

ELLORA'S CAVE PRESENTS

BRIGIT ZAHARA

*Kissing the  
Blarney Stone*

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Kissing the Blarney Stone

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# ***KISSING THE BLARNEY STONE***

**Brigit Zahara**

*Dedication*

*For Dessie with all my love*

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## Chapter One

Thirty-eight-year-old Maggie Byrne wasn't sure what to expect from her March visit to Ireland for St. Patrick's Day. While all her immediate family had been back to "the old country" many a time, this was a first for her.

She was to stay with her Great-Aunt Claire and would be picked up at the Dublin airport by her second cousin twice removed, Shamus O'Neill, before heading to Drogheda—a little town about thirty miles south of Ireland's capital. Ten years her senior, Shamus or Shamy, as he was known in Ireland, had reportedly visited Maggie's North American home when she was a child of five. The Irish almost *always* added a "y" to those masculine names so lending themselves to this particular form of affection—hence there are no Johns or Jims or Bobs throughout the entire country, only Johnnys and Jimmys and Bobbys. Whatever his moniker—and for the record, Maggie did and always would call him by his full name—she couldn't remember him. Well, not entirely. A vague memory of a tall, gangly boy with black hair and a serious expression flitted across her mind's eye and, as strange as it sounded, the image carried with it a little tug of indefinable emotion. What was it exactly? Familiarity? Comfort? Attraction? Certainly nothing of a sexual nature for she had been but a child back then but quite possibly the feeling she was recalling was one of genuine affection. Though their meeting had been brief at best, on some unconscious level Maggie had liked him.

But that was the only memory that remained and now as she stood with tousled hair and smudged mascara compliments of her transatlantic flight and nightmarish transfer in London's Heathrow Airport, she searched the sea of faces waiting in the arrivals terminal for someone she didn't really know or had seen in some thirty years. Christ, perhaps she should have come equipped with a photo? Walking uncertainly out into the throng of smiling, waving and hugging people, Maggie looked from side to

side for a sign of her second cousin-cum-chauffeur. A sign! Maybe she should have worn a big sign with her name on it.

*Look for a sign.*

The words drifted almost hauntingly through Maggie's head. That was, after all, what that woman on the puddle-jumping Aer Lingus flight from London to Dublin had said. The self-professed matchmaker with some thirty decades of connecting singles with their soulmates to her credit—or so she had claimed—had shown up out of nowhere to plunk down into the empty seat to Maggie's left made temporarily vacant when the gentleman beside her got up to use the restroom. In possession of a sharp tongue and an admitted soft heart, the colorful character had been adamant about Maggie's future.

"You're on a journey," she had said, stating the obvious and far from wowing Maggie with her insight as she launched into the unexpected chat. That is, until she clarified the statement. "Aye, not a literal journey but an emotional one." She leaned in close and whispered. "One of the heart."

Maggie regarded her with a mixture of doubt and curiosity.

"What makes you say that?"

The woman stifled a snort as she scoffed at Maggie's obvious disbelief. "I can tell these things. I see them."

*Why not play along?*

"Do you? And what do you see for me?"

The woman closed her eyes, the worn skin between them crinkling into a frown for a moment before relaxing into a decidedly peaceful expression. When she next looked at Maggie, her face was beaming.

"Your destiny."

*Oh for Pete's sake. Could you be any more vague?*

"Right."

“Now don’t be dismissing me child. I’m telling you God’s truth. The real reason for your trip here will be revealed to you here.” She pointed south, spearing the air with a painted nail. “In this country you now visit for the first time, all your dreams will come true. You have only to open your eyes and your heart will see it. Look for a sign.”

The expression on Maggie’s face must have been especially doubtful for the woman then reached into her pocket and handed something to Maggie.

“Here. Keep this,” she whispered almost confidentially, then, “it will lead you to your dreams.”

*What a load of hogwash.*

Chances are, the woman had somehow managed to take note of the delicious mini-doze Maggie had enjoyed during the hour-plus flight and was having her on. Nothing magical about that. In fact, a blind man could have guessed what Maggie had been dreaming about during the flight.

It had all started when she boarded the final flight of her trip. Still feeling the effects of the sleeping pill she had taken earlier, Maggie had dropped off as soon as her butt hit the seat, sinking into a sizzling dream that left her breathless and hot.

In it, she was being loved from head to toe by not one, but two faceless fellas—faceless in that she never got a good look at either one of them. In her mind’s eye she only caught glimpses of twinkling eyes, full lips and dark hair as they bent over her. Determining their identity quickly became irrelevant as a series of hot flashes—and not of the menopause variety—overlapped each other, driving her heart rate through the roof and dampening the thin fabric of her undies as she slept. Muscular smooth chests gave way to ripped torsos and a light dusting of soft peach fuzz below a flat, tight navel. The treasure trail turned thicker and darker as it went south, graduating into a mass of black curls from which sprang a mouth-wateringly hard cock, the skin stretched so tight Maggie could see a thick long vein running from its base all the way up to its spherical cap that shone with a telltale drop of cum. Swooning within her sultry slumber, she licked her lips, almost able to taste its salty flavor. From there, her

dream duo each claimed one of her breasts, their dark heads moving up and down as they kneaded and licked the mound of warm flesh they held in their hands, soon settling into a sweet suction upon the aching rosy tip. When her breasts were hot and wet with saliva, strong hands cupped and pressed them together, the image of that gorgeous thick cock appearing once more, to slide up into the valley between them. Through eyelids droopy with desire, Maggie watched as the head of her dream lover's hard-on pushed through the molded makeshift channel time and time again as he slowly fucked her breasts. The sound of his full balls bouncing against her diaphragm made a soft slap against her moist skin.

While she couldn't see the other man of her dreams, she could feel him. Positioned between Maggie's legs, he was avidly tonguing her inner thighs, moving ever close to her pulsing centre. Tenderly licking her outer lips, he then spread and held them open with gentle fingers that stretched her skin just enough to fully expose the throbbing little nub at the top of her pussy. Teasing her, he lightly speared the ridge of flesh with his tongue for a good while, a low chuckle acknowledging the swelling beneath his lips as he blew on it. His warm breath swiftly increased the tremor in Maggie's thighs. Moving to put her out of her misery, his playful jabs then gave way to long solid licks against the shuddering nub. Finally when he sensed Maggie could take no more, he closed his lips around her clit to suck it gently.

Maggie shuddered, feeling the flare of a certain and explosive orgasm rising within her. Hot hands reached under her knees and hoisted her legs over his shoulders as he moved down her slit to plunge his tongue into her hot slick centre. Churning in around and around, he burrowed deep into her, his soft groan exciting her, as his thumb stroked her throbbing clit.

Arching her back, Maggie screamed as she came hard, distantly aware of the gush of wet warmth spraying across her neck as she placed her hands over those on her breasts and pushed them even closer together against the pounding cock that thrust up between them.



Awaking with a start, Maggie was stunned to see her hands cupping her breasts together just like in the dream. Embarrassed she quickly righted herself and prepared for the landing, avoiding the eyes of the gentleman who sat beside her, an annoying smirk on his face.

Then out of the blue, this “matchmaker” magically arrived to supposedly guide her toward her destiny with—what? Maggie glanced down at the small tarnished charm twinkling in the palm of her hand.

It was a four-leaf clover.

“I’m sorry, but I can’t accept—” As Maggie’s gaze rose from her hand, she stopped mid-sentence. The woman was gone. Leaning into the aisle she looked first right and then left, soon peering up and down the rows of heads in the centre, left and right sections but to no avail. There was no sight of the strange lady.

Settling back into her seat, Maggie absentmindedly slipped the talisman into her pocket as once more, the sexy, sultry memories of her recent dream drifted back to her. Never once had she entertained the notion of a threesome and certainly she had never experienced such an erotic dream—so that in itself was unique and odd—but the encounter with the woman was far more unusual. However Maggie stoically maintained the woman’s words to be nothing more than idle fancy.

Maggie O’Byrne was as practical as they come and some far-out chance meeting with a stars-in-her-eyes looney tune wasn’t about to change that. Be on the lookout for a sign that would make all her dreams come true and lead to her destiny? Not on her life! If fate had something in store for Maggie, she wasn’t going to chase it. Her “destiny” was just going to have to land right in her lap.

“Maggie?”

A low voice laced with a dead sexy brogue was carried on a wisp of warm breath that brushed across the back of her neck. Maggie wheeled around, her mouth immediately falling open as she looked into the bluest pair of eyes she had ever seen. In

the days that lay ahead she would come to realize that they were, in fact, as blue and clear as the Irish Sea that dashed against the craggy rocks of The Giant's Causeway – one of the country's many magical historic sites – but for the time being, she knew only that their hue was striking in its intensity.

"Shamus?"

"Aye," he said with a smile, his head dipping in a one-time nod. "It's good to see you again."

