

Halloween  
*Heart-throbs*

*Twelfth*  
OF  
*Never*

BOBBIE RUSSELL

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Halloween Heart-throbs: Twelfth of Never

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**Warning:**

**Warning:** This book contains sexually explicit content which is only suitable for mature readers. This story has been rated *Total-e-burning*

**Halloween Heart-throbs**

**TWELFTH OF NEVER**

**Bobbie Russell**



## Chapter One

Zoë turned the ancient skeleton key, shoving her shoulder against the huge oak door when she heard the lock click. Hoping the realtor had gotten the cottage cleaned as she had instructed, she dropped her suitcases just inside the door, utterly exhausted from the transatlantic flight.

Colleen Bannon, the realtor, had said the electricity couldn't be turned on until Monday, and this was only Saturday evening. She was too tired to explore the rental, but there was just enough light from the setting sun for her to make out large, sheet draped objects in the room off to the left of the entryway. She wrinkled her nose at the musty, closed up smell that permeated the hallway. It was no wonder she had gotten the place so cheaply. She dug in her backpack for a flashlight then wearily climbed the stairs. This place didn't look, or smell, as if it had been lived in for...forever.

Mentally following the floor plan she had seen on the internet site, she turned at the top of the stairs. Bathroom on the right, bedroom at the end of the hall. The loft bedroom was supposed to overlook the lake, and she hoped it did, if only to provide her the peace she needed. Setting her flashlight on a small round table against one wall so it pointed at the bed, she quickly pulled off the faded comforter, folding it inward to keep any dust trapped. In minutes she had a set of clean sheets spread across the huge bed, then stripped out of her travelling clothes and pulled on a T-shirt. As soon as her head hit the pillow, she fell into a deep sleep, thoughts of home and heartache temporarily forgotten if only through her deliberately imposed exhaustion.

*Warm breath caressed her bare stomach, and Zoë kicked off the sheet to better feel the exquisite touch. Seconds passed and she held her breath, wanting more.*

*"Please," she murmured, not sure what she was begging for, but knowing she wanted it, needed it, to take away the pain. "Please."*

*Butterfly light kisses skimmed from her toes up one leg, pausing at her knee when a hot tongue snaked out and licked the sensitive skin before travelling along her thigh. Calloused hands pushed against her thighs, and she spread her legs willingly, the ache building in her sex. The instant a rough*

*tongue touched her clit she arched, a moan coming from deep in her throat. His mouth was hot and wet, devouring her, nibbling on her clit and then sucking, taking her to the edge of an orgasm where she hovered and then crested, her pussy clutching in need, every nerve ending throbbing.*

*His touch continued across her stomach and then upward, licking the underside of one breast before sucking her nipple into his mouth. The aftershocks of her climax continued as he milked her, first one breast then the other, her entire body tingling as though a thousand feathers touched every inch of her skin. There was no weight against her chest, no hard muscles pressing her hips down into the bed. Only the constant, lingering touch, as light as the breeze from the window, but igniting her need and feeding her hunger. His fingers pinched her nipples, the pleasure/pain shooting through her. She planted her feet on the bed, pushing her hips up against him, spreading her legs as wide as she could to take the invasion of his cock as he entered her. He was enormous, his thickness stretching her beyond anything she had ever felt and yet she took him all, feeling the tip of him buried deep as his hips ground against hers, his balls slapping against her ass as he began to pump into her.*

*She felt his breath against her temple, his hand sliding between their bodies and opening her lips so his cock rubbed against her clit every time he moved in or out. She pushed, her hips arching off the bed as another orgasm slammed through her, the effect so strong she cried out.*

Zoë shot straight up in bed, gasping as her pussy continued to throb with the after effects of an incredible dreaming orgasm. The room was pitch black, and for a minute she had no idea where she was. The only thing she knew for sure was that she was naked. She felt around the bed and found her T-shirt, struggling into it as the breeze chilled her aroused skin.

Stumbling out of bed, she felt along the wall until she came to the table, grabbing her flashlight. When she flipped the switch, it was to find the room empty. She turned quickly and swung the light to the windows, which she saw were closed, exactly as she had left them. Then where was the breeze coming from?

She stood still, letting it flow over her, trying to determine where the draft was. But while a breeze should be blowing along all of her at once, this felt as though it travelled up her legs, under her T-shirt before following the lines of her hips and waist. Feathers, she remembered from her dream. It felt like feathers touching her, and she let out a sigh as the whisper of a touch skimmed her nipples, making them peak.

"It's the chill air," she told herself, but it was mid-September and the room was warm. "Maybe it's a ghost," she snickered. *A waft of air caressed her cheek.*



Zoë couldn't go back to bed, but didn't have to wait long before the sun crept over the horizon and bathed the landscape in a golden glow. Now that she had a chance to see the cottage in the light, she was delighted. The entire stone structure was covered with large red leaves of all shades. The vines crept up the stone clear to the roof, and she imagined even the windows would have been covered if someone hadn't cut the vines from around them. She had no idea what the leaf was – it looked somewhat like a maple, but the leaves were larger. It didn't matter; it was beautiful and picturesque and just what she needed.

As she continued to explore, she found an outdoor room off to one side. It didn't have a door wide enough to be called a garage even though the walls and floor were concrete. A bicycle with baskets hooked to the rear fender leaned against the wall. There was also an old plant stand of some sort, a park bench, and a rocker. She dragged the rocker out the door onto the terrace, which faced the lake. Then she brought out the stand, which was just the right height to use as a table. She turned to face the lake where the sun was just winking across the surface. The view was beautiful; the air clean and fresh smelling.

She had chosen well, and last night's dream was just that. In the light of day, she knew there was no one here but her, and that was exactly the way she wanted it. She sat in the rickety rocking chair at the back of the cottage, legs tucked up under her shirt, chin resting on her knees as she watched the day begin.

*Day five*, she thought, and she was still alive, although at the beginning of day one she wouldn't have thought she would survive. She still remembered the incredulous expression on Trevor's face when she had walked in on him, fucking some blonde bitch on the bed that was supposed to be theirs. He hadn't even shown remorse, she thought now, or guilt at being caught. As she stood in the doorway to their bedroom, he had smiled, asking her if she wanted to join them.

It was amazing how fast you could make travel arrangements and get out of the country. In less than a week, she had rented the cottage, booked her flight to Ireland and packed her bags, leaving behind no forwarding address but a load of regret.

"I should have cleaned out the fucking joint saving account instead of only taking half," she muttered, standing and stretching. Her stomach growled and she couldn't

remember the last time she had eaten, but she was suddenly starving. That must be a sign that she wasn't going into severe depression, anyway.

It didn't take long for her to brush her teeth and dress, pulling her mass of red hair back in a ponytail. She made a face in the mirror. At least she didn't have all the freckles that usually accompanied her hair colour, and today, she decided she wasn't even going to wear makeup.

She locked the front door and walked around to the lean-to for the bicycle. She set out for Galway, a mile or so down the dirt road, looking with interest at the landscape as she pedalled into town. It was like every picture she had ever seen of Ireland – green as far as she could see; low rock walls called laces dividing the pastures and farms instead of fences. In the distance was Fire Lake, a relatively small lake compared to some she knew were in Ireland. On the far side she could barely make out a dark mass – maybe a castle, or a farmhouse. One day soon she would have to go exploring.

She breathed deeply of the fresh morning air, determined to enjoy her surroundings and not think about her miserable life.

"I will not feel sorry for myself. I will not feel sorry for myself," she repeated the litany with each push of the pedals, until she practically flew down the last hill and coasted into the sleepy town.

After a delicious cup of coffee, heavily laced with cream, and a pastry at a little coffee shop, she found a grocery store and gathered some essentials to get her by until she took stock of whether the stove and fridge actually worked at the cottage.

"You're the American," the old man at the register said as he took her credit card.

"Is it that obvious?" she asked.

He chuckled. "We're a small village, and news travels fast."

"So you know I rented the Rose Hill cottage?"

"Can't believe Colleen did that to you. She's all for making a Euro." He shook his head. "You know, they say it's haunted."

"I don't believe in ghosts," she told him, thinking if she did, it might make a better story than the one presently in progress on her laptop. "Why do people say that?"

He looked around, like he didn't want anyone to overhear him speaking. "It's not a ghost that haunts the place. They could have exorcised a ghost; but not her."

“Her?”

“That cottage was once owned by a sorceress.” He nodded his head in emphasis.

“Really?” Zoë raised her brows, hoping to look like she believed his tale. “Perhaps I can get her to cast a spell over someone,” she muttered.

