned my phone to my pocket as my brain started to tumble with unsettling thoughts. As a graduation present, my dad paid for two plane tickets to Scotland. However, something was wrong. Off.

He'd never wanted me to spend summers in Alloway, or get to know my great aunt Gracie—but it had been my mom's dying wish. Every June, when it came time for him to put me on the plane, he appeared to be holding his breath, the way one waits out a tornado warning. After Aunt Gracie got sick and I announced I didn't want to see her anymore, he seemed relieved.

So when I'd first informed him about my plan to spend the summer after graduation in Alloway, Scotland—to sort through my late aunt's belongings and put the cottage she left to me on the market, I'd expected him to flip out and forbid his only daughter to go halfway around the world. Object to two defenseless girls living alone in a foreign country of kilted boys where eighteen was the legal drinking age. Do something dramatic and paternal like ground me for life.

Instead, he'd turned quiet. His eyes—the identical shade of slate gray as mine—grew shiny and he seemed to disappear inside himself. When he finally responded, rather than talk to me, he spoke to ghosts.

“I always knew this day would come. No matter where we went, it was inescapable.” Then he stared at me with a hard, haunted look. “Even when you spend a lifetime running away, your destiny always catches up.”



CHAPTER 1.3 – Kenna Drives to Alloway

Mackenna

(The scene takes place right before chapter 2 of Doon. We get to see Kenna and Vee driving to Alloway and to glimpse of Dunbrae Cottage through Kenna's eyes.)

I was no stunt driver, but I could totally play one on TV. It was exhilarating to drive on the wrong side, down a lane that was more cart-path than actual road. As I flew toward my beloved Alloway with my bestie at my side, I couldn't envision a more perfect moment.

Unfortunately, Vee was not having the same award-winning experience. “We're almost there,” I said, noting her Kung Fu grip on the handle above the passenger door.

Despite the white knuckles, her mouth twisted into a smirk. “All the more reason to slow down. I would really like to *not die* today.”

Vee's gaze flicked past me to where a half-crumbling, yet surprisingly solid, stone wall loomed. Chunks of missing rock attested to its previous victims. If I squinted, I could almost see the ghosts of drivers past perched on the ledge cheering me on. "*Go Kenna, go! Go Kenna, go!*"

"Relax." I waited until Vee's turquoise eyes refastened on my face. "My aunt's place is straight ahead."

Her head jiggled from side to side which caused her hair to undulate in thick brown waves. "I haven't seen straight since Indiana."

There was a joke in that, but before I could get it out the universe threw us yet another hairpin curve. I slammed on the brake and skidded to a near-stop before maneuvering the sardine-sized car thru the hundred and eighty degree turn.

Once we were in the clear, Vee made a noise that resembled a chicken swallowing a mouse as another too-large-for-the-road truck came barreling at us. In hopes of making us less of a collision target, I sucked in my breath and stepped on the gas. Our clown car swayed as the truck rocketed past.

Exhilaration at cheating death made me feel lighter than air. "Seriously. Odds of us becoming road kill are astronomically small."

She sniffed. "Okay math girl. If Kenna and Vee are driving from Glasgow to Alloway in separate cars and Vee drives at 40 miles per hour and Kenna drives at 75 miles per hour, what are Kenna's chances of making it there alive?"

"The correct answer has nothing to do with math—just awesome driving skills, which I have in abundance."

Vee wrinkled her perfect button nose as if musing over which part of my statement to poke holes in first. She'd probably start with some quantum mechanics explanation of how math made

our car go. Maybe how geometry—or was it algebra?—was used to steer, and blah, blah, blah. I preferred to stick to the most basic, practical explanation. Cars go by magic.

When I said as much aloud, Vee rolled her eyes and shifted her focus forward. She knew better than to argue. Junior year, I'd dominated in debate class on acting skills alone. I took pride in my lack of preparation and total ignorance of actual facts. As my opponents carefully ordered their index cards, I channeled the greatest, legal protagonists of the American theatre. *Inherit the Wind*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *the Crucible*, *Agnes of God*, *Twelve Angry Men*, *The Caine Mutiny*—a role for each and every situation. The overachievers club had been positively outraged by how my A plus performances blew the class curve.

In typical bestie fashion, Vee hitched a ride on my train of thought. “Do you regret not going to graduation?”

“In bufu Arkansas? Nope.” I was exactly where and with whom I wanted. “How ‘bout you?”

“No.” She paused to chew her lip. Probably conjuring up the after-graduation party, Eric boozing it up while Strippy clung to him like a conjoined twin. Or possibly the empty spot in the commencement audience where her waste-of-space parent wouldn't be. Vee released her thoughts in a soft huff. “I'm just glad to be moving on.”

As usual, she was Right as Rogers—Richard not Mister.

A white and black blur to my left announced Alloway in three. Although three what—I had no idea...*Three metrics?* Vee quirked her brow and I knew she was just waiting for me to ask. Instead, I favored her with another smile. “We'll be there in three.”

“Miles, Kenna. Scotland uses miles just like us.” She angled toward me. “How long's it been?”