He reached for her then and she him, as if it were the most natural thing in the world. Never one to kiss strangers, or remote relatives for that matter, in introduction – even if technically speaking she had met them previously – Maggie was astounded to find herself sharing a European kiss with her very distant cousin. After pressing her lips to his warm, fragrant cheek lightly scented with a soft spicy aftershave, she moved across to do the same on the other side, their lips just shy of brushing against one another as they passed.

Pulling back from their brief but fireworks-filled exchange, Maggie barely had time to give Shamus a quick once over and yet she still managed to take in his mass of dark curls, lean hard body and dashing white teeth before he drew her attention to his right and the man who stood beside him.

"Come here 'til I tell ya now," he began, the first of many charming Irish colloquialisms that she would come to know and love, "this is me mate Myles. He's just back from a match in Glasgow so is after hitching a ride with us into town."

Myles was slightly shorter and stockier but still a "fine figure of a man" and just as much of a looker with his strands of auburn hair falling into his sparkling brown eyes and a dazzling even-toothed grin that buckled the knees.

*Okay, what gives? What about the bad teeth and "Guinness gut" reported to be permanent fixtures on any decent – or as they pronounced it "day-cent" – Irish man?*

Jerking a thumb in Shamus' direction, Myles gave Maggie a quick wink.

"The bastard'll be wanting taxi fare."

Shamus didn't miss a beat nor crack a smile as he stooped down to pick up Maggie's carry-on. "Two Euros a mile. I won't be taken advantage of."

*Too bad. I wouldn't mind taking advantage of you.*

No sooner had the thought formed in her mind than Shamus gave voice to it.

"Maggie would never take advantage of me like that, would you Maggie? You'd never use me, play up to me just for my...machine."

Feeling unexpectedly flirty and suddenly giving in to the moment, she fixed her face in a deadpan expression before answering.

"Gee, I don't know. I guess that all depends on how big your engine is."

Shamus and Myles laughed uproariously as Myles slapped Shamus on the back. "Ah, you've met your match, boyo. You'll be getting back as good as you give with this one."

Shamus' eyes locked with Maggie's for one blazing second. "Would that be right Maggie? Will you give it to me good?" he whispered so low only she could hear as the three of them headed for the baggage claim.

Maggie only smiled in reply but silently she called on the luck of the Irish hoping she'd soon have the chance to do that very thing.

\* \* \* \* \*

After getting Maggie settled in at Aunt Claire's, the three of them hit a number of pubs in town that night, or more precisely in the neighborhood. Truth be told, there was a pub on practically every corner of every street in Ireland, residential included and all of them possessed a good group of regulars, an endless supply of "the drink" and good *craic*—conversation.

Near midnight, they ended up at a favorite Friday night haunt of the town locals called The Widow Murphy's. A three-piece blues band was rocking the house in grand style that added to the rousing atmosphere of the small but packed spot. Falling fast and easy into the mix, Maggie and Shamus and Myles joined in the fun, drinking,

talking and dancing—the guys each giving her a few spins around the floor and even one hilarious go round with each other. After more than a few pints of Guinness “softened for the ladies” with a dollop of black currant syrup and singing a number of well-known Irish ballads that blared from the speakers during the band’s breaks, Maggie chatted out back with a local woman she’d befriended on one trip to the washroom who was smoking a couple of Silk Cut ciggies. Shortly after, she found herself sandwiched between and arm-in-arm with Shamus on the right and Myles on the left as they left The Widow’s, as it was called, just after two a.m. The past few hours the barkeep had been warning her that the “black brew” could do things to you if you weren’t used to it but Maggie didn’t feel drunk.

Just fabulous.

It was a cool misty night and though the effects of jetlag were starting to settle in and make her feel a tad lightheaded, Maggie didn’t want to head back to Auntie Clare’s house. As he would do many times during her stay, Shamus read her mind.

“Do you fancy a walk down by the Boyne River Maggie?” he asked, the lilt in his voice making her stomach do a sexy little flip-flop. Without thinking, she laid her head on his shoulder. Even beneath the black leather of his jacket it felt warm and strong and she also clasped his forearm tightly.

“That would be lovely.”

They were strolling through one of the town’s countless cobblestoned alleyway-like narrow streets that, similar to a labyrinth, all connected and led one way or another to the Boyne. Indeed they were not but another fifty steps from the river’s stone wall when Shamus steered them all into a darkened little alcove and quietly murmured “You’re lovely,” before leaning down and kissing her full on the mouth. It was a soft, slow kiss with just enough moisture and pressure and purpose to completely eliminate it from the “kiss your brother on his birthday” variety. As his tongue flicked tentatively between her lips, tenderly encouraging them to part, Maggie became aware of his hand

drifting down to lightly clasp hers. His skin was warm, making the cold gold band of his Claddagh ring register by comparison.

The ancient wedding ring could be spotted on nearly every Irish person, be they married or single, a fact that could be told by the manner in which the jewelry was worn. Comprised of a heart held by two hands and topped with a crown, tradition was if you wore it with the crown pointing toward the back of your hand or down as it was often called, you were single. If the crown was pointing out, you were taken—either engaged, married or at the very least, off the market. Maggie herself owned one but it was back home in Canada. Besides, nowadays, many a non-Irish person could be seen sporting the ring as its meaning, at least in North America, had morphed into one of friendship.

The thought of Claddagh rings and their historic meaning drifted from her mind at the feel of Shamus' fingers around hers, his sensual touch making her feel cozy and secure. And hot. Just then, Myles slipped his arm around her waist, the movement making Maggie feel the enticing combination of safety and sexual attraction even more.

"That looks good," Myles muttered, his voice low amid the subtle smooching sounds of Maggie and Shamus' kiss. "Might I get a wee taste too?"

Pulling his lips away from Maggie, Shamus turned to look at Myles, the light dancing in his eyes as he spoke.

"I don't think so. You're not my type."

"Not you, ya gobshite. *Maggie.*"

Maggie wasn't familiar with the Irish insult but she knew what a gob was and she knew what "shite" was, so it didn't take a whole lot of figuring to catch the meaning.

"And what would you do after that? You've too much of the drink in you to get a proper stiffy."

"So have you but that doesn't seem to be stopping you."

"Aye, but I've a muse in me arms and she's working wonders over here, which gives me an idea."

"And what's that?"

Shamus looked down at Maggie, his face shining in the moonlight. "Well, seeing as it's your first night in the Emerald Isle, I was thinking that maybe I—"

Myles cleared his throat loudly. "You mean we."

Shamus nodded in acknowledgment before continuing, "All right, *we*, would like to give you a night you'll never forget. One that will welcome you in grand style. Would you like that Maggie?"

Maggie gazed up at him, her eyes dark with desire. His hand was holding hers loosely and he began to draw sensuous little circles with his thumb into her palm, each minute movement making her pussy moisten and twitch in sweet anticipation of his tentative touch in a place other than her hand. Beyond the magnetism he exuded, Maggie was responding just as strongly to the overwhelming and unusual sense of familiarity, ease and indescribable *rightness* of them being together.

Turning to Myles, she hoped to gain some perspective, or at the very least, breathing room but the same feeling existed, even amplified as she noted the sincerity within his eyes and felt the warmth of his touch as he reached one hand up to gently cup her face.

"Would you Maggie? We're yours if you want us."

Not waiting for her answer, Myles then leaned forward and kissed her fully. Not a tender, shy exploration as Shamus had done, but a swallow-you-whole devouring of her lips complete with torrid tongue twisting that directly set Maggie's pussy pulsing and her knees knocking. Thankfully, Shamus had shifted them both so that Maggie was now vertically sandwiched and held upright between him and Myles. While Myles continued to kiss her with an intensity that took her breath away, his hands dropping to caress her ass and pull her against the jutting line of his very hard erection, Maggie moaned mid-kiss at the feel of Shamus' equally erect cock pressing insistently against

the cheeks of her butt, his hands massaging her breasts as his lips and tongue wonderfully worked over one side of her neck. Gasping for air, Maggie turned away from Myles' hot mouth. His kisses immediately started to trail down the front of her neck.

"I thought you said you'd had too much drink," she breathed, the insistent rigidity of their hard-ons pressing and *impressing* her from both sides.

"Ah, it's because of you," Shamus said hoarsely, "You're all woman, Maggie Byrne. Come now, don't you see what you've done? You've woken the dead."

"We're rising like Lazarus!" Myles laughed, "And so help us God, we've got to have our way with you or die. Again."

Shamus' hand then moved down the front of Maggie's pelvis, lower, lower, until his fingers pressed against the by-now very moist material between Maggie's legs. That's when the battle of the brogues and wit resumed, amazingly carried out in the midst of hotter kisses, more intense caresses and ever escalating heartbeats.

"Watch what you're doing there," Myles said breathlessly, as he tore his lips away from Maggie's to direct a comment over her shoulder to Shamus. Seconds later, came Shamus' low response.

"Why's that?"

"Coz she's not the only one you're touching." By now, Myles had unbuttoned her jacket and blouse and was pressing hot, moist kisses along the swell of her full firm breasts.