“Don’t be talking that way,” the old man hissed. “Never can tell what evil spirit might overhear. That cottage’s been standing nigh on five hundred years and nobody’s ever managed to live in it mor’n a month. Strange things happen, that’s for sure.”

“Why doesn’t someone just burn it down?”

“You don’t know anything about Irish history, do you? Burning never did nothing but cause the spirits of the great lords of the land to rise up and cause havoc!”

Zoë couldn’t help the smile that crossed her lips, but upon seeing the old man’s frown, she quickly pinched her lips together. She knew enough about Ireland to know that people still believed in fairy rings and the legacies left behind from an era of great knights and bloody battles.

She contemplated what the old man had said on the return ride to the cottage. Pumping up the hill was a lot harder than coasting down she thought as she breathed deeply, forcing her legs to keep the pedals turning. She had spoken the truth about not believing in ghosts, but thought that seeing a ghost would be better than seeing Trevor’s lying, cheating face every time she closed her eyes.



Zoë managed to get through the day without electricity, but she’d be glad when the power came on in the morning. Since the water heater and pump were powered with electricity, she had to fill a bucket at the hand pump outside and take a cold sponge bath. The water actually felt good, as she had spent the day uncovering furniture and exploring the cottage, dusting and cleaning what she could.

The little house had three rooms downstairs – a kitchen, a great room filled with antique furniture, and a dining room with a heavy wood table and chairs and a buffet to one side against the wall. Upstairs was only the loft bedroom in which she slept, and the bathroom.



After some peanut butter crackers and an apple for dinner, she set her laptop on the table, thinking if she could only write, she could wipe her memory clean and forget the pain that still made her breath catch. Unfortunately, her work in progress was supposed to be a romantic suspense, and as she opened her latest chapter and stared at the screen, tears coursed down her cheeks.

“Damn you, you fucking bastard,” she cried, knowing she would never be able to take her characters down the path they needed to go when she felt so empty and bitter inside. She pushed the laptop away, laying her head on her crossed arms. “I wish there was a way to get you out of my system as easily as you apparently got me out of yours.” She closed her eyes on a sigh, not wanting to cry for a lost love, but sobbing until she exhausted herself.

*His hands weren't gentle tonight as they forced her to her feet, roughly jerking on her clothes until she stood naked. Instead of the sweet caresses she had felt last night, he took her in a searing kiss, bruising her lips as he forced her mouth open to devour her.*

*And still, she softened in his embrace, longing for him to take away the hurt, even if it meant hurting her in a different way. She needed that forcefulness to forget. As though sensing her thoughts, he turned her, pressure against the back of her shoulders forcing her to lean forward. She bent over the table, the scarred wood cool beneath her hot skin. She tried to turn, needing to see his face; wanting to replace Trevor's image, but he held her firm.*

*His hands slid along her arms to her wrists then stretched her out, palms against the tabletop. She felt him probing her from behind and she widened her stance. An immediate sense of fullness caused her to gasp. There was no preparation for his penetration, but she was wet and ready anyway. He rammed into her, over and over, bringing her to a screaming climax before she wanted it to end.*

*The walls of her vagina clutched and her breathing was ragged, and still he fingered her sex lips, rubbing one digit across her clit, making her wiggle back against him. She felt the feathers again, this time across her back, as though someone covered her from behind, but without the weight. Her hips hurt from being pushed against the edge of the table, but an overriding tension coiled inside her again and just when she thought she couldn't take any more, the pressure on her clit increased as though it were being pinched, and she came, her entire body convulsing as great waves of heat flowed through her, beginning deep in her pussy and flooding outward. Her nipples, hard and aching, rubbed against the table, the friction prolonging her climax.*



Zoë awoke with the sun, once again naked and having no idea why she would have gone to bed that way. In fact, she didn't remember climbing the stairs to her bedroom at all, and certainly didn't know how she got the light bruises she could now see on her hips as she stared in the mirror of the bathroom.

She touched herself, tender not only across her pelvis, but also between her legs. She slid her fingers through her pubic curls, opening herself. Her sex lips were pink and slightly swollen, her clit tender to her touch.

She wondered if she had done this to herself in her sleep. That would certainly explain why she had been naked, but recalling the erotic dream she'd had, she knew she couldn't have made herself come spread across the dining room table, her palms flat on the wood. This made two nights in a row, and while she certainly didn't mind the orgasms, she wondered what precipitated the dreams. She had no face for her secret lover, but his size and strength made her hungry for more.

Her sex tingled, the barest hint of warmth spreading across her open lips and caressing her clitoris. Was she going crazy? Had finding Trevor unfaithful caused her to go nuts? He had been the one she had loved enough to let him do anything to her, becoming totally uninhibited in the bedroom. Seeing him fucking someone else must be what was giving her these wet dreams – thinking she could replace him with some phantom lover who took her to the heights of pleasure and she didn't have to do anything in return.

She heard a knock on the door downstairs and the warmth was instantly gone, but the tenderness remained as she hurriedly dressed.

"Got your water turned on and the lights will work now," said the man as she opened the door to bright sunlight.

"Won't you come in?" she asked politely.

"No! This place is haunted, as anybody in their right mind knows. Don't understand why that old bat keeps renting it, seeing as how nobody stays long anyway."

"I don't understand. Why do people say it's haunted?" She asked the question even as she began to wonder if her dreams were more than figments of her imagination.

“Women say they get—” he paused, his already ruddy complexion darkening. “Eh, sorry. I shouldn’t be carrying tales. I gotta go.” He turned and scurried to his truck, speeding away without a backward glance.

## Chapter Two

Zoë stood by the windows, reviewing the past week as she undressed without turning on the light. She had gone through the paces of living – eating, bathing, and even riding the old bike around the countryside and into town almost daily. Every day, the pain of Trevor’s betrayal hurt a little less, but she wondered if that had more to do with her night-time activities than anything she did during the day.

Without fail, her dream lover would come to her in the dark of night, caressing her with an infinitely gentle touch, mapping the hills and valleys of her body with hands and tongue. She didn’t always orgasm. Sometimes, she simply felt wrapped in a warm embrace and the feeling eventually calmed the anger she felt.

If the village people were to be believed, her dream lover was a ghost. She still wasn’t sure she believed that, but he had given her back her self-esteem and she had started writing again. She had sent her agent the synopsis and several chapters on a new mystery, having decided not to do a romantic suspense least she kill off the hero.

She put her palm against the window right where a glint of moonlight reflected off the pane. She felt at peace as she watched the full moon crest the horizon. Pale golden light caressed the sloping meadow from the keep in the distance and caused the water on the lake to look as though a million fireflies danced on the surface. She opened the window to allow the night breeze in, letting it caress her bare skin and ruffle her hair as she pulled the hair band out.

*“Líoch. You are beautiful.”*

She spun at the sound of his voice, a deep Irish brogue that raised goose bumps on her skin. He stood on the other side of her bed, a tall man with golden hair that reached his shoulders. Shoulders that were massive, and bare. Her gaze swept downward. He had the most magnificent hard on, his cock jutting out of a nest of darker blond hair like a sword. Muscles rippled across his chest and arms. His thighs were sprinkled with darker hair, their muscles cording the length of his legs.

*“I am Keegan McFallon, knight and lord. You are the one come to save me.”*

“Why me?”

“You haven’t run away.”

“I have nowhere to go. Besides, who in their right mind would run after being given multiple orgasms every night?”

“Would you like another?” A sexy grin cut across his features, softening the hard planes of his face.

She let her gaze travel over him again, noting the glistening drop of cum seeping from the eye of his cock at her perusal. He walked toward her and Zoë felt anticipation, not fear. The T-shirt she wore as a nightgown dropped from numb fingers. She thought she might be dreaming again because this was too good to be true! Was he the same one who had come to her the previous nights? And why was he here now, when she wasn’t dreaming?

His hand came up and covered her breast, the rough palm abrading her nipple until it peaked, hard and aching. His fingers squeezed lightly and she suddenly knew.

“It has been you.” Although she had never seen him before in her life, and she hadn’t known *who* he was, she still knew *him*. His touch had made her come in glorious spasms of orgasm. And tonight he was here in the flesh.

“I do not wish to spend my time talking. I have less than six hours before—”

She pulled him to the bed, pushing on his chest to get him to lie down. Whatever the reasons for his appearance in her bedroom, she wasn’t going to waste time analyzing it.

He gripped her upper arms and pulled her down with him, quickly rolling them both over so his hips settled in the vee of her thighs.

“You think to be the aggressor?” His tone mocked her puny attempts to control his movements.