“Six years. Since Aunt Gracie’s funeral.” From the time I was knee high to a grasshopper, I spent every summer here. Dad always claimed it was so he could have a break from single parent life. Looking back, I suspect it was the closest thing to my mom he could give me. Her kin.

“What do you remember most about your aunt?”

“She was kooky. Fun. She gave me chocolate and coffee for breakfast. And she always set a place at her table for my imaginary friend. Do you remember him?”

Vee snorted. “How could I forget your made-up boyfriend?”

“Hey. He was real to me.”

I hadn’t thought about Finn in years. There hadn’t been a whole lot of children in Gracie’s neighborhood, so I’d made one up. Every summer, he waited for me on the Brig o’ Doon, the bridge behind Gracie’s house. Over the years, we’d gotten into plenty of mischief together. Of course, I was the only one to get into any real trouble. Being imaginary had its perks.

We rounded another curve and Vee’s gasp filled the silence as she got her first glimpse of Alloway. Ahead, a cluster of whitewashed cottages and medieval stone structures nestled into an emerald landscape so vibrant it dazzled the eyes. Rooftops of every earth-tone variation and angle rose against an impossibly bright blue sky.

A lazy river ambled along the left side of the village. And in the center of the tiny hamlet, just as I remembered, the marble pillars and curved dome of a Grecian monument created a proud pinnacle that reached toward the heavens.

This was my second home, where my late aunt Gracie—technically, my great aunt on my mom’s side, had kept Mom’s spirit alive. Now, Gracie would gift me and my bestie with an unforgettable summer before we went our separate ways.

I pointed toward the hamlet while coasting into a little roundabout. “Alloway was the home to eighteenth century poet Robert Burns. That’s his memorial in the center of the gardens. You can see it from the back of the cottage. And just ahead we’ll cross the River Doon.”

Wide-eyed, Vee took it all in. As we bounced over the rough stones that spanned the river, I glanced toward my left, where an even more ancient bridge, no longer relevant to modern life and fit only for foot traffic, arced over the water and disappeared into the forest. From the high point of the bridge, a kid waved in our direction. He was adorable; dressed in a plaid kilt with a matching cap sitting askew his mop of dark curls. He almost reminded me of—Sweet Baby Sondheim, it was Finn!

“Welcome home, Mackenna! I’m waiting for you.” His voice resounded impossibly loud inside the miniature car.

Heart pounding with the erratic rhythm of a hundred tap-dancing squirrels, I stomped on the brake and the car skidded to a stop half off the road on the grassy shoulder. I swiveled toward the bridge for a better look—and to prove that whatever reality gasket I’d just blown was entirely in my head. Thankfully, in place of the dark-haired boy, stood a very ordinary, bearded man in tweeds.

Other than the old guy, there was no one else in sight. It was a Blithe Spirit moment—hearing some phantom that didn’t exist. The urge to answer his gleeful voice nearly consumed me. But only whackadoodles conversed with people that didn’t exist. I was not crazy...yet.

After a few steadying breaths, I looked at Vee and braced myself for questions about my odd behavior. But she was a million miles away. She stared, trance-like, across the river. Tiny beads of sweat coated her skin. I knew if I touched her, she’d be freezing despite the warm afternoon. “What is it, Vee?”

Her wide, troubled eyes darted to mine and then back to the road. “I feel like I’ve been here before.”

It was far easier to focus on her para-abnormal delusions than my own. As I pulled back into traffic, I groped for the most logical explanation. “Every summer I wrote you about this place. I sent you, like, a million postcards.”

She nodded to indicate the two blocks that constituted the main and only shopping district. “Maybe...but everything’s so familiar.”

“You’re sounding a little nutball.” My reply, complete with accompanying hand gesture, provoked a small smile from her.

She swatted at my hand. “Don’t make fun.”

“Who me?” The girl with the little imaginary friend? I pointed to a tidy white shop with red lettering as we passed. “That’s the Poet’s Corner Coffee House. We are soooo going back for cinnamon cocoa after we settle in.”

Without missing a beat, she crinkled up her nose. “That’s just what I need right now—caffeine.”

As we slid through the final roundabout, a charming two-story structure came into view. It was straight up fairytale. The stately white stucco structure had a steep, thatched roof, and brown-trimmed windows that provided symmetry and counterbalance to the front garden of overgrown wildflowers. An arched trellis at the foot of the walk lent a welcoming, yet ceremonial, feel to the house’s approach. I’d spent the better part of my seventh summer reenacting Hansel and Gretel on these grounds.

Vee whistled, long and crisp. “Nice neighbors.”

“Nope.” I eased the sardine-mobile to a stop and indicated a wooden sign hanging from the center of the trellis. Celtic-looking script proclaimed DUNBRAE COTTAGE.

“No!” Vee blinked in rapid succession as if her vision needed fine-tuning. “Isn’t a cottage supposed to be small and cozy? This is massive!”

“Just three bedrooms, one full bath and one half bath.” I shrugged as if the cottage were a mere trifle. “Your old house in Bainbridge is actually bigger.”