"Ah, yeah but you told me you liked it."

Myles was flicking his tongue through the fabric of her bra against her left nipple. He stopped.

"I never did!"

"Aye, ya did."

Maggie could feel Shamus chuckling behind her even as his fingers strove to drive her wild with want. She'd already clued into his devilish button-pushing tendency so as he manually pushed hers, he was figuratively pushing Myles'.

"Don't be joking about a thing like that Shamy. She'll be thinking we're a couple of gays."

"Hey, I have nothing against gays," Maggie said in a winded voice, her head dropping back against Shamus' shoulder to reveal the smooth white skin of his neck. Like a vampire he was on her throat in a flash, the strong suction of his lips evident in his sweet ardent kisses while his teeth deliciously nibbled at her skin.

"Neither have I," Myles said, "but I'm not one so quit rubbing me man with the back of your hand or I'll break it."

"Which, your man or my hand?"

"Shamy, you're after a good lacing..."

"Okay, okay, enough," Maggie said. "What if I rub your man?"

"Now you're talking," Myles growled, as once more, his hands and lips played over Maggie's body but this time, he guided her hand to the bulge in the front of his pants and moved it up and down against the hardness there. As things grew more heated and the time came to either stop or move to a more comfortable location, Maggie distantly wondered aloud, "I thought we were going to the Boyne. Where's the river?"

As Shamus' fingers dipped under the band of her jeans and panties to connect with the slick, warm wetness beneath, he whispered sexily right before he stuck his tongue in her ear and his fingers into her pussy, "It's right here."

"Ah..." Maggie sighed, closing her eyes. Her knees buckled as the fire of want settled with a delicious warm thud in the very hot spot Shamus was touching.

"Okay," he said softly, his voice tense with need. "We'd best move on to another place or I swear, I'm going to lay into ya right here in the middle of the street."



"Get in line," Myles murmured as he dropped to his knees, his tongue making lazy crazy circles around Maggie's navel.

Whether it was jetlag, Guinness, the mythical lure of the country working its magic on her, or the two gorgeous guys similarly working their own kind of magic that set her pulse racing, Maggie felt wonderfully dizzy. Her head was spinning and stars danced behind her eyes as she once more felt her knees crumple, the security of the guys' arms saving her from hitting the ground. Worse yet, she was uncharacteristically tongue-tied, unable to get out more than a single word. But it said everything she most wanted to say, or was capable of saying, in that moment.

"Yes."

Then everything went black.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ten minutes later, the three of them were in Myles' home which, from the exterior, pretty much resembled every other home Maggie had seen thus far. With little exception, the housing in Ireland consisted of strips of row houses, the only variance being in the brightly colored doors that ranged from royal blue and fire engine red to canary yellow and kelly green.

However Maggie took very little notice of the interior, for not two seconds after stepping into the tiny foyer and peeling off her jacket, Shamus turned her around and cupping her face in his hands, kissed her hotly. As Maggie wrapped her arms around his shoulders and swirled her tongue within his mouth, she felt Myles behind her. His hands moved around to caress her thighs, holding her stable as he knelt down and bit one of her butt cheeks through her jeans. The love bite registered as more pleasure than pain.

Standing quickly, he then grabbed her hand and started to pull her up the unbelievably narrow and steep flight of stairs. Without resistance, she let go of Shamus, except for his hand, and followed Myles. All the way, she could feel Shamus literally

hot on her heels, his body heat permeating her clothing to give her serious butterflies that very quickly translated into a burning ache of need between her thighs.

When they hit the landing, Myles drew her into one of two rooms on the top floor. One was a miniscule bathroom, the other was the bedroom. Maggie would soon discover that space was at a premium in Ireland so the rooms in most houses were exceedingly compact.

As they entered, Myles didn't hit the switch on the wall but there was just enough light coming in the window from the moon to dimly illuminate the contents of the room which consisted of a tall dresser, a nightstand and, of course, the bed.

Long gone was the banter that had existed earlier between Shamus and Myles. Indeed none of the three spoke a single word. Rather, under the silvery gleam of moonlight and in an all-consuming silence made sexy in its seriousness, broken only by soft breaths and winded moans, Myles and Shamus undressed Maggie. Showing incredible restraint, they removed her clothing very slowly. Instead of one working the top and the other the bottom, Shamus and Myles wordlessly fell into a kind of front and back system in their mutual goal of getting Maggie naked.

Standing opposite her, Myles unbuttoned Maggie's blouse and slipped it off her shoulders, before unzipping her jeans and easing them to the floor. Once down there, he knelt so she could use his shoulders for support as she stepped out of the denim pants. Behind her, Shamus had unhooked her bra and un-looping the straps from around her shoulders, helped guide her arms out before letting the lacy fabric slide down her torso and to the floor. He next hooked his fingers on either side of her panties' waistband and lightly pulled them all the way down. Myles was still kneeling before her so once more Maggie placed a steadying hand on either side of his head. As she lifted first one foot and then the other to step out of her underwear, Shamus caught hold of her socks and pulled them off. Fully naked and warm with need, Maggie tried to control her erratic breathing as she watched Myles strip down, his hard-on bobbing slightly as he straightened up after removing his pants. Behind her, Maggie could feel

Shamus' hands on her hips, delicately pulling her backward against the slick bare flesh of his torso and rigid length of his cock.

Maneuvering her back and over to the double bed, the guys eased Maggie down where the slow and tender mood of the moment took a drastic turn. Shamus moved around so he was squatting behind her head. With a soft groan of appreciation, he leaned forward to cup and suck first one of Maggie's nipples then the other, his hard cock within reach of her mouth as he did. Maggie couldn't resist the temptation. Reaching up, she lightly scratched the hard flat surface of his lower abdomen, letting her fingers dance down into the soft curls of his pubic hair before finally taking hold of his rigid length with one hand. Craning her neck back she began licking up and down Shamus' shaft while her free hand dropped down to caress his full sac. She moaned softly at the feel of Myles' tongue lapping back and forth over the slick folds of her pussy. His hands were on her inner thighs in a gentle but very sexy means of restraint and as he held her open, his lips moved up and closed around the pulsing bud of her clit. Involuntarily arching her back to stretch back further, Maggie parted her lips and took Shamus' cock head into her mouth where she began to leisurely suck the firm velvety globe. She felt his pelvis twitch and shoot forward in response, his teeth scuffing not so lightly over her nipples as his impassioned sucking upon them grew more intense.

Myles pulled his lips away from Maggie's clit only long enough to whisper "You're beyond beautiful", before resuming, this time inserting a couple of fingers into her vagina to swirl them around and bring her to a fever pitch. Right before she came, Myles shifted his body up in a flash. At an incredibly slow pace, he put on a condom then replaced his fingers with the hard width of his stiff cock, teasing her mercilessly with an inch-by-inch entry and withdrawal that threatened to make her explode out of sheer frustration.

Shamus too had shifted forward to lean over the length of her torso and delve his tongue in and out of her navel before licking down through her pubic hair. Tilting his

head to one side so he wouldn't bump against Myles' pelvis, he flicked his tongue over the swollen ridge of Maggie's clit. His elongated position gave her now full access to his cock which was thick and swollen with need. Taking him fully into her mouth, Maggie began sucking his shaft, her head moving up and down as her hands reached around to clasp the smooth spheres of his ass and push him deeper into her. A few minutes later, the three of them climaxed into a delicious domino-type chain reaction. Myles' ardent thrusts pushed him over the edge, the feel of his thick hard cock moving inside made Maggie explode just as Shamus' warm cum spilled into her mouth. Warm, sweat-soaked and breathless, the guys repositioned themselves just enough to sandwich Maggie in between their hot moist bodies. Shamus' voice was the last thing Maggie heard before she fell asleep.

"Welcome to Ireland, precious."

## Chapter Two

Two fire alarm-like rings jolted Maggie from a sweet, sultry sleep. After a brief break there were two more. Sitting upright in bed, she struggled to get her bearings. Again two sharp shrill rings pierced her ears.

*What the hell was that?*

After a fourth sounding of the dual jingles, she came to realize that the phone was ringing. Looking around, she struggled to get her bearings. She was not, as she suspected, in Myles' bedroom but rather in another room and if memory served her correctly, it was the bedroom Aunt Claire had led her to upon her arrival. Throwing back the covers, she looked down at the pink pajamas that covered her body. They were embossed with raised red lip prints all over except for an area between her breasts that read KISS ME.

Distracted, she started as yet another pair of high-pitched chimes urged her into action. Jumping from the bed, she raced down the stairs and into the small living room. Aunt Claire was nowhere to be found but the culprit that had awoken her so rudely from her slumber clanged again and this time, Maggie could've sworn the rings sounded irate. Moving over to the phone on the end table, she picked up the receiver.

"Hello?"

The female voice on the other end of the line was Irish. And pissed.

"Who's this?"

"Um...this is Maggie."

A brief pause punctuated by a sharp exhale preceded the next curt question.