She looked up at chiselled features. He was far too rugged to be considered handsome. At least not the suave, almost pretty way that Trevor had been handsome. His nose had a bump on the bridge, as though it had been broken more than once. His chin was square, his cheekbones high, and there wasn’t a hint of softness anywhere. But it was his eyes, tawny brown, that captured her attention. In them she saw weariness, loneliness; and desire.

“You’ve made me come so many times that just the thought of you has me dripping.” At her words, his hand slid between them, two blunt fingers pushing up inside her. She groaned.

“Aye, you’re wet for me.”

“But you haven’t come, have you?” Every morning Zoë had awakened stretched and tender, just as she had on previous occasions when she had made love all night. With one exception. There was no smell of sex; no sticky cum on her thighs.

At her question, his beautiful eyes narrowed. “A spirit can not feel the squeeze of your muscles; can not shoot his cum into your clutching receptacle.”

She lifted a hand to the side of his face. When she touched his cheek, rough with bristly whiskers, his eyes darkened with passion. “Then tonight let me make you come. Let me return the pleasure you have given me.”

This time when she pushed, he rolled to his back and Zoë took immediate advantage, trailing her hands over the hard planes of his chest as her lips went unerringly to his cock. She heard him groan when she took him into her mouth, laving the rigid length of him with her tongue as she sucked.

His hand caressed her ass, fingers sliding along her crack to her anus before pausing. Her muscles squeezed involuntarily as he fingered her opening, then slid further down, pushing into her wetness.

“Now!” he groaned, shoving another digit into her, his thumb pressing hard against her clit. She felt herself tense, her pussy muscles clutching and knew she was on the edge. She took him deeper, sucking harder, and he pulsed into her mouth, spewing hot and long. The taste of him made her climax, the sensations spiralling outward, making her legs shake as her passage gripped him tighter.

She fell back on the bed, gasping for breath, never before climaxing until she thought she would pass out. He immediately turned, pushing her thighs wider, grabbing her ankles and lifting her legs to his shoulders.

“Again?” She was too weak to protest, her head rolling from side to side. “I can’t,” she whimpered as his still hard cock rubbed against her sex.

“You will, again and again, until the moon sets.” He rammed into her, the pressure intense with her legs in the air and her ass tilted upward. She was at his mercy and he

showed her none. Each time he slid out, her muscles clinched, trying to hold him in, and when he pushed forward, she would open for him. The friction was intense and in minutes she was crying out, her orgasm as fierce as the first.

Seconds later, he pushed deep and stopped, his beautiful face frozen in sexual ecstasy as he came. The thrill of being possessed by a man like Keegan had Zoë's insides clutching, milking the very last of his essence. Finally, he allowed her legs to slide down his arms, collapsing on top of her, his face damp as he tucked it into the curve of her neck.

"What is your name, wench?"

Wench? It wasn't just the word, but other phrases he had used that now had Zoë wondering what she had gotten into. She pushed, and with a groan, he rolled to the side, his eyes closed.

"Is it me, or do you have a problem with all women?"

He chuckled, sliding his hand under the fall of her hair to wrap it around his fist. "Besides your endless chatter, your hair — *ceara* — fiery red, should have warned me from the onset that you wouldn't be like the others."

"Let's just not go there," she said, not in the least pleased he would compare her to other women. It struck too close to home. "My name is Zoë Shepard."

"That's an English surname!" His eyes flew open; his brogue thick as he spat out the word.

"Yeah, so? We just fucked our brains out for the last couple of hours and you didn't seem to mind." She tried to escape but he pinned her to the mattress.

"Aye, that is so." He nibbled on her neck, and then kissed the side of her mouth.

"Besides, the Irish aren't fighting the English any more."

"Aye, so I've heard." He slid a hand down her stomach.

"So." Zoë was having a hard time concentrating with his hands and mouth everywhere. He even used his feet, sliding one up and down her leg. She took a breath to gather her wits. Pushing him away, she scooted up against the headboard, crossing her arms over her breasts but not really hiding anything from his intense gaze. "The least you can do now is explain."

"You'd rather talk than make sweet love?" He smiled and Zoë's insides started to melt, so she pinned him with a narrow-eyed gaze.

"Ah, 'tis just as well. I have very little time to tell you, before I disappear again."

"Why?"

"'Tis my curse."

"You'd better start at the beginning." She was starting to think he was a lot further removed than just being a ghost. "Before you became a ghost, when did you live?"

"'Tis not a ghost that she created." He laughed but Zoë heard no humour in the tone. "Then at least I would know I could never be mortal again. I would not keep trying, only to remain in anguish."

Now she was thoroughly confused. "The beginning, McFallon." She tapped his chest.

"The time is not important. I was Lord of Blackstone Castle with hundreds of mighty knights pledged to my service. Our lands and people prospered and all was well. T'was time I married and begot heirs, but Fiona said if she could not be my lady, no one would."

"Fiona?" Zoë's eyes narrowed. "Is she the bitch who did this to you?"

He laughed. "Aye. She lived in this very place, and most thought her a healer but in truth she was a sorceress."

"So why did she pick on you?"

"She was very beautiful, and as Lord, t'was my right to bed her, which I did; frequently and very well, I might add."

Zoë could feel his chest puff up. Go figure that men haven't progressed beyond the rape and pillage era. "Yeah, yeah. So she screwed you in more ways than one."

"I had to marry well; to gain land and alliances for my clan."

"That still doesn't explain how you got in your present state."

"I had come to visit Fiona. We had just made love. When I told her I could not marry her, she cast a spell on me." He closed his eyes and Zoë could see the taut lines of his face as he relived that fateful day.

"Hurry, Keegan. If you're going to disappear, I won't know what to do for you."

His eyes popped open. "You would help remove the spell?"

Her hand slid over his chest and down to circle his cock. As she squeezed, he lengthened and she began to ache inside. She wanted him again. "Lord McFallon in the flesh is so much better."

This time it was Keegan who moved to the side, apparently needing to tell his story more than he needed sex, at least at the moment.



“She wanted my money and the elevated position as my lady. Failing that, she at least wanted my rod inside her, but she knew when I married I would be faithful to a wife. So she cursed me to forever roam the earth in a state of arousal until I had an orgasm on the *twelfth of never*.”

“The twelfth of never?” Zoë didn’t understand.

“Aye, and I have yet to figure out what t’was she meant when conjuring the spell.”

“So that’s why you go around fucking every woman in sight?”

“I have never taken a woman against her will. Like you, most think they are dreaming at first. But when I appear in the flesh, they feel they’ve been violated, so they tell the authorities, who of course can’t find me because I have returned to spirit form by morning.”

“And nothing works?”

“Would I still be in this state had it? I make love until I’m exhausted; I have orgasm after orgasm, but I still wake up in a form not my own. You must find the secret to unlock me from this prison. Even if I stay in the mortal realm and then die because I would be an old man, it would be better than this eternal damnation.”

Zoë thought of the glorious orgasms, his beautiful body as it covered hers, his weight pushing her into the soft mattress. “If this is being damned, I’ll gladly go with you.”

“When I am in spirit form, I can’t feel your skin ripple beneath my touch, or taste the essence of your kiss. I can’t feel the clutch of your walls when you come.” He rolled over, bracing himself above her and staring at her with pain in his golden eyes. “And I can’t come in you and *feel* my cock deep in your body.”

“But I feel you.” She remembered the feather-like touches, the breeze across her sex lips.

“That is only half of what it...means...to...live.” Before her eyes, he faded; his strong, chiselled features becoming transparent; the golden eyes that watched her as she came disappearing altogether. And there was no longer the delicious weight of his hips pressing her thighs open.

“Keegan,” she whispered his name.

*A waft of breath touched the lobe of her ear; her sex tingled and her clit throbbed as invisible fingers lightly pinched it.*



"You're still here," said the lady who gave her the coffee she had ordered.

"You're still here?" Questioned the utilities guy when she passed him on the street.

"You're still here." The old man at the grocery store nodded, a toothless grin on his face as if he knew she would be, where the others had seemed very surprised.

"Okay, someone tell me why that surprises everyone."

"It's the moon."

"The full moon last night?"

"Aye. After every full moon, the tenants would always leave screaming." He looked her up and down, trying to figure out why she wasn't hysterical. "What happens when the moon is witness?"

Zoë opened her eyes wide, hoping to look innocent.

"There was one who left at a dark moon but we thought perhaps she was so in fear of the stories she had heard, she left before the full moon appeared."