The mention of her childhood home caused Vee to flinch. The bank had foreclosed, issuing in Vee’s pay-by-the-week motel and seedy rental years. Stupid Kenna!

As I lightly touched her arm, I made a mental note to make it up to her at the first available opportunity. “Wait ‘til you see the inside. The whole thing’s been restored thanks to the new caretaker.”

“Let’s go then.” Shaking the clouds from her blue-green eyes, Vee lifted the door latch. Before slipping from the car, she cast a bright smile at me over her shoulder. “Our destiny awaits.”



CHAPTER 2.1 – Vee’s Second Calling Dream

Veronica

(This dream takes place after Vee sees Jamie in the window at Aunt Gracie’s cottage, just before Kenna wakes her up in the library in chapter 3.)

The forest looms dark and dense. Running as if my life depends on it, fear squeezes my lungs, but I don't know what I'm running from...or to. Sweat trickles down my face stinging my eyes. Tearing through branches, thorns scrap my skin. I round a corner...

...and there he is.

Casually he leans against a tree, arms crossed over his broad chest, one booted foot in front of the other. I screech as I come to a clumsy halt, arms wind-milling at my sides.

Really? Now prince charming decides to show up?

Why couldn't he appear in a dream where I'm dressed in something besides my own sweat and fear?

I bend over resting my hands on my knees trying to catch my breath. As I straighten, my gaze travels from the tips of his sturdy black boots, past muscular calves encased in some kind of dark heavy socks, to strong sun darkened knees and thighs...

It was him alright.

Jamie.

Fighting the dizziness threatening to topple me onto the carpet of pine needles under my feet, I concentrate on shifting my eyes to his face.

Ridiculously pleased to see him again, I lift my lips in an inviting smile.

Intensity draws his brows together in a scowl even as he strides to close the few feet separating us.

The smile melts from my lips. I can see and almost feel his deep confusion, but neither of us speaks.

Standing close now, the air of anticipation deepens.

Mesmerized I study his face, knowing he could soon disappear. Strong straight nose; warm blond hair sprinkled liberally with gold; killer cheekbones; firm, well-proportioned mouth—the lower lip slightly fuller than the upper—and, oh...the most delectable dimple in his square chin.

“Jamie.” The name escapes my lips like a sigh.

He bends at the waist in a quick bow. “M’lady.” His dark eyes shine mischievously.

Mere steps away from this boy who I long to hold, who I know, in my gut, will be real when I touch him, I take a step closer.

His eyes heat as they sweep over my forehead, my eyes, my nose, my mouth.

My belly does a tight flip. He’s memorizing me too.

“When are ye goin’ to get here?” He moves closer still and I have to tilt my neck to look up into his face.

“Where?”

“I need you.” A dense swirling mist sweeps up his body as he reaches for me. “*We* need you.”

“I don’t understand.” I shake my head, and back away, not wanting to turn and take my eyes off of him, yet terrified if we touch, I’ll disappear forever.

“Wait...” His honeyed voice sounds raw.

The haze closes around us, roiling in waves, obscuring my sight.

Panic trickles down my spine. “Will I see you again?” I call out in desperation.

“On the brig...” His words echo through the fog and into nothing.



CHAPTER 2.2 - Reid-Welling Production Company: Vee's Fairytale*Veronica*

(This scene was cut from chapter 2 for pacing. It's a bit of fun insight into Vee's fairytale obsession.)

“So, what do you think?”

I whirled to find Kenna bouncing lightly on the bed.

“You're right. Dunbrae Cottage is just like a fairytale. Better than anything you and I could've dreamed up as kids.”

“The Reid-Welling Production Company! I totally forgot.” Kenna's dove grey eyes glittered as she flopped onto her stomach on the mattress.

“Our favorite game.” I liked to think all the plays I made up for us to act out had a hand in feeding Kenna's love for drama.

She sat up with an apple-cheeked smile. “What's our story today, Vee?”

“Ugg...no way.” I grabbed a stack of shorts and placed them in the dresser. “I wouldn't even know where to begin.”

When I turned, she knelt on the bed, hands clasped in a begging gesture. “Pleeeeeease. I'll be your friend forever.”

I returned her grin, feeling silly as tears burned the back of my eyes. I didn't need her promise to know this brash, sometimes kooky girl was my one true friend, the only constant in my life. If she wanted a story, then so be it.

Pushing down my sappy burst of nostalgia, I began pacing, my hands clasped behind my back. “Well, let's see...” I paused tapping my chin with my finger. “It should be a tale of

adventure...with a servant girl—that's me," I said watching Kenna bounce on the bed in anticipation, "and a noble princess—that's you."

I swept my hair up behind my head, twisting the strands into a loose knot as I paced. "The princess and the servant form a forbidden friendship which they must hide from the royal family. Their desperation to break free from the expectations and constraints of society prompt the girls to seek the advice of an evil sorceress...who then gives them each a magic chalice allowing them to communicate with each other throughout the kingdom." As I stopped in front of a window to think, black clouds rolled in, a spring storm brewing.