"Is Claire there?"

Maggie scanned the room a couple of times before taking a few steps, as many as the phone cord would allow, to peer into the kitchen. It was then that she noticed a piece of paper propped up on the kitchen table.

"Just a moment," she said, setting the receiver down. Going into the kitchen, she picked up the handwritten note addressed to her in a lovely lacy script.

*Maggie,*

*I've gone to mass. Will be back soon.*

*Love,*

*Auntie Claire*

That's right. It was Sunday and Aunt Claire was known never to have missed a Sunday church service in her life. Maggie went straight back to the phone.

"No, I'm sorry, she's not. Can I take a message?"

"This is Cora," the woman said abruptly, the infamous Irish lilt nowhere near present in her tone.

"I see. Well I'll be sure to tell her that you –"

"I'm looking for my husband."

"Oh." Now what exactly was she supposed to say to that? On second thought, she had met many people the night before. Maybe she could help the woman out with, at least, a sighting of her beloved. Maggie had good intentions but seconds later she would be sorry for intending any good. "Who's your husband?"

"Shamus O'Neill."

\* \* \* \* \*

It was crowding one p.m. when Maggie left Aunt Claire's house and walked down to the city centre. She had used the back of the note her aunt had left for her to jot down the brief message, "Call Cora". Now confused, anxious and nursing a hangover, she sought the one distraction that always took her mind off things – shopping. As always,

the main street in Drogheda was alive with activity, but as it was St. Patrick's Day, there was an extra buzz in the air. The street had been closed to traffic for the St. Patrick's Day Parade that would take place early in the afternoon. Everywhere people, clad in varying shades of green, could be seen crowding the narrow street, stopping to talk and catch up or just milling about waiting for the main event to begin.

While the thought of food made her stomach churn, Maggie was in desperate need of a good cup of coffee before she did much else. Coming across a friendly looking place called The Moorland Café, she ordered a cappuccino and took a seat by the window. As she stirred the cinnamon-dotted frothy milk topping into the drink, she tried to sort out her head.

What had really happened last night? It all had felt so real, so magically, deliciously, wonderfully real, that Maggie was ninety-nine point nine percent certain she hadn't dreamed it, but try as she might to ignore them, there were unanswered questions that nagged her relentlessly. What had happened in between the Boyne and Myles'? She couldn't remember how they got to his place. And how had she gotten back to Aunt Claire's? That part of the evening was an empty page too. Just as puzzling was the answer to the question, who had put her in her pajamas? As impossible as it seemed, had her breathtakingly beautiful tryst with Myles and Shamus just been a dream? Before the phone call from Cora, she would have hoped not. But now? She sure as hell hoped so.

As her gaze drifted out over the passing traffic and crowd, she spotted Shamus across the way. He was wearing a cap—not a baseball cap but the close-fitting tweed variety that was particularly popular in Ireland—and a navy pea jacket, an emerald green turtleneck underneath. She turned her head away to avoid being seen but when she looked back, Shamus was staring right at her. With a smile and a wave, he hurried across the street.

*Shite.*

Moments later, he was striding toward her, a warm open grin lighting up his face.

"Top o' the morning. Howya feeling?"

Maggie's tone was more than a little frosty.

"Fine."

"Are you sure, love? There was quite a bit of the drink taken last night and I'm thinking you're not used to it."

"I can hold my own."

Shamus' eyebrows shot up and he began to say something but Maggie cut him off.

"What about you? Feeling a little green this morning?"

*Or perhaps a little guilty?*

"Not a bother. Ah but we did have a grand time, didn't we?"

At the thought of their night together, real or dreamed, Maggie blushed, her gaze dropping to unintentionally land on Shamus' hands clasped together on the table top.

"I was going to ring you this morning but thought I'd best let you get your rest."

*Ring!*

With her view still locked on Shamus' hands, Maggie could see his Claddagh ring and more than that, she could easily see that he was wearing it to indicate he was single.

*Fecking liar!*

In its adjective form, the Irish routinely said "fecking" instead of "fucking", a modification that Maggie had quickly adopted as she always found the other word a little too vulgar for her palate. Then again, it would appear that Shamus was part of that certain group of Irishmen—the notorious whoring around bunch—so maybe the North American version of the curse word was appropriate after all. Either way, Maggie was indeed faced with a dilemma. Should she confront him with news of Cora's call or attempt to save face and just back away? After a super speedy struggle, she decided to go with her first option.

Sort of.



"Say," she began, knitting her brows together in a show of feigned bewilderment, "have I been wearing my Claddagh ring wrong all these years?"

Shamus flashed Maggie one of his stop-your-heart grins as his eyes, all warm and sparkling, locked with hers.

"I dunno. How have you been wearing it?"

"With the crown down."

"Then unless you've got a hubby hidden away somewhere that no one has heard of—and what a lucky bastard he'd be—you've got it right."

Maggie squashed the desire to roll her eyes as his Irish charm. Wanting to be sure she understood him correctly, she leaned forward in earnest, going at the answer she sought from another angle.

"So, the crown down means you're single."

"That's right."

"Just like you."

The light of amusement in Shamus' eyes faded slightly as he studied Maggie's face.

"Yeah but come here 'til I ask you now. Are you after marrying me Maggie? Coz if you are, I gotta tell ya, I'm not a good bet."

Maggie had opened her mouth to piercingly point out she now wouldn't marry him if he were the last man on earth but his last statement stopped her cold. Thanks to the morning's late-breaking newsflash, *she* strongly suspected that he wasn't good marriage material but Maggie suddenly found herself incredibly curious as to why Shamus himself thought so.

*Only one way to find out.*

"Why is that?"

For the first time since they'd met that day, Shamus' eyes left hers to gaze distantly out the window. Ever the owner of the stereotypical "Irish eyes are smiling", his

expression darkened as he sighed, his voice slipping low as he answered. "I don't know."

Momentarily perplexed by his obvious drop in mood, Maggie's conviction slowly returned as she bit back the retort that filled her head.

*Maybe because you're a cheating, lying son of a bitch who can't seem to keep it in his pants!*

The searing hostility behind the silent slur surprised her. Why should she care if he was the biggest womanizer in Ireland? Yes, he'd lied to her and that was surely a good reason to be seriously put out. But the raging resentment inside carried with it the unmistakable mark of real pain. And worse yet, it was the kind of hurt you only felt when you were in love with someone.

*Me love Shamus? Impossible! Ridiculous! Fecking foolish! Why I'd rather... I'd rather...*

Damn it. Why couldn't she light on something, *anything*, that was better than the notion of loving Shamus? And how the hell was she going to get out of this conversational pickle that she'd put herself in?

"Caught ya! Ah, you're not to be trusted Shamy O'Neill," Myles said as he strode toward them.

*No shite.*

"Look at ya boyo, sneaking off with Maggie and not of the mind to include me."

"Hi Myles," Maggie gave him a weak smile as he sat down, placing a warm hand atop hers. His Claddagh flashed in the daylight streaming in through the window, revealing he too was single.

*Yeah right.*

Directly he picked up on the serious vibe at the table and his eyes moved from Shamus to Maggie and back again. "Who the feck died?"

Frowning, Shamus turned to look at him. "What are you on about?"

"The length of them faces on the two of you is enough to make me jump into the Boyle but I'm after sorting you both out. Whaddaya say? Shall we hit the parade and then onto a little hair of the dog that bit you?"

Despite her dilemma, Maggie found herself chuckling. "It's a little early don't you think?"

The shock on Myles' face was comical. "Not at all! The bars have been open since half eleven."

They all got to their feet but Maggie had to think fast to prevent any situation that held the remotest possibility of leading to a reoccurrence of the night before. That is, if, in fact, any of it had happened at all.

"I really can't."

"Why not?" Myles asked.

"I've...got some things I have to do."

"Like what?"

*Jaysus. Give it a rest.*

"I just have to..."

Shamus leaned over and placed a gentle warm hand on her shoulder. His eyes, still carrying a hint of his still fresh seriousness were silently entreating hers. "Come with us Maggie. Please. You've come all this way and you can't miss the St Patrick's Day Parade. You just can't."

Maggie took a deep breath as she nodded.

"All right."

Outside, the crowd had thickened considerably as hordes of people pressed along the parade route eager for a good view, all sizes and shapes of bodies tightly packed along the curbs that flanked the road. A lone cry of "*Erin Go Bragh*" — long live Ireland — or "Here's to St. Patrick!" would trigger an eruption of cheering and applause that spread like wildfire amongst the crowd.

As Myles and Shamus and Maggie worked their way through the dense throng, the probability of becoming separated became more and more likely. Despite her unease with the goings-on the night before, Maggie was relieved when the guys each took firm hold of one of her hands. The warmth of their skin immediately made her feel safe and comfortable. From his position at the front of their line Shamus shouldered and maneuvered the three of them into a choice spot and not a moment too soon. Another energetic outburst from the crowd signified the start of the festivities.