So, Zoë thought as she rode home, a female sorceress didn't haunt the place; it was Keegan. And apparently there were two possible times a month when he would be solid and real like last night. Rock hard solid, she added, groaning as she remembered the size of his cock; the wonderful feel of it filling her. She tilted forward, letting the bike seat put pressure on her clit as she pedalled harder, rolling her hips from side to side, but it didn't relieve the ache she felt. She wanted the sex they shared; him coming inside her as she clutched around him; not the shadowy feel of him brushing over her as she came alone.

"It has to do with the moon," she said as she burst into the house, dropping her groceries on the counter. She frantically looked around, knowing he wasn't there; that he wouldn't come to her until tonight.

"Tell me you're here; that you can hear me."

*A soft kiss of air brushed her cheek.*

She touched her cheek and smiled. So, he was always here.

"You watch me bathe," she said. "You're here when I touch myself." The thought that he watched her pleasure herself when he couldn't come should have brought a blush to her face but it only made her throb deep in her vagina.

Determined to help him, she opened her laptop, connecting to the internet. She looked up the 'twelfth of never', only to find it was a song by Johnny Mathis – way too modern. The closest thing to a sorceress or mysticism she could think of in today's world was Tarot, but what she found related to lunar cycles didn't help. It stated only that the moon governs the emotional life, which seemed appropriate, but all the rest about gibbous and balsamic moon cards didn't make sense. And she couldn't find any internet references to a sorceress named Fiona.



Zoë spent her days researching on the internet and her nights having cataclysmic orgasms. Trevor was forgotten; her manuscript on hold until she heard from her agent. When she couldn't think of any other key words to look up, she climbed on her bike and rode into Galway, going through the bookstores for history of the area. She purchased tickets on some tours, visiting area castles, hoping to hear something about a haunted castle, a sorceress and a knight condemned to wander the spiritual realm. She even visited Kylemore Abbey, but no one there wanted to speak of ghosts.

"You have to tell me where to look," she whispered as she flipped through yet another book at the Galway Irish Crystal Heritage Centre.

She pulled a worn tome from the shelf and the book next to it tipped onto its side then clattered loudly to the floor.

The woman behind the counter looked at her accusingly.

"Sorry," Zoë said, picking up the book to return it to the shelf, but her hand stayed as she read the cover. *Ancient Keeps of Galway*.

"You followed me," she whispered, not sure if the falling book were an accident or if Keegan was close by. "If you're here, you're naked, as always," she grinned, thinking of what the prim curator would think if Keegan could suddenly appear in the flesh. She knew he would have a hard on; it was his perpetual state considering how the sorceress had cast her spell. She felt a tingle at her sex, and the beginning of the familiar ache.

She hurried to check out the book, the pinch-faced woman frowning at her the entire time. Zoë figured she had probably heard that *the American* was staying at the cottage and wondered if she was a witch too, considering she was still here after the full moon.

When she got back to the cottage, she took her book and a glass of wine out to the rocker, her favourite place to be. Well, other than wherever Keegan happened to want to fuck her, that is. But it was still mid afternoon, and he only seemed to visit her at night. Lazily flipping through the book as she rocked, she sat up quickly, choking on her wine as the pages fell open to one particular castle. She glanced across the lake, where an old keep stood sentinel against a backdrop of hills, the lake glimmering so brightly she had to shade her eyes. Was it the same?

She held the book up. It looked similar, though it was hard to tell at this distance. "Blackstone Castle, once the home of the largest clan in Ireland. In the foreground, ó hAodha Lake, so named for the way the sun glints off the water at sunset like fire." Keegan had said he was Lord of Blackstone Castle. There was a footnote at the end of the picture caption, and she quickly flipped to the appendix.

*After the demise of their Lord, Keegan McFallon, Clan McFallon eventually became absorbed into the surrounding area, as they were on friendly terms with many clans, and most had need of good fighting men. The mystery surrounding Lord Keegan's death remains after centuries.*

"Holy shit. So everything he said is true." Zoë hadn't exactly doubted him, yet his tale, in fact the whole ghost-spirit-making-her-orgasm thing, was a tale stranger than fiction. She suddenly felt a compelling need to visit Castle Blackstone. She looked again across the lake. She couldn't swim it, but she could walk.

She threw some snacks and a bottle of water into her backpack, along with the Ancient Keeps book and locked the door when she left, laughing to herself. It wasn't like anyone would come near the place to steal anything.

It took close to an hour to manoeuvre through the tall grasses and trees that ran along the edge of the lake. Keeping it constantly in her view to the left, Zoë hoped there were no snakes in the grass, because if there was a trail, she hadn't found it, and proceeded to make her own. She stopped in awe in the meadow directly in front of the castle. Towers of stone, which looked almost black from time, stretched high into the sky. A stone wall had once connected the towers, but now lay in ruins, yet she could almost imagine knights patrolling

the wall, looking for invaders. She climbed over a low pile of rubble, smiling. She bet knights didn't patrol the walls. She couldn't imagine Keegan pulling guard duty; he would be off slaying dragons somewhere.

There was no roof; it had long since rotted away. The uneven ridges of stone stood in dark relief against the blue sky, and though it wasn't exactly what Zoë would call scary, the huge old keep was eerie. Large gapping archways were simply black holes. If she entered, would she get swallowed up in the past? Given her current circumstances, did it really make any difference?

Zoë hadn't studied much history, and her novels were set in contemporary times, but as she wandered beneath stone arches and through rooms that once would have been majestic to behold, she was totally taken in. There was a strong emotional pull here; a heaviness to the air that she hadn't felt outside the walls. She thought if she closed her eyes, she might get sucked back through some vortex to a bygone era, when knights did gallop through the gates on huge horses. And yet, she wasn't afraid. She guessed after Trevor's deception, there wasn't much that could hurt her, so she might as well take adventure where she could find it.

She peeked into cubbyholes, and even found the entrance to what she just knew was the dungeon. An iron gate still hung by one hinge, stone steps led downward and curved into the dark. Even with her flashlight, Zoë wasn't about to go down there.

Wandering further through the keep, she found what had probably been a garden, overgrown by weeds. Beyond the garden stood a smaller stone structure, the more pointed set of stones on one end making Zoë think it must have been the chapel. Once she skirted the overgrown garden, a stone path led to the side, where she found several gravestones, tilted at odd angles from storms and time. One stone, much larger than the rest, was flat on the ground. She brushed at the leaves and dirt covering it, her hand shaking and an icy shiver going up her arm as she touched the cool rock. She couldn't find any markings and wondered if they were on the other side. Knowing it would be impossible for her to turn the heavy stone by herself, she decided it was best that she didn't know whose name was written there. It didn't make any difference how long ago Keegan had lived — if she could set him free in the present time.

She stepped back through a different arch in the inner wall, walking along the grassy area between it and the outer wall. She looked up, expecting to see storm clouds because it seemed so dark, but the sky was only a deep blue. She glanced at her watch, noting it was much later than she'd thought. When she got to the low area where she had come in, she climbed over the rocks and stared down toward the lake, which shimmered like fire from the setting sun. She scrunched up her mouth. It had taken an hour to get here; she didn't have an hour before sunset to make it back to the cottage, and she didn't particularly want to walk through the woods and tall grass in the dark.

She turned back to the castle; gloomy shadows creating an image even fiercer than the original black stone. Did she want to stay here? She knew from having started a lunar calendar after reading about the Tarot moon that there would only be the tiniest sliver of a moon tonight, and it would cast no light for her to see by.

In the time it took her to decide, the sun had sunk further and the shadows lengthened. She thought it might be just as well if she stayed put. She had no aversion to sleeping outside, and had her jacket in her backpack. She found a grassy area right up next to the outer wall, and settled down for the night.

Keegan would be here when the night crept over the hills and everything was totally, absolute black. Whether in spirit form or not, she was not afraid when he surrounded her. And face it, she grinned to herself, when she had his cock deep inside her and she was in the throes of climax, she didn't notice her surroundings.

## Chapter Three

Zoë woke shivering in the early dawn as moisture soaked through her light jacket and pants. A heavy mist swirled everywhere, making the castle no more than a hulking dark shadow behind her. She could barely see the lake, and had to carefully pick her way back to the cottage, wondering if she got lost in the fog whether she'd become a spirit and wander aimlessly like Keegan. Thoughts of him totally depressed her because he hadn't come to the castle last night. It was the first time since she had arrived that she hadn't been with him, although why it mattered when he was only a spirit, she didn't want to analyze. So much for the faithfulness of men from any time period, she thought as she opened the door.