Continuing to pace, I let the words flow from my mind. "There will be two knights, brave and true. To serve and protect their blessed land from evil is what they must do." I paused and winked at Kenna, encouraged to see she still hung on my every word.

"One fateful night, both girls dress in servants' garb and sneak out to the lake...or the river." I wiggled my brows and gestured with my thumb at the windows behind me. "To stargaze and share secrets. Little do they realize that this night they will meet their destinies—our honorable and, of course, very handsome knights!"

"In kilts!" Kenna added.

"Of course." I grinned and then made my face serious as the room grew darker, the clouds moving closer. "After a short time, the girls each fall deeply in love. But what none of them know is that the evil sorceress has placed a curse on the chalices. Not only will the cups lose their magic if they are touched by someone who has found their true love..." I stopped and leaned in for dramatic effect, "but they will steal the holder's beauty, which will then be granted to the sorceress!"

Grinning like the silly girls we were, we both collapsed on the bed in a fit of giggles.

“Vee, you’re hilarious! I had no idea you still had it in you!” Kenna screeched through her laughter. “But I have to ask, does your Neanderthal Ex play into this little romantic tale?”

I stopped laughing, sat up on the bed and stared at her straight faced, “Eric’s your knight, actually.”

Kenna roared. “And Steph’s the evil witch!”

Clutching our stomachs, we rocked back and forth, as tears ran down our faces. The picture of Kenna gazing doe-eyed at my slack-jawed, jock ex-boyfriend was so ludicrous that I suddenly stopped laughing and wondered why I’d ever dated him myself.



CHAPTER 15.1 - Duncan’s Visit

Mackenna

(This scene takes place before chapter 15, first thing in the morning.)

“Why are you telling us what to do? We’re not your subjects.”

Though I had yet to form an opinion about what Duncan asked, I couldn’t help but bristle at his request. He’d rudely interrupted our breakfast to say he couldn’t stay because he had official business concerning the Centennial. Disappointment turned the pancakes in my stomach into hockey pucks.

Duncan raked his fingers through his already disheveled hair, making it even more chaotic. “Why did I expect ye to be reasonable? Since I canna accompany you today, I am requesting that you and Veronica remain in the castle with Fiona.”

At the first sign of dissention, Vee had retreated to the periphery of the scene, where she watched like an extra. “So we’re your prisoners again?”

Duncan blinked several times. His voice, when he answered me, was raspy with intensity. “You’re not my prisoner. Ye never were.”

He’d just informed me that I would have to spend the day with a royal babysitter. So I begged to differ. “What am I then?”

“You’re my—” He paused his dark velvet eyes suddenly miserable. “My—my guest from America.”

If I was truly his guest, as he claimed, I had a choice in the matter. “What if I say, ‘no’?”

Rather than argue, he clasped my hand in his and continued to plead his case. “Please, Mackenna. It would be a great comfort to know you were close by—and safe.”

Just a touch—his skin against mine—sent my heart into overdrive. Suddenly lightheaded, I had to grip the table with my free hand to steady myself. How dare he make me almost swoon!

“If ye will not do it for me, do it for your friend’s sake.”

A vision flashed of the beret-wearing attacker trying to hit a home run with Vee’s head. If Jamie hadn’t intervened, she might have died. Deflated, I agreed to Duncan’s demands. “Fine. We’ll stick around.”

The relief on his face almost made me feel sorry for giving him a hard time. “Thank you. Please allow Jamie and me to make it up to the both of you on the morrow.”

Like an invisible string, the mention of the king wanna-be propelled Vee forward. “How is your brother?”

Duncan favored her with an impish smile. “He’ll live. Jamie’s known for his particularly thick skull.”

Ha! So I wasn't the only one to notice his freakish obstinacy.

"Oh. Well, I'm relieved to know he's okay." Vee, on the other hand, seemed attuned to the softer side of Prince Jamie.

Satisfied that he'd accomplished the purpose for his little visit, Duncan swaggered across the room. "It's settled then. I will leave you in Fiona's most capable hands. The castle has an excellent library if ye are so inclined."

"Really? Thanks." Vee's eyes glazed over in literary rapture—my best friend had never met a book she didn't like. So not only were we stuck in this gloomy castle, but now we would have to read as well. Duncan was sooo going to pay for this.

At the door, he made a low bow. "If ye will excuse me, I must take my leave. Until tonight, m'ladies."

"Can't wait!" I flashed him the Streetcar smile I'd perfected performing a Blanche DuBois monologue.

He paused, hand on the doorknob, to return my fake smile with his own genuine lopsided grin. "Just because you think me a right dense oaf, doesn't mean I'm incapable of recognizing sarcasm when it hits me up alongside the head." He cocked his right eyebrow in a deliberate display of superiority. "Even if I choose to forgive the source of said sarcasm because I'm a gentleman and she's so lovely."

With the last word and an infuriating wink, he made his grand exit. From behind me, Vee chuckled under her breath before returning to her blueberry pancakes. Sure, it was funny to her now—but just wait until Royal Emo Boy accosted her with another one of his mood swings.