Craning her neck to see, Maggie soon spotted the Grand Marshall of the Parade—a tall, hulking man sporting a green blazer and a shamrock painted on his bald head. Proudly waving the Irish flag from side to side, he led the procession of local dignitaries perched high in the line of slow moving convertibles that preceded a colorful array of floats, Irish dancers, bands, clowns, jugglers and local organizations, each one drawing a rousing cheer as it passed. At one point, Maggie even spied Aunt Claire with some of her cronies across the street and catching her eye, grinned and waved but there was she could get across to watch what remained of the extravaganza. After a brilliant show of celebration and national pride, the two-hour parade eventually wound down. As the surrounding masses started to dissipate, Myles turned to Shamus and Maggie, a sparkle dancing in his eyes.

“Toasting time.”

Maggie opened her mouth to decline but Shamus saw her response coming and cut in before she had the chance.

“Now, Maggie. You can’t *not* drink a toast to St. Patrick on the day that bears his name. Not if you’re Irish.”

“Aye, you wouldn’t want to be offending us and you a visitor to our own country no less,” Myles added with a wink. “We could get all riled up and start a brawl.”

Shamus nodded enthusiastically.

“The Fighting Irish. That’s how it all started. It’s true. Many, many years ago, some far-off traveler wouldn’t drink a toast to St. Patrick on the Man’s special day while here.

I'm telling you straight, within the day, the whole of Ireland was in an uproar. Now you wouldn't be after starting that kind of scene, Maggie, would ya?"

Maggie clenched her jaw half in annoyance, half in amusement.

*Fecking Irish charm.*

"Okay. I'll go for a drink with you," she sighed, pressing her lips together to hide the smile that threatened to spread them. "But just one."

## Chapter Three

Maggie awoke the next morning, her head pounding as she squinted out from between red, swollen eyes. She was back in her bedroom at Aunt Claire's house, the air in the tiny space nippy and damp. Snuggling deeper under the covers, Maggie closed her eyes and tried to fall back asleep but her brain, bubbling with activity, wouldn't let her rest.

She could recall as clear as day stopping in the afternoon before at one of the many downtown pubs that peppered the main street of Drogheda with Shamus and Myles. They had made their way through the throng to a cozy corner booth and ordered a round of Guinness. Myles' uproariously funny sister popped in not long after and joined them as another and then another round of Guinness was brought to the table. After the fourth set of the black brew, things got a little fuzzy.

And now as she lay in bed struggling to get past that remembered point in time, one hazy snapshot after another persistently appeared and, in some cases, reappeared in her head like a bum DVD player stuck on replay every few seconds. With a huff, Maggie finally succumbed, no longer fighting the images that played across her mind's eye all the while conscious of the fact that she was once more unclear as to whether she was remembering reality or a dream.

First there was a bar marquee with the name Benny Flannagan's on it. Then another. And another. Sarsfields'. Johnny Mahone's. Scholars'. Nolan's. Flashes of warm crowded interiors comprised of dark wood, gleaming brass, televisions, bodies bundled against the chill, talk, laughter and of course, a seemingly endless supply of "the drink". Indeed, over and over again, the clink of pints coming together could be heard as *Slainte*, the Gaelic toast meaning "Good health" rang out, the large mugs of frothy-topped Guinness then lifted to thirsty lips where it was hastily sucked back.

Wild, rousing jigs and reels were played on crackling speakers, performed live by a local or two and danced by all present.

Bursts of heat and butterflies fluttered between Maggie's legs and in her stomach as other pictures came to mind, those of hot hands moving over warm skin, fingers lovingly tracing the curve of lips, caressing cheeks, brushing hair from foreheads and mouths opening to welcome other mouths, as soft wet tongues twisted and circled upon entry. Shaking fingers unbuttoned a blouse as pink-tipped nails scratched down a lean muscular back. Whispered words of "No", "Wait", "We can't", were soon replaced with "Yes", "Please" and "More."

Masculine hands cupped and caressed a pair of full breasts, warm lips and not one, but two hot tongues quickly followed suit. From there the barrage of images sped up, one replacing the other at a fast and furious speed. A soulful deep kiss on an inner thigh was overtaken by a quick flick of a strong tongue against a clitoris. Full painted lips fastened around a smooth shiny cock head before sliding down the rigid shaft below. Feminine fingers teased a heavy pair of balls as a thick hard cock eased into a slick aching pussy. Soft declarations of "I love you," "You're our woman" and "We're yours forever" were breathed out from between lips trembling with desire and emotion. Backs arched, butt cheeks clenched, teeth ground and moans rang out as two hard bodies urged every last bit of passion and pleasure from a curvaceous third, the urgent push and pull of their efforts concluding with an explosive three-way climax that left them all in an exhausted heap, panting, sweat-soaked and dazed.

Throughout it all no names or faces appeared and yet Maggie knew with the only bit of certainty around the images, that the three stars of her mental movie – be it real or imagined – were once again, herself, Myles and Shamus.

Bewildered and now as horny as all hell, Maggie got up and took a shower. Once dressed, she stood in front of the mirror over the sink as she ran a comb through her wet hair. Through the accumulated condensation, her reflection revealed a dark blotch just below the curve of her jaw on the left side of her neck. Wiping the steam from the

glass, she peered closer at the crimson mark on her throat, gasping at the realization that it was a true blue—actually, red—hickey. After doing her best to conceal it with foundation, Maggie joined Aunt Claire for breakfast downstairs. Whatever had or hadn't happened between her and Shamus and Myles, or to be more precise, how much had happened with them, she was resolved about one thing. Until she could figure out what was going on, she was going to give the two hot Irishmen of her dreams a very wide berth.

\* \* \* \* \*

True to her own tormented intent, Maggie spent the next several days Shamus and Myles-free. Avoiding their calls when in and making damn sure she was mostly out, Maggie asked Aunt Claire to take her sightseeing. Having spent little time with her great-niece thus far, the still very spirited senior was delighted to have Maggie all to herself so she could introduce her to the many sights in and around Drogheda such as the mysterious, historic site of Newgrange.

Built about 3200BC, the megalithic passage tomb is located within a kidney-shaped mound that covers an area of over one acre of gorgeous Irish countryside surrounded by ninety-seven kerbstones. The nineteen yard long inner passage leads to a cruciform chamber with corbelled roof that is impressive in its own right. Even more remarkable though is the fact that it has been estimated the construction of the passage tomb would have taken a work force of three hundred at least twenty years to build.

Most amazing of all though is what happens within the passage tomb on the twenty-first of December every year. That is when the passage and chamber of Newgrange are illuminated by the sun's first light appearance during the winter solstice. A shaft of sunlight shines through the roof box over the entrance and penetrates the passage to light up the chamber. The mystical dramatic event lasts for seventeen minutes at dawn, the occurrence so heralded by locals and visitors alike that there is an annual lottery held to gain admission into the compact chamber on for an up close and personal viewing of the Winter Solstice sunrise.



Another great spot Aunt Claire insisted Maggie must see was The Giant's Causeway. Declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1986 and a National Nature Reserve in 1987 by the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland, the seaside spectacle consists of forty thousand interlocking basalt columns that form stepping stones leading from the cliff foot into the sea. Mostly hexagonal, there are some columns with five, seven and eight sides, the tallest of which is thirty-six feet. The mystifying structure is reportedly the result of an ancient volcanic eruption but Irish folklore tells another story.

Legend has it that the Irish giant Finn McCool built the Causeway to walk to Scotland to fight his Scottish counterpart Benandonner. One version of the myth has Finn falling asleep before he gets to Scotland. When he doesn't arrive, the much larger Benandonner crosses the bridge looking for him. To protect Finn, his wife lays a blanket over him, pretending he is their baby. When Benandonner sees the size of the "infant" he assumes the child's father, Finn, must be gigantic indeed and in terror, flees back to Scotland, ripping up the causeway lest he be followed by Finn. While this tall tale is always told tongue in cheek, the Causeway legend does correspond with geological history as there are similar formations at a connecting site across the way in Scotland.

One spot they weren't able to get to was the famed Blarney Stone that legend says all who kiss it are guaranteed eloquence. Maggie was disappointed but her jaunt around Ireland, a fanciful place filled with myths and magic, with Aunt Claire fuelled her imagination and for the most part took her mind off of Myles and Shamus. Or more precisely, Shamus' marital status and whether or not she had unwittingly committed adultery with a hot and charming but nevertheless cheating and lying gobshite. But as she stared out at the blue waters of the Irish Sea as it crashed against the Causeway's ragged shore and far beyond, its color immediately reminding her of Shamus' eyes, Maggie's thoughts returned to her two Irish lads once more and her pointed problem with one, or maybe, who knew? Possibly both of them.

If she was bold enough she could ask Shamus outright if he was married but could she trust his answer? If he was, as she strongly suspected, a player in the truest sense of the word, there was no way in hell he would openly admit it. And sure, she could even ask Myles about Shamus' availability but in her experience, mates tended to stick together, especially ones who were willingly involved the same woman, so she was doubtful she would get a honest answer there either. Heck, Myles could even be married himself for all she knew.