Total chaos greeted her when she went to her bedroom to get a change of clothes. The bed had been stripped, the sheets and coverlet tossed carelessly on the floor. Every piece of clothing she owned was strewn around the room, a few pairs of her bikini briefs hanging askew from the bedside light.

"What the hell?" She raced back downstairs to see if her laptop and purse, which contained all her credit cards, not to mention her passport, were still there. Breathing a sigh of relief, she found nothing disturbed on the table and nothing gone from the cupboards or fridge. Only her bedroom had been disturbed, and when she returned upstairs to straighten it, she found nothing gone. It was simply and literally tossed.

She climbed into the shower muttering, "McFallon, if that's your idea of a joke, we're going to have a little discussion the next time I see you." That thought led to another – when would he appear in the flesh again?

As soon as she dried off, she wrapped her hair in a towel, dressed, and went downstairs, grabbing a cup of freshly brewed coffee and her notepad before going out back to her rocking chair. As she sipped her coffee, she gazed across the lake. The misty fog still hovered over the valley. She could hardly see the lake, and couldn't see the castle at all. Was Keegan there, looking for her when he couldn't find her here?

She flipped open her notebook to the lunar calendar. Last night had been a waning crescent moon, just the slightest edge of light. She wasn't sure how accurate her calculations

were, given a moon cycle was approximately twenty-nine and a half days, as compared to a thirty or thirty-one day month, but according to her notes, either this night or the next should be a new moon, and she would be able to see Keegan again, literally, if what the villagers said was fact. They hadn't done the new moon thing since she hadn't arrived until just a week before the full moon.

Knowing she would have to wait hours and hours until she could experience the great sex they shared, she made herself collect her laundry and strapped the bag onto the back of her bike and rode into town to find a laundromat. Once she had the laundry going, she wandered along the narrow streets, peeking into store windows. When she came to a T-shirt shop, she went in and bought a pair of extra large gray sweatpants and a matching T-shirt.

She had decided that she wanted more from Keegan than sex – what *was* she thinking? – therefore the clothes. Yes, she was sure they would fuck. After all that seemed to be his ticket out of the netherworld, but since even a knight of the realm couldn't keep it up all night, she decided to feed him, and then find out more about him.

Unfortunately she didn't have the opportunity that night or at any time the next day because once again, Keegan didn't show. Zoë wandered through the house, softly calling his name, holding her breath at each minute tingle she thought she felt and every touch of breeze on her skin. Finally, her nerves worn to a frazzle and beginning to wonder if she had made up everything, she fell into bed exhausted before the sun had even set.



“Where *were* you?” A deep, thoroughly angry voice jerked her from a sound sleep as the covers were yanked off and she was bodily hauled out of bed.

Even in her half awakened state, she recognized the Irish brogue and didn't need a light to know it was Keegan. His smell and very essence were stamped into her memory. Even so...

“Me? Where the hell have you bee –”

She never finished the sentence as his mouth crushed hers in a punishing, devouring kiss. His tongue forced her lips open, delving in to taste her, and she found herself fighting back, not to push him away, but to take him as he was her. Lust, in its purest form, bubbled



up inside her as he lifted her completely off the ground, never releasing her mouth. She wrapped her legs around his waist and her arms around his neck as his hands kneaded her ass, his fingers sliding along the edge of her thong.

With a yank, her panties were ripped off and he lifted her higher until she could feel his cock, stiff and hot, probing her crevice. From the second he had touched her, she had turned slick, but when he pulled her hips down, impaling her with one deep thrust, she still cried out from the full thick length of him invading her so quickly.

“Keegan,” she whimpered, but he seemed immune to her voice. With one hand holding her steady, he slid the other under her shirt, pushing it up and off to capture her breast in his big hand. He sucked and nipped at her neck and she knew she would have a mark, but it didn’t matter. He pinched and rolled her nipple between his fingers and her juices flowed.

She dug her fingers into his hair, loving the feel of him inside her, but sensing desperation in his touch. “Kee,” she nibbled on his earlobe, “what is it?”

He squeezed her so tight it hurt as he started thrusting into her. She didn’t know how he could maintain his balance but wasn’t about to tell him to stop so they could get into bed. It felt way too good, sliding up and down on his shaft; him burying it deeper than ever in this position.

“I thought I had lost you – that you had gone back to your home.” His voice, thick with emotion, rocked Zoë to her core.

She had wanted something more from him, and apparently he felt the same. She hugged him tight, then cradled his head in her hands, gazing into eyes the colour of dark amber. “I’m here,” she whispered against his lips. “I’ll always be here.” She kissed him, as gently as she could, and for as long as it took for him to calm, his strokes finally gentle, his hands softly caressing her ass.

He shifted her in his arms, one hand sliding down her belly to finger her clit as he continued to thrust into her. That was all it took for Zoë to spiral out of control.

“Oh, God,” she cried as she came, squeezing her legs tighter around his waist. Just as she crested, her muscles clutching as sensation spiked, Keegan thrust once more and with a groan, spewed into her. She could feel his muscles quiver and it was long minutes later before he sucked in a ragged breath.

"Fiona may have cast a spell over me," he said as he looked down into her eyes, "but Ceara, you will be the death of me." She unwrapped her legs from around his waist and he slowly allowed her to slide down his body until her feet touched the floor. She could feel his cum trickle down the inside of her thigh.

"I could say the same, if you keep waking me up like you did," Zoë replied as she looked around the floor for her shirt.

"You do not like waking up with a climax?"

"I don't like having the shit scared out of me," she mumbled as she tugged the shirt on over her head.

"Why do you cover your beautiful body?" He took a step toward her, tugging up the hem of her shirt.

She slapped his hands away, turning to grab the things she had bought him. "Because there're things we need to discuss, and I can't think straight when I'm staring at you and you have a hard-on."

He looked down, his penis limp now, but still a very nice length. "'Tis not very hard right now, but give me a moment." He raised his gaze to hers and shot her a sexy grin.

"Exactly; that's what I mean. Here, put these on."

He slid into the pants but refused to put on the shirt as he followed her downstairs to the kitchen. As she got out the steak and potatoes she had bought for his dinner, she started talking.

"Where have you been anyway? I went to the castle and came back to find my bedroom a wreck and you no where in sight."

"You visited Blackstone?" His head jerked up from where he had been punching keys on her computer. "Has it well withstood the ravages of time?"

"You mean you haven't been there? In all these years?"

He shook his head in sorrow. "I am linked forever to this place because of the curse. I have had to watch from afar as my knights fell in battle and others took my land. I could not help when the fields turned fallow because the villagers left to work in the city factories."

"You know about the industrial revolution and technology?"

"Aye. This is a computer," he pointed as he spoke. "That is a 'fridge'. You have electricity but no satellite television. On those times when I was a whole man, I would read and watch and learn." He gave her a sexy leer. "When I wasn't off wenching, that is."

She didn't want to tell him his castle stood in ruins, so quickly changed the subject. "Okay, so if you were here, what's with my bedroom the other night, and my clothes?"

She watched his cheeks darken and wouldn't have thought a man like Keegan could blush.

"Ah, whatever yer cooking smells good. I don't remember the last time I had a hearty meal."

"Don't change the subject, McFallon."

He looked off to the side, out the window, though it was dark and Zoë knew there was nothing to see. "I was...concerned that you were not here."

"Concerned? That's why you tossed my bedroom?"

He shrugged. "Well, there may have been some anger involved, seeing as you were not there."

Zoë plunked the steaks on plates, grabbed the baked potatoes out of the microwave, and carried them to the table. "Sit," she instructed, trying to hide her smile. He was mad that she hadn't been here, but it wouldn't have been because he wanted sex with her. The last two nights he would have been a spirit, and as such, wasn't able to climax. So that meant he cared about her, not his own physical needs.

She watched him reach to his side, pause and frown, before he picked up the knife she had put by his plate. She could only assume he was used to having it strapped to his side.

"Is it difficult, not having things you're used to? Not having anything familiar around you anymore?" She watched as he literally devoured the steak. She ate a few bites of hers, but found it hard to be hungry in the middle of the night.

"I have gotten used to a great many things over the past five hundred years. Though 'tis true I miss my mighty sword, I have become quite fond of doing without my clothes or heavy suit of armour." He glanced at her plate, his empty now, and she silently handed it over.

He grinned as he cut into her steak, continuing their conversation. "I could wish that Fiona had waited just a minute or two before casting her spell so that I at least had on my

leggings. It would have saved many a lady from embarrassment over the years. These leggings," he gestured to the sweats he wore, "are actually quite comfortable."