CHAPTER 16.1 - Kenna's First Dance in Doon*Mackenna*

(This scene takes place during and after chapter 16. We get to see what Kenna and Duncan are up to after Vee goes off to dance.)

With a complete lack of subtlety, Vee waggled her brows at me. Any moment now, she would break out in “*Kenna and Duncan sitting in a tree...K—I—S—S—ING.*”

Desperate to cut her off, I interjected, “Go dance, Vee. Before you gyrate out of your stockings.”

Duncan took Vee’s arm and propelled her towards the frenetic floor. “Feel free to join in. We have many fine dancers in Doon. Even my brother is most accomplished in this area.”

“Really?” She paused to watch Jamie in the middle of an animated group of young women, including lovely Sofia. Her face darkened for a few beats but then turned determinedly bright. “If you will excuse me, the music calls and I must obey.”

With a lithe skip, Vee wove her way toward the center of the dance floor. She leapt into the melee, her feet an elegant flurry of rhythm and improvised high-steps. More than a natural, she was sublime. The room began to take notice as she moved in perfect sync around the other dancers and into the direct sightline of a certain blond Laird.

“Look.” Duncan gestured with his head toward the spot where moments before, Jamie had been in intimate conversation with Sofia Rosetti.

In a rare, unguarded moment, the MacCrae had stopped paying attention to anything except Vee, who whirled with the grace of a ballroom dancer and the enthusiasm of a child. While he

watched, a stunning smile of appreciation lit his face. His eyes seemed to drink her in as if she was the elixir of life. But I'd seen enough of the prince's ever-changing moods to know whiplash would soon follow.

I shrugged. "She's always been like that. When Vee dances, the whole room notices."

Duncan's fingers brushed my arm in a phantom touch. "She's not the only lass in the room worth noticing."

Desperate to change the subject, I blurted out the first thing that popped into my head. "I'm sorry about your dad."

The sweet smile on his face faltered as his lips turned downward. "Thank you. I daresay he's not much more for this world."

I recalled his father's interaction in the throne room. "You're very close to him."

"Aye. My father and I are very similar in temperament. We naturally comprehend one another."

"And your brother?"

"Jamie reminds my father of my Ma. Lord rest her soul. He's verra like her." At the mention of his mother, Duncan eyes turned distant and glassy. His next words were wistful. "She always spoke of the special bond that existed between a mother and her first born son."

I watched Jamie take a couple of automatic steps toward Vee before catching himself and turning back toward Sofia. "Did you envy his closeness with your mom?"

"Nay. I know she loved me. But my brother misses her terribly—even more than I do. He confided in her, and since she died, he's been adrift without an anchor."

"But he has you, right? And friends, like Sofia?" It was a shameless attempt to get the 411 on the boy who'd captivated my bestie's fragile heart.

“Aye. She and Jamie have been close their whole lives. Don’t tell Jamie I told ye, but as babes they shared a tub a time or two.” He quietly laughed. “My Ma was very fond of Sofie.”

“What about you?” I teased. “Who did you bathe with? Gabriella?”

The sadness in his eyes vanished, replaced by his asymmetrical grin. His soft rolling brogue dropped a whole octave into a deep rasp that sent shivers across my skin. “Why, Mackenna? Jealous?”

“Nope.” The image of Gabby and Duncan bathing together filled my mind. But in my unsettling version, they were far too grown up to be innocent babes. “Why are you afraid to tell me?”

“I can’t be divulgin’ all my secrets. A lad’s got to retain some mystery, now.”

“Never mind.” I tensed my posture as if I were about to leave. “I’ll just go ask Fiona.”

As I made a big show of turning away, Duncan caught my arm and spun me back towards him. “Fine! Twas Fergus, if ye must know.”

Taken off guard by the last thing I expected to come from his mouth, I howled in laughter. Duncan glowered at me, but the light in his eyes told me he appreciated the humor of his embarrassing revelation. “Now don’t ye go making a thing of it. I like lasses—verra much—and am quite willing to prove it to you if need be.”

The challenge in Duncan’s dark features caused me to immediately back down. I wasn’t sure what he would or wouldn’t do in a public setting—but I wasn’t about to find out. My breath caught and strangled my laughter as my face began to flush. My heart went into manic tap-dance mode. “I believe you. No demonstration necessary.”

Duncan leaned in slightly to test the sincerity of my concession. Determined to ignore his nearness, I feigned interest in the far side of the dance floor. As Vee twirled past Jamie, the

MacCrae's hands reached for her. With a frown, he fisted them at his sides before darting a guilty glance in the direction of his former bathing partner.

I voiced my thought as I analyzed the unfolding drama. "He's upset by our coming."

Duncan's voice carried a soft reprimand. "I wouldna be too quick to assume what my brother thinks or feels. He's a complicated person and hardly ever shows his true feelings on the outside."

I filed that information away to share with Vee at a later time. The music stopped. In the brief pause, Jamie walked toward Vee with renewed purpose. The first strains of the next, slower tune trembled through the hall. Jamie grabbed Vee's arm and spun her close before she could dance away. The air in the room charged with anticipation and I held my breath to see what would happen next.