*You know what they say, birds of a feather, flock together, or in this case feck together.*

Maggie winced at the crude interpretation of the saying and closed her eyes as another torrent of steamy mental pictures somersaulted in her head to raise her pulse and quicken her breath. If this carried on much longer, she would go mad with the not knowing of it all. Heaving a deep sigh, she opened her eyes and stared off into the distance, the graceful glide of a lone gull overhead drawing her gaze. For one fleeting moment, Maggie wished she could be that gloriously free being and fly away from what she now knew she had to do.

Undoubtedly unable to get a straight answer from either Myles or Shamus and fearful of possibly adding insult to injury yet again should she meet up with them, Maggie felt the only way out was to get out.

That resolved, she decided there and then that as soon as she got back to the house, she was going to pack up and leave Ireland without so much as a word to Myles or Shamus.

If Maggie had learned anything in her life it was that a person couldn't control situations or what other people did. The only thing a person had control over was their own thoughts, feelings and actions. Maggie couldn't change what had happened nor could she make the guys come clean about their supposed single status as well as the factors surrounding their now certain one, possibly two, nights of passion.

All she could do was make sure that it never, ever, ever happened again.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I don't understand. I thought you were staying for another two weeks."

Aunt Claire's tone was calm but her body language revealed her anxiety. Wringing her hands, she slowly paced within the close confines of Maggie's borrowed bedroom. An achievement by anyone's standards given the narrow restrictive space.

Snapping the locks into place on her suitcase, Maggie heaved the large navy piece of luggage onto the floor with a sharp exhalation that blew away the errant strand of hair that had fallen across her forehead and over the bridge of her nose. Airborne for a few brief seconds, it soon floated down and settled back where it had been. Agitatedly, Maggie dragged it back with her fingers to hook it behind one ear.

"I know I said that, Auntie, and I'm sorry to change plans so quickly but I just felt it would be a shame to come all this way without visiting Scotland and England too."

At the same time Maggie had decided to leave Ireland, she had also resolved to keep the reason for her hasty departure from Aunt Claire. She hated lying as a general rule, especially to her beloved great-aunt but there was no sense in digging herself in deeper by disclosing the details of the whole affair with Shamus and Myles.

*Affair.* Inwardly, Maggie cringed at the word. Turning, she retrieved her paperwork from atop the bureau.

"But there's still so much to see in Ireland," Aunt Claire replied as she stopped, her sharp gaze suddenly eyeing Maggie suspiciously. "Honey, is there something you're not telling me?"

Maggie stiffened, grateful that her back was to the older woman. Women's intuition was not a thing of myth and Maggie knew from watching the aging matriarchs in her own family that the inexplicable sense of female perception grew only stronger and more concise, with age. Biting her lip, she prepared to lie. Again.

"No, Auntie. Honest. I just want to see as much as I can. But I promise, I'll come back and spend more time with you."

*Another lie. This was becoming habitual.*

A warm bony hand gently clasped Maggie's shoulder, tenderly encouraging her to turn around. As she pivoted, Maggie prayed the truth behind her flight was not, along with her tears, shining in her eyes.

"I sense that you are about to make a mistake," Aunt Claire smiled, "But fret not darling. All things happen for a reason. Even mistakes. And don't be worrying about seeing me again my darling. I *know* you'll be back in Ireland one day."

The front doorbell chimed loudly, effectively ending their conversation.

"That can't be the taxi," Maggie said in a panic. "It's not to arrive for another hour."

"No, I suspect it's Shamus and Myles. I invited them over."

Maggie's eyes bugged out of her head, her voice just shy of a shriek.

"What? When did you do that? And why?"

"Right after you announced you were leaving and went upstairs to pack. I thought it only right to give the boys a chance to say their farewells. Come along now."

*Jesus, Mary and Joseph!*

Resisting the urge to clamp a hand to her forehead in exasperation, Maggie begrudgingly followed Aunt Claire down the stairs and into the living room.

"Sit down," she said to Maggie in a soft but nevertheless authoritative tone before going to the front door. Seconds later, she led Shamus and Myles in, waving them toward the sofa opposite where Maggie sat, perched apprehensively on one of the armrests on the single overstuffed armchair. "Now you children chat while I make a cup of tea for you."

She had barely turned the corner when Shamus started in.

"Maggie, love, what's this all about? You can't mean to go and leave us."

"For the love of God, girl, have you no mercy?" Myles chimed in. "You've taken our hearts. *Macushla*, don't be after breaking them."

Maggie grimaced as the meaning of the Celtic word came back to her full and fast, carrying with it a forgotten image of Myles kissing one of Maggie's eyelids and then the other before planting a kiss on the tip of her nose.

"*Macushla*," he said softly.

"What's that mean?"

Shamus situated at the base of the bed had stopped sucking her toes long enough to answer. "It's Gaelic for 'My Darling', and that, my sweet Maggie, you will always be to us."

Clearing her throat in an attempt to banish the lovely picture from her mind, Maggie shot a nervous glance in the direction of the kitchen, her voice lowering. "I don't think this is the time or the place to get into it."

"Then where? When?" Shamus said earnestly, Myles quickly concurring as he enthusiastically nodded.

"Just name it and we'll be there, sweetheart."

"I'm sorry. I just can't do this. I just can't."

God, they were making this hard, what with their pleading eyes and trembling voices. As probably lying, cheating bastards, they sure could play the part of wounded victim.

"Please, Maggie," Myles said as he stood and walking over, sat down on the chair. Warmly, he laid one hand atop hers. "If we've done something wrong, you gotta let us know so we can make it right."

*Make it right. How about start by admitting you're married? One of you? Both of you?*

At the thought, Maggie glanced down at Myles' hand that still rested on hers. Frowning, she stared hard at the Claddagh that graced his fourth finger. It had been turned around so the crown was pointing out signifying he was taken. Baffled, she tried to casually glide her gaze from his hands to Shamus', clasped together between his

knees. There too, she saw the unbelievable—his ring had also been reversed to indicate he too was no longer single.

*What's up with that?*

In the wake of their one, possibly two nights together, were the guys' consciences now bothering them to the point where they felt they had to indicate their true marital status if only via this outward sign?

*"Look for a sign."*

As the matchmaker's words on the plane came back to Maggie once more, she realized she was indeed receiving and perceiving, a sign. The guys were either unable or unwillingly to verbalize the truth that they were *both* married but were choosing instead to let their hands do the talking. Why they were begging for a continuance of the relationship was anybody's guess but in her mind, Maggie was now sure of the situation. While she was hurt by her findings, she was nevertheless relieved to learn the truth and know that she was making the right decision to leave.

"I'm sorry," she said again standing in a physical show of her position. "I have to go now."

"Maggie, please," Shamus said, rising to his feet as did Myles. "Please don't do this."

"Don't throw us away," Myles said, motioning with his hand to indicate the three of them.

"Please," Maggie whispered, tears filling her eyes as she headed for the stairs. "I really have to go. Just go. Now."

Running up the steep flight of stairs, she ran into the bedroom and shakily closed the door. Falling onto the bed, she buried her face in one of the pillows that served to muffle her loud sobs and cover the sound of the front door as it opened.

Then, after a lengthy delay, quietly closed.

## **Chapter Four**

Maggie pulled back the mesh screen to stoke the fire. The last weather report an hour earlier had said the temperature had fallen to minus twenty-eight that, with the wind chill factored in, translated to a bone-chilling minus thirty-six. Such a frigid climate was usually reserved for January and February but in a freak spring storm, the temps had drastically dipped below the seasonal norm while the snow drifts had soared high. Thank heavens for wood-burning fireplaces, flannel pajamas and the comfort of “vegging” indoors when it was too cold to venture outdoors.

It had been a couple of weeks since Maggie’s speedy exodus from Ireland but the memories of the country and the two men she had met and yes, she could now admit, had fallen in love with there, still lingered on. Among the collage of thoughts and feelings was a sense of great relief that she had, at the very last minute, chosen to explain the situation to Aunt Claire. Granted, it was via a handwritten note left on the bedroom bureau that more than likely wouldn’t be found until she was long gone. But at least, Maggie felt better knowing that Aunt Claire wouldn’t be reading wrongly into her reason for leaving.

Flopping down onto the couch, she pulled the cozy polar fleece throw bunched at her feet up and over her body. As she twisted onto her side so she could see the television, she felt the necklace she was wearing slide down against her left shoulder. Pulling the sterling silver chain out of her pajama top with her thumb, Maggie moved down its ropey length until she got to the charm at the end and held it out in front of her. Smiling, she looked at the four-leaf clover, now polished and gleaming thanks to a recent trip to the jewelers. Along with her magical memories, it was all she now had of Ireland.

Maggie was just starting to nod off when the doorbell rang. Sleepy-eyed, she raised her head and waited.