"What happened to her?" Zoë asked; not that she cared about the bitch, but it might have some bearing on the spell she cast.

"My men found my body near her cottage. Of course, being in my prime, and without a wound on me, they were never able to determine how I died. Even though Fiona was a sorceress, she was mortal, and they tortured her."

"But she was a woman! Didn't you hold women in high esteem?"

"Not when they kill the lord of the clan. Besides, it is said that which one does in anger or harm will return three fold. She only received her due." He frowned fiercely, as though the incident happened only yesterday.

"Would you like some dessert?" Zoë stood to clean off the table but when she moved to step around his chair, Keegan pulled her down onto his lap.

"Is dessert your delicious juices?" he asked, his voice deep and smoky and Zoë immediately started aching. When she squirmed on his lap, she felt his erection push up between her thighs. His hand slid up her leg, his fingers insinuating themselves between her sex lips, teasing her nub before sliding deep into her wetness.

"Come for me, sweet *Ceara*," he whispered before tonguing her ear in rhythm to the thrust of his fingers.

"*Ceara*," Zoë said on a sigh. "What does that mean?" She leaned back against his shoulder, her body completely lax as she let him pleasure her.

He shrugged lightly. "The language of the people of Éire is sometimes difficult to translate."

Zoë moved off his lap and turned toward him. When she tugged at the waistband of his pants, he grinned as he lifted his hips. She straddled him, reaching down to circle his penis and guide it to her throbbing pussy. She ever so slowly sank down on him, stopping before he was fully embedded. "Try," she cooed.

He clamped his hands on her hips, trying to bring her all the way down, but the exercise she had been getting pedalling her bike to town and back made her legs strong enough to hold steady. "Kee," she warned.

“’Tis the word for fiery red, the colour of yer hair,” he said with a sigh as she lowered just a little more.

“And líoch – the word you used the first time I saw you?” She was enjoying teasing him because she could feel him pulsing at her entrance, and her muscles clutched in response.

“Beautiful. ’Tis the way yer face lights up when you come; the feeling I have in my chest when you look at me as you are now.”

She smiled as she sank all the way down, meshing their hips in the most intimate way possible. She didn’t have to believe him. Her red hair was the bane of her existence, but in truth, she felt beautiful when she was with him. And so, because he was so generous with his compliments, she was generous with her body, sliding up and down in an ever increasing rhythm, her muscles squeezing and stroking until he threw his head back with a shout, and she felt his hot cum fill her completely.



Zoë snuggled her face into his neck as Keegan carried her upstairs to her bedroom.

“You didn’t have your ice cream,” she murmured as he gently laid her on the bed.

“The hot cream from your body was no doubt a much better dessert,” he replied, referring to the fact that he had laid her out on the table and lapped at her with his tongue, teasing her clit and licking her sex lips until she had screamed in another glorious climax. He had then slid his tongue into her, licking and sucking until she came again. After that, she hadn’t recalled anything until he put her to bed.

“Don’t go,” she begged, grabbing his hand when he brushed back her hair. “Come to bed with me.”

“Aye, *Anam Cara*, for as long as I can.” He crawled in beside her, pulling her close and she felt the warmth of his chest against her back, his breath caressing her neck. She entwined her fingers with his as he laid his hand on the curve of her stomach.

“You couldn’t leave the cottage to come to me at the castle,” she said sleepily, “but why didn’t you come to me last night? I was here.”

“In all the years I have been roaming the netherworld, I never knew I could use all the energy that created me. Tearing apart your room, worrying and wondering where you were, expended everything that I was, until I was nothing more than a speck of energy.”

She squeezed his hand. “What was it like?”

He tugged her closer, as though absorbing her energy and she knew she would gladly give it to him if it would keep him by her side a little longer. “It was like floating in a murky lake; barely seeing you, unable to reach you. Much worse even than when I am only a spirit.” He sighed. “I will not make the mistake of getting angry again.”

Zoë drifted off to sleep, warm, sated and content, his kiss lingering on the tender skin at the base of her ear.

## Chapter Four

Zoë almost cried when she awoke in the morning. How could she be so right and so wrong? Although Keegan had been quite solid, as her sore thighs could attest, he was gone with the morning light. So while she now knew that the moon played an important part, in that he became a whole man on the full and new moon, what was the rest of the spell?

She quickly showered and dressed, racing downstairs to her computer. She consulted the moon calendar. She had two weeks and a day before the full moon, when he would appear again. Could she find the secret that would help him remain a mortal man?

The *twelfth of never*. Twelve? The twelfth moon cycle? Looking at the moon cycles she had pulled from the internet, the twelfth full moon was in December and the twelfth new moon was in November. Would they have to wait that long? And what if it wasn't the twelfth cycle from January as she was figuring? What if Fiona had been on some Celtic calendar? The twelfth moon cycle could be anything, depending at what point she began counting.

Thinking of other references to the moon she knew, she looked up blue moons, but found they only occurred about every two and one half years, so she really hoped that wasn't the key.

"Augh!" she groaned out loud, totally frustrated that she was finding more questions than answers.

She thought about the name Keegan had called her – his *anam cara*. She grabbed the book of Celtic wisdom she had gotten from the library and started reading. What she found out had her heart pounding but not because of any moon references.

The words meant *soul friend*, and the Celtic understanding was that there were no limitations on the soul and love; that time and space meant nothing, and that not even death could sever the connection of this love.

Is that what she and Keegan were experiencing? Had some mysterious, mystic connection caused her to find the Rose Hill cottage on the internet? If she believed that, then there was nothing she would not do for him, and visa-versa.

She sucked in a breath as understanding dawned. It was true. She wanted more from him than the physical. In the little time they had, he had made her laugh, treated her with tenderness and loved her with a fierceness that was scary. She had to find the secret to the spell!

Every night when Zoë fell into bed Keegan was with her. She didn't know if he could hear her or not, but she talked to him, telling him what she had found out, or more what she wasn't finding out. And he would caress her and kiss her and give her an orgasm to make her quit talking.

By the end of the week, she was ready to pull her hair out, because she just couldn't find anything that appeared to define the *twelfth of never*. She even got books on Celtic magic and witchcraft. After all, Fiona was a sorceress, and Zoë equated that to witches. She actually thought she had found the secret when one book mentioned Celtic tradition began the "Wheel of the Year" at Halloween – October 31<sup>st</sup> – but when she consulted the lunar calendar, the new moon would be the twenty-eighth. So close!

Still, shivers ran down her spine when she read further and learned that during the commencement of this season of darkness, the misty veils separating worlds could be very thin, or even part. Was that why she and Keegan, who were most definitely from different worlds, were able to be together?

She rubbed her temples in consternation. Needing a break, she got on the internet, checking her email. Her agent liked her mystery idea, but as Zoë stared at the computer monitor, it suddenly dawned on her that she should be writing Keegan's story. Quickly she emailed her agent with a very sketchy outline.

Just as she was ready to shut down her computer it dinged, indicating she had another message. Her heart pounded when she saw the address.

Trevor.

She almost didn't open it, but decided she had nothing to lose and knew she was over the worst of the hurt he could inflict.

"OK, you've had your pout. Now come home."

She leaned back against the chair, staring at the monitor. Pout? Ha! She hit reply and started to tell him where he could stick his big fat prick, when it dawned on her that if she replied, he could probably find her. He was a technology wizard, and even though her e-mail



address was generic, he could probably trace the connection somehow to the internet provider she was currently using. She wasn't going to have anything to do with him, so why should she even answer? Her finger hovered over the delete key for just an instant, and then she hit it, signed out and shut off the computer.



Zoë took extra care getting ready for Keegan's visit. She shaved and waxed, shampooed and perfumed. She now waited in eager anticipation in bed. It was the full moon and he would appear to her again in human form. She didn't have any new information, but still her pussy contracted with the thought of making love to him. It was so much better when she could feel the thickness of him and the hot sperm that shot into her when he came. She thought of Trevor's message earlier that day then began to worry if Keegan would turn out to be the same faithless type man. He had said she was his *anam cara*, and even though he was a spirit, at least for now, his presence in her life felt much more right than her relationship with Trevor ever had. But would that survive if he became mortal?

"What has you frowning so, *ceara*?"

His deep brogue didn't surprise her and she turned to where he stood framed in the doorway.

"Did you mean what you said last time, about being faithful to a wife?"

"Aye."

"I though all you knight type guys went around wenching all the time."

He pounced on her, wiggling his naked hips between her thighs. "If I had a *wench* as lusty as you to come home to after a hard day's ride, why would I wander elsewhere? Besides, have you not heard of honour?"