What happen was—Duncan stepped in front of me and blocked my view. The intensity of his gaze caused something foreign to uncurl in the pit of my stomach. My whole body felt tingly and strange.

"Your friend's a right fair dancer, but I fancy a bit more of a challenge." He nodded toward the floor now populated with couples moving at a slower, if no less complicated, pace. "Care ta dance, yet?"

While I hesitated, he grinned at me with starry eyes. "It's not like I'm askin' ye to run through the hall in your knickers or eat a hand full of meal grubs—which're surprisingly chewy, by the way—it's just a dance. If ye refuse me now, I'll be the laughing stock of the kingdom. The lads'll never let up. If not for the sheer pleasure of having me as a partner, take pity on my reputation."

Without giving me time to think, he pulled me into the center of the fray in a firm but gentle grip. His large left hand held my right while his other one cupped my waist. Heat radiated from our points of contact so that I felt dizzy.

For a moment, he stared at the juncture where his hand rested reverently against the curve of my hip, and then his eyes climbed to mine. His ridiculously gorgeous face shone with triumph as he pulled my body flush against his and my curves reshaped to his hard angles. My heart pounded wildly in my chest—or was that his heartbeat?—as we slowly began to move to the music.

Add to Duncan's list of accolades, accomplished ballroom dancer. In less than thirty seconds, I realized I was outmatched. Panic flooded my veins making me desperate to hightail it to the powder room. Dancing had never been my forte. If I had any hope of keeping up, I would need to channel my inner Anna Leonowens. With a lift of my chin, I began to whistle a happy tune in my head imagining he was the King of Siam and I was unafraid—*etcetera, etcetera, etcetera*.

The music shifted into something more upbeat. Duncan's beguiling brown eyes twinkled mischievously as he increased our pace. Determined to meet his challenge, I whirled with manufactured abandon. Then, just to even things out, I very deliberately and methodically stomped on his foot. Hard. "Sorry," I mumbled. "Two left feet."

To his credit, he never said a word. He just grinned, held me tighter, and twirled even faster across the floor. In unison, we danced until our worlds fused together in one dizzying blur.



CHAPTER 20.1 – Duncan’s Visit after Muir Lea*Mackenna*

(This scene takes place between the first and second scenes in chapter 20.)

Imprisoned again. Although we were in the turret room and Duncan had used the word “confined,” this time we were truly locked up.

Unable to sleep, I walked the length of his chamber—three hundred and seventy six paces—in an endless loop; counting up, counting down, by odds and by evens. Time drug on like days and years. All the while, I waited for the angry mob of Doonians to appear with torches and pitchforks to demand retribution for their dead. Would I end up back in the slimy dungeon or handed over to a worse fate? I shivered to think what the Doonian equivalent of the death sentence would be—hanging, beheading, burned at the stake, drawn and quartered?

An eternity of terrifying scenarios passed before Duncan finally knocked at the door. A secret knock—and a hasty exchange through the peephole. Then the guard stationed on the inside lifted the bolt.

The hours that had passed since I’d last seen Duncan altered him greatly. Bluish circles under his eyes, unkempt hair and dark stubble across his jaw made his seem like a homeless version of himself. My heart ached for this warrior, who despite all his skill and strength, was powerless to stop the death of a beloved father.

He paused in the doorway as if unable—or unwilling—to bridge the distance between us.

“Where’s Veronica?” The bafflement on his face attested to the fact that he had no idea it was the middle of the night.

“Sleeping.”

“I’m sorry to have ye confined, but it’s the only way I could guarantee your safety.” He sighed and ran his hands over his haggard face. “Something’s afoot. Ever since Fergus told me what happened, I’ve had my trusted men looking into it. But the kingdom’s fragile. My father’s—worse. And another person’s gone missing. The people are scared and lookin’ for someone to blame.”

“I’m sure Gideon is pointing them in my direction as we speak.” As the muscles contracted around my heart, I tightened my arms over my chest and dared him to accuse me.

“Not likely, seeing I had to lock him in the dungeon for his own safety.”

Open mouthed, I processed the implications of Duncan’s words. Before I could form a response, he paced into the room. “Everyone thinks Gideon and his men are on a border mission for Centennial preparations. Not even Jamie knows what happened in the meadow. And I don’t plan on tellin’ him just yet. This stays between us. You, me, Fergus, and Veronica.”

He was covering for me. Lying to his own brother, his soon-to-be-king. “Why? I mean, don’t get me wrong—I’m really thankful. But why?”

“Don’t ye know, woman?” He gave me a long look—not one of searching, but of finding. Like we’d know each other our entire lives.

Unable to help myself, I drifted toward him. “I know I look guilty.”

“I couldna give a rat’s arse how you look. I know who you are.”

“And who am I?”

“You’re my—” A discreet knock at the door interrupted Duncan before he could finish his confession. I was his—what? The ache in my chest worsened as I watched Duncan cross to the door and open it a crack.

A young page's voice spoke from beyond. "M'Laird, yer father is askin' for ye."