*Who'd be insane enough to be out in this weather?*

Convinced she had heard incorrectly, Maggie set her head down on the couch's plump armrest just as a second ring chimed out. This time there was no mistake.

Getting to her feet, she headed for the front door, quickening her step as a couple of soft thuds sounded out on the other side. Throwing open the inside door, she squinted through the frosted glass of the storm door but to no avail. All she could see was shapes. Unlocking the latch, she pushed open the mostly glass entry, her mouth falling open at the sight before there.

Shivering violently, their hair covered in snowflakes and their faces red with the cold were Myles and Shamus. Maggie was literally speechless as her gaze moved from one sniffling face to the other. After a long moment, Shamus broke the ice.

"Jaysus, it's cold. Me nostrils are sticking together!"

"Feck your nostrils. The boys have pulled back up into me body just to get a wee bit of warmth."

Despite the shock, Maggie laughed.

"Could we come in Maggie?" Shamus said, his arms wrapped tightly around his midsection as another shiver overtook him.

"Ah, yeah... Yes, of course."

Stepping aside, she waved them in and closed the door behind them, watching in disbelief as they each set a small suitcase down on the floor. Inching past their frosty forms, she turned and looked at them questioningly. Myles jumped in first.

"So, how've you been?"

Maggie let out a deep sigh.

*Enough with the lack of communication and assumptions. Enough with pussy footing around.*



"What are you guys doing here?"

Shamus answered.

"We needed to set something straight."

"Have you ever heard of a phone? Or a computer?"

"No. This is a face-to-facer," Myles replied.

*Right.*

"You boys came a heckuva long way just to get...."

Maggie couldn't bring herself to say *get laid*. Even after all this time, it hurt her to think that was all she had meant to Shamus and Myles.

"We didn't come for that," Shamus said.

"Not that we're opposed to it either," Myles quickly added with a wink. "But no, we have to clear something up."

Maggie crossed her arms.

"Fine. Clear away."

Shamus glanced down at his snow-covered boots and snow-flaked jacket. "Can we come in a little farther?"

Wordlessly, Maggie nodded. The guys stripped off their outer gear and followed her into the warmth of the living room where they all sat down—Shamus and Myles opposite Maggie just as had been during their last conversation in Ireland.

"Come here 'til I tell ya, macushla," Myles began, "We..."

"Don't call me that."

"Oh no. We're going to call you that. Now and forever. So you best get used to it."

"Listen to what he says, precious," Shamus urged.

"We don't know how or when but somewhere along the way, you got the idea that one or both of us was married."

Maggie started to protest but Myles quickly cut her off.

"Will ya wait, love 'til I speak my mind? Like I said, I don't know how this all happened but we're here to tell you it's not true."

"Not a word of it," Shamus concurred.

"Really? And what about Cora? She phoned looking for her husband after that first night, which, by the way, I still can't make any sense of."

"Ah," Shamus nodded, leaning back. "Cora. There's a story. Maggie, Cora is my ex-wife. We divorced close to two years ago but she's not one to accept things easily. When word got around town that I was seen with a beautiful Canadian girl on my arm who was staying with Claire McGauley, she decided to call and complain to Claire."

"Which she did," Myles continued. "Your Aunt called Cora and backed her off, never realizing that Cora had misrepresented herself to you."

"But—"

"As for what happened that first night, after Myles and I kissed your beautiful lips in the alley by the Boyne, you passed out cold," Shamus said. "The Guinness will do that to you. I carried you back to Claire's and she undressed you and put you into bed."

"What about—"

"The next afternoon we had a grand time christening damn near every pub in Drogheda before going back to my place and picking up where we left off the night before. We know you were feeling no pain with the drink, so were we and as God as our witness, ah, Jaysus, Maggie it was beautiful. You're beautiful. I knew from that night on that you were the only woman for me."

"I knew it too," Shamus said, as he rose and moving across the room, knelt at Maggie's feet. "That's why I turned my Claddagh ring around."

"Me too," Myles said as he moved to sit beside Maggie on the couch. Shaking her head slowly, Maggie closed her eyes and rubbed her aching temples.

*Sure, everything the guys are saying explains it all, and well, but how can I be sure of they are telling the truth?*

Just as he had done that very first night, Shamus read her mind.

"Don't take our word for it though, love. Here."

Reaching inside his shirt pocket, Shamus pulled out a letter and handed it to Maggie. With trembling fingers, she opened the note and silently read it. It was from Aunt Claire, the lovely lacy script confirming both the identity of the author and every single detail that Shamus and Myles had shared with her.

"Oh my God," Maggie said as she realized she'd been wrong. Twice. Not only had she misunderstood the situation but she had also misread the sign the matchmaker had mentioned. When she'd noticed the guys had flipped their Claddagh rings, she assumed they were confessing their infidelity. In truth, they were confessing their love and commitment, *to her*.

All along the matchmaker was right. There was a sign and her heart had seen it. But her *head* had read it wrong.

"I'm so sorry," she whispered, finding it hard to raise her eyes to the faces of the men she loved. Myles put a finger under her chin and made her look at them.

"Darling, there's no sorrys needed. We love you. And always will. We're just so glad, you now know that."

"We're crazy about you," Shamus said. "Or maybe just plain crazy, flying halfway around to the world to this freezing place."

For the first time in a long while, Maggie felt the glow of love warm her from the inside out. "I love you both too. Very, very much. And I've a great way to keep you both warm in this bitter cold."

Myles grinned as he cast a sidelong glance at Shamus, whose eyes were now sparkling with delight and desire.

"Ah now, do tell us, love. What's that?"

Wordlessly, Maggie stood and taking each of their hands, led them to the plush polar bear rug that fronted the fireplace.

Where their imploring expressions had been one of concern, Myles and Shamus' eyes now shone with the look of love. And want.

Maggie started first with Myles, slowly unbuttoning his shirt. Sinking to her knees, she unbuckled his belt, popped the snap and eased down the zipper beneath it. Giving the veiled bulge between it a gentle rub, she then pulled down his pants and striped boxers, guiding one foot and then the other out before tossing the clothing aside. His muscled calves and thighs were exactly as she had remembered—strong and lightly covered with a dusting of dark hair. As her hands glided up his hips, Maggie came eye level with Myles' hard cock as it jutted out expectantly. Without hesitation, she leaned forward and laid an open-mouthed warm kiss on its glistening head, the move sending a shudder of pleasure through Myles' thighs.

"Lie down," she whispered as her gaze drifted over to Shamus. He had remained rooted in the spot she had led him to only a few feet away. As Myles stretched out onto the warm fur of the throw rug, Maggie reached out an arm to Shamus. "Join us."

Taking her hand, he moved closer to stand before her, gazing down into her eyes. For a short time, Shamus ran the fingers of his free hand through Maggie's hair, stopping only to caress the soft curve of her cheek. Reaching one hand up, Maggie steered his fingers over to her mouth where she began kissing them softly. With her eyes locked on his, she then guided his thumb between her lips and sucked it all the way into the back of her mouth and out again, repeating the two movements over and over again. Dropping her other hand to the hard swelling below his waist, she began massaging his bulky package, coordinating the downward plunge of her mouth upon his thumb with the southern stroke of her palm against his cock. Shamus responded with a soft sigh, his eyelids closing as his pelvis involuntarily pressed forward against the steady pressure of her hand.

Behind Maggie, Myles had risen up on one elbow and inched in closer so he could place a snaking trail of hot kisses along the small of her back. Easing her pj bottoms down and off, he then continued to kiss each of her butt cheeks. Moving from one to the

other, he then gently spread the soft mounds apart and licked lightly at the puckered hole between them.

The new sensation sent a shiver through Maggie and with a gasp, she braced herself against one of Shamus' thighs with her free hand. Shamus opened his eyes, now dark with desire. Clasp ing her fingers in his, he brought her hand up to his mouth and bending down, kissed it lightly. Releasing it, all the while watching Maggie with an intensity that made her pussy pulse, he slowly began to undress. The sight of him stripping down, so slowly and deliberately, made Maggie literally weak in the knees, her thighs trembling beneath her. In a purposeful, sexy manner, Shamus undid the first few buttons of his shirt before reaching back and pulling it over his head. Maggie stopped caressing the front of Shamus' pants just long enough for him to undo them and pull out his vein-ridged cock. Before she had a chance to touch it, Shamus had closed a tight fist around it. As he began a steady methodical stroking upon it, his chin tilted up, his breath, now audibly heavy, coming out from between his parted lips.

By now, Myles had shifted again. Easing Maggie's legs apart, he then positioned himself on his back between her legs. With his hands anchored on either side of her hips, he gently guided her down onto his mouth. With her thighs now twitching uncontrollably, Maggie moaned at the first feel of Myles' tongue sliding up along the length of her dripping pussy. From her aching opening to the pulsing nub of her clit and back again, Myles licked her slowly, holding her stable as her shuddering increased.