"I wish American men felt that way," she muttered.

"Who has hurt you, fair Zoë? I will slay them with my sword!"

She laughed as she moved against his groin. "The only sword I've ever seen of yours isn't exactly what would work." She could feel the tip of his cock at her opening.

He let out a sigh, bending his head to meet hers, forehead to forehead. "Would that I had more than a few hours with you each moon cycle. There is so much I would tell you about my clan; about my land."

"I'm trying, Keegan. We just haven't found the right combination yet. I've plotted moon cycles; read everything I can find on the phases of the moon, and all we know is that you become a real man on the full moon and on the new moon, otherwise known as a dark moon." A thought struck her and she pushed against his shoulders.

"Let me up." When he refused to move, spreading hot kisses across her collarbone, she groaned, then pushed again. "Keegan, it's important. I think I have something."

As soon as he released her, she bounded out of bed and raced for the stairs. She could hear him behind her as she grabbed a paper and pencil.

"Dark is black. Black means no light," she wrote. "What are synonyms for *no*?"

"What's a syno--?"

"Words that mean the same, or almost," she replied as she wrote more. "No, not, zero nothing...never." She gasped. "A dark moon is no moon; no can mean never." She turned to him in excitement. "*The twelfth of never* is a new moon!"

He raised a brow, not nearly as excited as she was. "I am sure I have made love to a woman on a new moon; a dark moon, a waxing and waning moon, and everywhere in between."

"Yes, but it has to be when you can orgasm, right?"

"Aye."

"Now all we have to do is figure out what the twelfth is as it relates to a new moon." She turned to find the notes she had printed off on lunar phases.

"Come here." He circled her waist and pulled her back against him. "'Tis a full moon tonight, and I have very little time left, according to your computer clock." He nodded to the monitor. It was three in the morning. They never ate nor slept according to any schedule on the few times he'd come to her in the flesh. There were other, more immediate things to occupy their minds.

"But what about—"

He turned her and kissed her silent. She wrapped her arms around his stout neck. In the short time she had known Keegan, she had found a man she longed to spend her life with. Oh, his body was a definite, but she was finding there was so much more to the man.

Keegan released her lips and she squealed when he lifted her, tossing her over his shoulder and heading for the stairs. "If you think all a knight does is bed wenches, 'tis up to me to at least show you the right and proper way 'tis done."

When they got to her bedroom Keegan dropped her on the bed before going to the bathroom where he used her razor to shave.

As she scooted to the edge of the bed and watched him, she knew what she had to do. Scribbling a name on a piece of paper, she lit the red candle she had bought and held the paper over the flame. When it caught, she dropped it into a dish and watched it burn.

"You have been studying, my *anam cara*." He came to stand behind her, circling her waist with his large hands, his touch warming her. She leaned back against him.

"Aye," she mimicked his brogue. "'Tis a way to acknowledge old weaknesses and to get rid of things I no longer need."

She felt his lips on the side of her neck. "So you have finally rid yourself of this Trevor creature who treated you badly?"

"How do you know it was his name I burned?"

"I am always with you, even if you can not see me."

"Always?"

He nipped her neck at her teasing. "As long as you stay in the cottage. In your reading, do you recall the significance of a red candle?"

She turned to him and smiled. "Of course, although we've never needed one to enhance *our* sex." When she rubbed her belly against his hips he groaned, and she could feel his erection grow. She circled his neck, hopped and wrapped her legs around his waist. "Take me to bed, McFallon. Even if we now know you probably need a new moon, we'd better practice so we can get it right."

He pinched her bottom. "You think I need practice?"

"Practice makes perfect."

"You do not need practice to be perfect, sweet lady. You have given me more than I have experienced in all the years since my death. You are indeed perfect as you are."

“Ah, I knew there was a reason I stuck around until I could see you again.”



The next morning, although Zoë was sad that Keegan had disappeared once again, she felt they were closer to finding the secret to the spell. Since she was sure the ‘never’ part was the dark moon, she had exactly two weeks to figure out the ‘twelfth’ part, so she narrowed her research specifically to information on the new, or dark moon.

In her reading, she discovered there was a difference between a new moon and a dark moon and only the dark moon could be precisely computed. Figuring they needed something precise, she checked the definition of dark moon to find it was the exact moment in time when the sun, moon and earth were in alignment. It was called conjunction and according to the on-line encyclopaedia, it occurred at the exact same time all over the earth. Holding her breath as she thumbed through an almanac, which the article had referenced, she came to October’s calendar.

“Oh, Keegan,” she whispered, “I think I found the secret.” Her eyes misted over and for a minute she just sat there, not believing it might possibly be true. The moment of conjunction—the dark moon—would occur on October 28<sup>th</sup> at exactly midnight. *The twelfth of never.*

Her excitement grew and she danced around the kitchen until she was dizzy. When she thought about giving Keegan his life back, she was so happy, but then suddenly she wondered if he would still want her. After all, a man as handsome as he could have anyone he wanted. At the present, she was handy.

That thought was so thoroughly depressing, Zoë went to bed fretting. In the middle of the night, she awoke, swearing she heard *anam cara* over and over again in Keegan’s deep brogue. Was he telling her that he would still love her? Was she so insecure after Trevor that she no longer had faith in her own ability to attract and keep a man?

She got out of bed and went to the window, gazing out over the lake to where Blackstone Castle stood, a black shadow against the lighter green of the meadow. The half moon cast just enough light for her to see the jagged edges of the ruins.

*All will be well.* Although there was no sound in the room, she knew it was Keegan speaking to her, because she suddenly felt surrounded by warmth, his presence almost tangible.

"I do hope so," she sighed as she climbed back into bed, "because there's only a week to find out."

In the morning when the post came, Zoë was happy to see her latest royalty check because her funds had been depleted quicker than she thought. If she didn't start writing again soon, she was going to have a hard time surviving back in the States, much less extending her stay in Ireland.

With that thought in mind, she took the laptop and coffee out back to her morning spot. Before she began writing, she checked her email to find a note from her agent regarding Keegan's story.

"Zoë, you don't write fantasy. Besides, no one would ever suspend his or her disbelief over a story with an orgasming ghost under a sorceress' spell. Stick with the mystery proposal you sent."

Zoë looked out at the lake where the water twinkled, making her think of dancing fairies. She smiled, knowing Keegan's Celtic heritage was rubbing off on her. Regardless of what her agent thought, Zoë knew she had to tell Keegan's story.

## Chapter Five

"Twenty-nine days, twelve hours and forty-four minutes," Zoë muttered as she set the computer clock to a countdown mode. At exactly midnight, the moment of conjunction, she just knew it would be *the twelfth of never*. Everything fit together. Never was the dark moon; twelfth was the twelfth hour or midnight, which was also a 'never' in terms of that point in time when it was neither pm nor am. So all she had to do was get Keegan to orgasm before her computer clock finished striking the midnight hour. Could he perform on demand? Should she even tell him, or would it make him nervous?

God knows she was. Her hand shook as she lit the red candle on the nightstand by her bed. The book had said red was a love colour. How would she hold off having sex with Keegan until exactly the right moment? Should they make love when he first appeared and hope he would be ready again later? They usually made love more than once when he was with her.

She stepped into the hot bath in preparation for his appearance. Funny how she thought of their sex as making love rather than fucking now.

"Ah, there is something very sexy about a fair maid in her bath."

Zoë squawked and shot straight up in the tub. Keegan stood at the bathroom door, his bronze skin bathed in the soft glow of the candles she had lit. His arms were crossed over his chest, his long legs crossed at the ankle as he leaned against the doorjamb.

As always, his cock jutted out from a tangle of dark blond hair and the sight of it, and him, had Zoë's vagina contracting in want. Still...

"Will you stop doing that?" she scolded him.

"But I delight in hearing you screech at me." He grinned as he stepped into the tub behind her. She scooted forward to make room, then settled back against him, his legs sliding along hers until she was wedged into the vee of his thighs, his ever present erection hard against her back.

Zoë laid her head back against his chest as he caressed her breasts.

"Why are you so contemplative this eve? 'Tis a new moon, and I feel the power in the essence that surrounds you."

"If I told you that I believe I know Fiona's secret, will you be disappointed if it doesn't work?"

His hands stilled on her breasts, and it was as if he stopped breathing.

"You have found the *twelfth of never*?"

She explained to him what she had figured out. "But I'm not an astronomer or anything. Oh, Keegan, what if it doesn't work?"

He hugged her tightly. "Have faith, *ceara*. You have learned my heritage and care enough about me to try to help. It will work, but..."