With a nod, he dismissed the boy and turned back to me with renewed urgency. "I'm not sure how long I can cover up what's happened. So if anyone comes for ye, do not go unless Fergus or I say so. That goes for Veronica, too."

This was bad. Really, really bad.

When I failed to respond, Duncan insisted. "Promise me." And as soon as I did, he was gone.

Two more days passed without even a glimpse of Duncan. They were the longest days of my life.



CHAPTER 22.1 - King MacCrae's Funeral

Mackenna

(This scene takes place just before chapter 22. We see a bit of the funeral before the wake.)

Most of the outfits Fiona had managed to scrounge up for Veronica and me seemed like something out of a fairytale reinvention, two modern girls playing dress up princesses. But today was different. The stiff collar and floor-length skirting of my gray, woolen mourning dress—straight from the third act of *Our Town*—seemed as drab and oppressive as the raincloud-laden skies.

Vee sat rigidly beside me on the hard wooden pew, equally as dismal in her matching frock and long black cloak. We were like a sad version of the Bobbsey twins—or the Tweedles, Glum

and Glummer. The Auld Kirk remained the same beautiful building of hewn stone and stained glass, but it felt more austere—colder—but, surprisingly, no less spiritual.

The Doonians put on a brave face, but everything moved so quickly. In less than four days' time the Brig o' Doon would be open. Between now and then, they needed to bury a beloved monarch, crown the new king, embrace his choice as queen, and prepare their hearts and minds to welcome those being led to the kingdom. What wasn't on the "to do" list, time to process their emotions.

"Amen!"

The uniform response of the mourners interrupted my reverie. As the service concluded, I shimmied out of the pew behind Fiona. "Now what?"

"Now the wake takes place in the pavilion behind the Kirk. It'll last 'til sunset, when the Auld Laird's pyre is set afire and he's sent ta his Eternal rest on the Loch o' Doon."

I mentally substituted church and lake for kirk and loch as I stepped into the aisle and made way for Vee to exit in front of me.

Vee favored our chaperone with a distant smile. "Please go ahead. I need to visit the loo." She pointed in the direction opposite of the congregating mourners.

"I need to go, too," I echoed. I hadn't wanted to come for so many reasons, not the least of which was Duncan's cover up. Even without the Doonians knowing the horrible events of the meadow, I doubted they wanted the outsiders intruding on such a private occasion.

"Right then. I'll see you girls around back." Fiona disappeared into the gathering crowd and as soon as she did, Vee sagged against edge of the pew, her eyes drifting shut.

As the morning passed, she'd grown more withdrawn. I got it. I least I thought I did. She was one of the last people to speak to the king. No matter what he had said to her—good, bad or

other—in light of his death it would be a lot to process. But she didn't need to bear the burden by herself. We were a team, and sooner or later, she'd have no choice but to spill whatever was going on in that whirlwind mind of hers.

Examining her profile, I could see the tenseness of her facial muscles despite her relaxed posture. I cleared my throat expectantly in an attempt to gain her attention, but it had no effect. Neither did the second or third try. It was as if she'd gone deaf as well as mute. More annoyed by the second, I finally spoke my mind. "Do you want to talk about last night?"

Vee's eyes blinked open. She glanced at me for an instant before shifting her attention toward the front of the church. Abruptly her face contorted with pain and I followed her gaze to a certain blond profile.

Jamie's head bent low as he talked to the lovely Sofia. Her face tilted up towards his—the universal body language for "kiss me"—as something the prince said made her smile. In that moment, they looked truly intimate—like a couple.

When Vee didn't answer, I pressed for a response. "Well?"

"No, I don't." The lackluster words conveyed a depth of repressed emotion. Her eyes were huge, like those creepy Precious Moments figurines, and glassy as she watched the king-to-be relate to his future queen. With a heavy sigh, she whispered, "Can I just have a moment? Please?"

"Okay. I'm going to find Fiona." I waited for Vee's nod of acknowledgement before walking away. At the exit, I turn back to witness Jamie take Sofia into his arms for a brief hug. In a nearly automatic gesture, I glanced to Vee to gauge her reaction. No matter how much Jamie fawned over the petite Italian, Vee's eyes never wavered. Whatever the king had said to her, I'd bet my bottom dollar it had to do with his eldest son.



CHAPTER 31.1 – The Slimy Dungeon ... Again

Mackenna

(This is the beginning of the second dungeon scene from Mackenna's point of view.)

I stared into space, caught in the same restless, bereft feeling that always came over me when I finished a show. It wasn't merely the lack of focus from being between plays—it was like being between people. My own skin felt strange and too tight, like wearing the wrong sized clothing. Being half in and half out of Doon felt eerily similar.

Panic at the thought of being trapped here clawed at my insides like a raging wildcat. But in spite of my dread, I didn't seem to have the energy to move. If we didn't get out, we couldn't cross the bridge. If we couldn't cross the bridge, the journal and the witch's influence would remain in Doon. And so would we.

We would be doomed to coexist with a village full of people who believed we were their enemy. Most likely, spend the rest of our very long lives in this icky, scurvy-infested dungeon. Alone.