She wiggled around to look at him. "But what?"

"If I must orgasm on the stroke of midnight, you must feed me to build up my strength."

"I think you don't exactly need any building up," Zoë commented, feeling his erection throbbing against her hip.

"Aye, 'tis true, given I could slip into your wet sheath right this minute and spill my seed in little time at all. But if I am to perform on demand, then we must do something to while away the time, do you not think?"

"We could always play checkers."

"I am hungry, woman. If I can't eat you, then—"

"All right," she laughed. "We eat."

Together they washed and dried each other off, laughing and teasing. By the time they finished, Zoë wanted to jump his bones, but knew she had to wait.

She had bought steak again—a huge one for Keegan—and soon they were sitting at the table with plates and glasses of wine. Though she tried not to look at her computer clock, the ticking sound she had set loudly announced each passing minute.

"How much time do you think you'll need?" she asked.

Keegan choked on his wine, his eyes watering.

"Woman, 'tis not the kind of thing to ask a man!"

"Well," she scrunched up her mouth, "if we have to be exact, it would help to know."

He narrowed his gaze at her. "Believe me when I say I shall have no trouble coming in your sweet body at the exact time needed. I have waited too long for this moment and am more than ready to leave this spirit realm."

Zoë had the grace to blush. "Okay, okay. Sorry if I offended your masculinity."

"Come here, sweet."

She rose and came around the table. He tugged her close, burying his face between her breasts. "You are my *anam cara*. We will make magic together." His hand slid down her back, across her butt, and between her legs.

"Keegan."

"Shhh, the spell is that I have to orgasm on the *twelfth of never*. Fiona never said that I could not make a woman come before me, and again with me."

His fingers were insinuated between her sex lips and Zoë felt herself grow damp. She moved so her nipple skimmed his lips and he opened his mouth to latch on to it, sucking and tonguing the turgid tip.

"That hardly seems fair to you." She didn't want him to stop, but felt she should raise a protest, mild though it was.

He turned to lift her to the edge of the table. "Ah, my sweet *ceara*. Truth be told, I shall make up for it in all the years to come." He tugged her thong down her legs, and then lifted her T-shirt over her head. "And speaking of coming..."

He parted her legs to move between her and Zoë leaned back, bracing her hands on the table behind her. Even though she knew where he was heading, she was unprepared for the sharp streak of sensation when his tongue slid between her sex lips. Her arms shook too badly to support her and she lay back, lifting her legs to drape over his shoulders.

He added his fingers to create totally new sensations as he slid two into her wet opening. Her hips lifted, pushing her pussy closer.

As his fingers pumped into her, he circled her clit with his tongue, then sucked it into his mouth and lightly nibbled.

Zoë screamed as she came, her climax spiralling from the very centre of her outward, travelling down her legs to make her toes curl. Her heart beat way too fast and she couldn't get her breathing calmed, and still he toyed with her, by turns stroking then sucking the nubbin until she came again.



Totally annihilated, she had to push his head away when he wouldn't stop because the intense pleasure bordered on pain.

Keegan kissed her quivering thighs, his mouth hot and wet with her juices. All Zoë could do was lay there, too weak to move, too sated to want to.

She slowly surfaced from her erotic trance when she heard her computer chime.

"Oh, God, it's eleven-thirty." She tried to sit up but Keegan placed a warm, firm hand on her belly.

"'Tis not time...yet," he whispered against her skin as he kissed his way up her thigh, across her hips, and then slowly travelled higher. When he leaned over her she could feel his erection against her sex lips. Knowing how fast they usually climaxed when he first came to her, she tried to scoot back.

Again he wouldn't have it.

"Be still. Feel the energy that flows between us. Your heart beats in rhythm with mine and our breath mingles. I can feel the energy of my ancestors and all the McFallons who have followed me into death. I have the magic of the ages in my veins. For the first time since Fiona cast her spell, I know the time is right. You are right."

With every tick of the clock, he continued to caress her, worshipping her breasts with his mouth and tongue; his hands sliding over her body like the wings of a butterfly. Zoë's passion began to rise once again, and she didn't know how Keegan could keep such tight control on his lust. But then he was a knight, an ancient warrior, and had seen many struggles in his time. Perhaps this was the greatest struggle of them all, and as much as she wished otherwise, Zoë knew she could only help him when that exact moment in time came.

"Concentrate only on what my hands are doing to your body. Think about the glorious climax you will have, and you will take me along with you. Together we shall overcome Fiona's curse." As he spoke, his voice soft and lilting, Zoë's spirit soared with his. And when he entered her, it wasn't his cock she felt as much as his spirit; his entire being, entwining with hers on a plane where she had never been.

She saw the green fields of Ireland; knights galloping huge horses into a castle that stood strong and bold against the horizon. For a moment she wondered if she would go with Keegan back to his time, rather than making him mortal in the present day, but the peace and safety she felt in his arms defied her fear.

When he was fully imbedded in her, he stopped to kiss the side of her neck.

“You are mine, from now through all eternity.” For long minutes she felt him throb inside her until their bodies and their hearts were in unison. Then, slowly, as the final ticks of the clock echoed throughout the cottage, he began to move, thrusting in and out of her, gradually increasing his tempo. As the chimes on her computer clock struck the first chord of midnight, he thrust harder and faster. She tried not to count, she really did, but with each thrust, each stroke of the clock, she clutched him tighter, willing with everything in her heart to make him come.

*Eleven.*

He stopped for an infinitesimal second and Zoë felt her muscles clutch in the first throes of climax.

“Keegan!” She arched her hips towards his and he thrust again, groaning as he imbedded himself so deep in her that she knew she would feel him forever.

*Bong.*

The stroke of midnight and Zoë climaxed, the waves of sensation so strong she felt light headed. And as her muscles clutched, she felt him come, hot and strong, spurting over and over into her womb.

Hugging him as tightly as she could, she began to cry. Mentally and physically exhausted, she tried to open her eyes; tried to hang on, hoping if the spell wasn't broken that she could keep him with her for a few more minutes. As the last vestiges of her climax faded and the bright lights behind her eyelids dimmed, the darkness came.

“It will be all right, my beloved.” She heard the words; felt him surround her, and then all was black.



Keegan wrapped her in a blanket and carried her downstairs and out the back door. Naked, he sat in the grass, his back against the cottage, so they could watch the sunrise.

“You'll catch cold.” Zoë could feel the dampness of the October morning even with the blanket, and Keegan sat there totally naked.

"I need to feel the earth of Éire beneath me and sense the touch of the Irish wind on my skin. All Celts revere nature and I want to again feel its ebb and flow." She felt him kiss the top of her head. "You have given me back my life, and I shall be eternally grateful."

"It's not your gratitude I want," she teased.

"Aye, this I know. I shall also spend the rest of my days pleasuring your sweet body."

"That's better." She wiggled closer to his chest. "Now that you're mortal, what will you do?" She had to ask the question, because she needed to know if she was to be part of his life, regardless of his teasing comments.

"I shall be a knight, of course. 'Tis what I was trained for." He reached inside the blanket to squeeze her breast. "And you can call me your lord."

She elbowed him. "You think. Seriously, I'm afraid there are no knights any more. And your castle is not the way you remember."

"Then I shall spend my days making love to you."

"Be serious. Gigolos are against the law."

"Only if you pay for the pleasure I give you and I would never charge you so much as a farthing."

She stood, holding out her hand to him. "If I don't start writing soon, I probably couldn't afford you anyway."

"I am certain we can find an exchange for my pleasuring you that will be agreeable to both of us." He gave her a lecherous grin before picking her up and tossing her over his shoulder.

She laughed as she caressed his bare bottom. "Then take me home, Sir Keegan McFallon, knight and lord of ecstasy."

## **About the Author**

Bobbie was born in California, married in Iowa and now resides in Kansas. The years in-between were lived in most of the southern states and three in Japan because her father was an Air Force pilot. That probably explains why she still loves to travel and explore new places and usually, each of her novels is set in a different locale. She has written practically all her life, beginning with journals of family vacations. She is now published in poetry, short stories, essays, magazine articles, teacher resource materials, and full-length fiction. She has also written and co-produced a documentary on Kansas history that won state and national awards.

Bobbie loves talking almost as much as she loves writing, and has been a teacher for grades K-8. While in education she made over 100 presentations at state and national conferences on material she had developed in the classroom. Later, during 14 years with public television, she was on air as a program moderator and during annual pledge drives. She has a BS in Education and an MA in Communication and has taught public speaking classes at the college level.

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