Vee smushed her face against the bars of the dungeon door and watched for Fiona's return. When she caught sight of her, she bounced on her toes in agitation. "Something's not right."

Fiona's mournful voice resounded from the other side. "Something? Try everything. The Brig o' Doon will be openin' soon."

"No, I mean with Jamie."

“Aye.” Fiona soft lilt of reassurance was edged with doubt. “Don’t ye fret, Veronica. Fergus’ will talk some sense into him.”

“Fergus has failed.” Fergus’s ragged voice reached us through the void, followed by a scuffle, a moan and a soft thump. “I didna even get to see him.”

With a humorless chuckle, he continued to address himself in the third person. “So now as second highest Commander of the Royal Guard, Fergus is committing treason.”

The unmistakable click of the locking mechanism caused the heavy iron door to swing outward. Rather than Fergus, Duncan rushed in to gather me into the haven of his arms. His disheveled hair stuck out at odd angles, and a purpling bruise darkened his right cheekbone—but on the whole, he looked amazing. His grave, dark eyes searched my face making my insides go molten. “Are ye all right, Mackenna?”

I nodded and buried my head against his massive chest. His heat and the calming scent of leather saddles and sunshine filled my senses. The steady beat of his heart gave me courage. “I know how it must look, but we’re innocent. We found out about the witch but we were trying to stop her. You have to believe m—”

“Shhh.” Duncan smoothed an errant lock of my hair with his fingertips and tucked it behind my ears. “How many times are ye going to put me through this? Don’t ye think I know who you are? I know you.”

“Guys?” Vee cleared her throat, and waited as Duncan and I parted. “Sorry to interrupt, but, I’ve got to see him. Now.” None of us needed her to clarify who ‘him’ was.

With a great sigh, Fergus turned his doleful face toward Vee. “Jamie’ll not see you, lass. Ye’ll not make it past Gideon’s men any more than I did. They got the jump on me.”

“I’m not giving up.” Vee’s determined eyes swept over each of us. “I’ll go by myself, if I have to.”

If the situations were reversed, if I was the one needing to see Duncan, Vee would have my back. I hadn’t the slightest doubt. So I was in. “I’m coming with you.”

Next to me, Fiona squared her shoulders. “Me, too.”

Already half a dozen shades of pink, Fergus emitted another humorless chuckle. “Seeing how I’m already slated for the dungeon m’self, count me in. Where Fiona goes, I go.”

I turned to the only one of us yet to speak. Other than Vee, Duncan had the most to lose. If he chose not to go against his sovereign’s orders, I wouldn’t blame him.

His brown eyes, hard and yet cherishing at the same time, narrowed in reproach. He lifted his hand, to touch my cheek in a butterfly caress. The gentle gesture sent shivers down my spine. “Aye. I’m in.”

He was right. I kept testing him, and he passed every time. Duncan would not fail us.

Vee gave him a determined nod and then charged into the corridor without a doubt that we would follow her...into the impossible—to face an evil witch—to save a boy king—perhaps even to death.

Maybe she was part ninja after all.



CHAPTER 0.1 - Kenna’s Long Forgotten Calling Dream

Mackenna

(This is a long forgotten Calling dream that Kenna back in high school. She remembers it between Doon and Destined for Doon.)

“Come ta me, Mackenna.”

Dreaming ...and definitely not in Arkansas anymore. The dark-headed boy with the moonlit eyes and wide, easy smile calls my name. His deep, rolling brogue moves through me like a familiar melody. I feel surprised he knows me.

Wearing a plaid kilt and leather vest over his coarse shirt, the boy looks freakin’ amazing. A medieval warrior with the eyes of a creative genius and the face of a leading man.

“Look all ye like. I don’t mind.”

Caught staring, I feel the blood rush to my face. My cheeks prickle with heat. “I wasn’t looking.”

Humor makes the golden flecks in his brown eyes shimmer. His lip curls into a wry smile. “Yes, you were. I’m lookin’ too.”

Impulsively, I smooth my hair before I can stop myself. I’m wearing a princess costume, although I don’t think I’m in any upcoming performing Cinderella. “I’m sooo not interested.”

“Aren’t ye? Your blood doesn’t lie. Your pulse quickens at the sight of me.”

It’s true. The stupid ogre reads me like a romance novel. “What do you want from me?”

“Don’t ye know? The corner of his mouth lifts and quirks in a lopsided smile.

For the first time, I become aware of the ocean of fog that separates us. “Who are you?”

Thick tendrils of mist begin to swirl around his feet. His impossibly broad smile grows even wider. Cocky. “I’m the one who’s waiting for you.”

Mist continues to snake up his body. It wraps around him like a climbing vine. But his self-satisfied smile never falters.

“Waiting where?”

The mist swallows him. His smug voice takes on a distant, dismembered quality. “Right here, lass,” he answers, as if it’s another no-brainer. “At...”

“At?”

But it’s no use. He’s gone.



Want more *Doon*? Visit the Dooniverse at www.DoonSeries.com

Doon and *Destined for Doon* are available wherever books are sold. *Doon* book 3 releases 9/2/15.