Maggie bit her lip as the pleasure was only heightened by the view before her. Breathlessly, she watched as Shamus continued to stroke his thick cock, its bulbous head growing darker and more irresistible with every tug. Unconsciously Maggie opened her mouth, eager to feel it between her lips. Readily Shamus complied. Pushing his pants down and stepping closer, he held himself out to her in a clear invitation. Maggie wanted nothing more than to devour him but chose instead to prolong his pleasure. Starting from his pinkie, she sucked for a good time upon each one of his

fingers loosely enclosed around his cock, teasing him with the close warmth of her mouth but careful never to touch her lips to any part of his hard-on.

Not yet.

Between her legs, Myles was still leisurely licking her pussy from end to end, now punctuating each upward glide of his tongue with a fast, frisky flicking against her swollen clit. Glancing up at Shamus with eyes heavy with need, Maggie quickly noted the same expression on his face. Having just concluded sucking his index finger, she then twisted her head to one side and laid one continuous strong lick against the corrugated sac beneath his cock. Immediately, Shamus repositioned himself, widening his stance so she could access the area better. After a handful of cursory kisses, Maggie then leaned in and softly sucked his balls into her mouth. A winded groan escaped Shamus as she gently sucked his sac, his own hand having automatically resumed its stroking upon his hardening shaft.

Meanwhile, Myles was pressing on Maggie's hips in an attempt to bring her further down. Relaxing into it, she arched her back and grunted softly as he snaked his tongue into her creamy core. With an enthusiasm that was geared to push Maggie over the edge, he tongue fucked her, his strong hands preventing her from moving away. Not that she wanted to.

Feeling the swell of an imminent orgasm, Maggie's purposeful prolongation of Shamus' pleasure could last no longer. Abandoning his well-sucked balls, she took hold of his rigid length and in one fell swoop sucked it all the way into her mouth, its cream-covered head knocking against the back of her throat. Above her, Shamus stiffened, his hands now in her hair, holding her, caressing her, pushing her harder and farther onto him. She pulled back, sucking intently on the velvety cap a few times before plunging down again, her tongue continuously swirling around the shaft as she went. As her pelvis and pussy tightened in unison, forecasting the explosion about to come, Maggie's head bobbed faster between Shamus' legs, his cock stiffening in her mouth as she slid

up and down its length, his balls within her hands pulling up hard and tight against his body.

Seconds before she was about to come, Myles stopped. Squirming out from beneath her, he turned right way up and eased Maggie forward onto all fours. The crinkle of a condom wrapper could be heard behind her. Without missing a beat, Shamus stepped back and lowered himself to his knees, his engorged cock still firmly encased in Maggie's mouth.

In a sudden move that took Maggie's breath away, Myles entered her from behind, his hard wide cock filling her fully. With an obvious resolve, he slide strongly into her over and over, his soft moans and winded grunts fuelling all of their passion. Shamus had reached farther forward to clasp Maggie's butt cheeks, pulling her harder against him while inadvertently opening her wider for Myles. Shamus' hips pulsed forward rhythmically as Maggie continued to passionately suck his cock from top to base, his forward thrusts unintentionally falling in time with Myles'.

The pressure and persistent thrusting of Myles' cock in her pussy soon set Maggie vibrating from head to toe. Reading her reaction, Myles quickly inched her knees further apart and doubled his efforts, the increased speed and strength of his movements causing her to explode. As she shuddered and shook within the midst of an earth-shattering orgasm, Maggie closed her lips over her teeth as she continued to heartily suck Shamus' cock. Rocked to her very core and blissfully spent, Maggie felt a still hard Myles withdraw from her. Tenderly directing her onto her back, Maggie smiled hazily as the guys then proceeded to give her a tongue bath from head to toe. Where Myles focused on her neck and breasts, Shamus sucked on her toes and kissing up her legs, licked her thighs until she squirmed with desire once more. Then taking her hand, Shamus gingerly guided Maggie's fingers down to her pussy.

"Show us how you like to be touched Maggie."

Maggie had never been asked to do such a thing before and even if she had, she wouldn't have been comfortable enough to do it. Not with anyone else. But with Myles and Shamus? She didn't hesitate.

Gently, she started to caress the slick folds between her legs, her fingers moving easily and steadily between the wet tight opening and the sensitive swelling inches above it. Myles and Shamus' faces grew serious as they watched intently, their chests heavy, their cocks literally dripping with desire.

"Jaysus, that turns me on," Shamus whispered. Myles' reply was a hoarse "Yeah."

As Maggie's touch upon herself became more intent, her mounting passion more obvious, Shamus quickly called a halt to things.

"Here now," he said lightly, taking her fingers from her pussy to suck them into his mouth. "Don't be bringing yourself to the boil. Not without us."

Leaning down to kiss her, Shamus then pulled Maggie on top of him. When they at last parted lips, he gave her a devilish grin. "Now have your way with me precious. I beg of you."

Rising up to sit astride him, Maggie could feel Shamus' hard cock pressing against. Lifting her hips up, she took the condom he held out for her and slid it on. Then taking hold of him she guided him gently inside her. Immediately Shamus closed his eyes, a heavy breath erupting from him once he was all the way in. With a slow but solid rhythm, Maggie pushed back and forth against him, the movement sliding her snug slippery pussy back and forth over his rigid cock. From time to time, she would rise up on her knees and sit down again, the dual maneuver drawing an even stronger reaction from Shamus. With his hands kneading the soft flesh of her breasts as they bounced, Shamus grimaced. The look of pleasure on his face excited Maggie beyond words and as her head fell back, her eyes drifted shut. All the while, Shamus pressed his hips forward in time with Maggie's plunges upon his cock, driving it deeper into her with every thrust. Slowly his hands dropped down to her hips where he worked to increase the strength of her pushes against him.



As their tempo increased, Maggie felt hands on either side of her head. Opening her eyes, she saw that Myles was standing facing her, his feet on either side of Shamus' torso. Myles' cock bobbing eagerly in front of her mouth and this time, she hadn't the desire nor the restraint to draw out his pleasure. In a flash, he was between her lips, the salty taste of him on her tongue, the warmth and weight of him filling her mouth. Bouncing harder against Shamus' shaft, Maggie enthusiastically sucked Myles' cock, her gaze lazily moving up over his torso and chest to finally lock with his eyes. There in the blazing fire within, she watched as his passion ran its course—from ever-increasing pleasure, to anticipation, that hold-your-breath teetering on the brink, to the sweet and vulnerable awareness of certain orgasm that culminates with full-blown release. Slack-jawed and shuddering, his eyes squeezing shut in certain ecstasy, Myles came, his hot cum hitting the roof of Maggie's mouth and spraying forcibly against the back of her throat as his body twitched and jolted within the warm constraint of her hands on his hips.

Beneath her, Maggie could feel the telltale signs of another orgasm beginning. Shamus' soft grunts and groans had increased in volume and frequency but beyond that, the thrusts of his pelvis against her had tripled in intensity, his legs and torso vibrating violently as his fingers dug into the soft flesh of her skin. She was keenly aware of the sudden flood of warm moisture between her legs amid the fervent thrusts of his hard cock up into her. Somewhere along the line, Shamus had raised his knees which served to both drive Maggie deeper onto him as well as create a greater pull upon her aching clit. As she licked the last bit of Myles' cum from her lips, Maggie bore down on Shamus, the feel of his still-coming cock inside her triggering her own explosive orgasm.

As Maggie came hard, her pussy clutching lovingly around Shamus' shaft, Myles leaned down and stuck his tongue in her ear, his fingers tickling her taut nipples and further increasing her indescribable pleasure.

As they slowly wound down, Maggie stretched out between Myles and Shamus. Their bodies were slick with their lovemaking but they were warm and content, the flames of the fire seemingly a mimicking memory of the passion they had just shared. Sandwiched between her two Irish lovers, Maggie's thoughts returned to how her trip to Ireland for St. Patrick's Day had brought them all together.

Now oceans away from the Emerald Isle, Maggie realized that she wouldn't change any part of her journey, not even missing the kissing of the Blarney Stone. For whether it was the four-leaf clover around her neck or simply the luck of the Irish, she didn't need the gift of the gab when it came to Shamus and Myles. She could clearly tell them that they were everything she had ever wanted or ever would.

Best of all, she could say it without the aid of any words at all.

## About the Author

A former operative for the CIA, Brigit Zahara previously unleashed her passion for excitement and adventure through her work, spending a good deal of her time traveling throughout the United States and Europe, with lengthy spells in New York, Los Angeles, Louisiana, Venice, London, Florence and Malta.

After Brigit took an early retirement, she then looked to her closet habit of writing fiction as a means of indulging her need for pulse-pounding action. From there, her taste very quickly turned to the tantalizing arena of erotica. Brigit has written a number of sizzling titles for Ellora's Cave. She looks forward to writing and publishing many more torrid tales of love and sensuality with this top publisher of erotic literature.

Currently Brigit lives in a seaside villa in Majorca, spending the steamy days penning even steamier stories and the cool, ocean-breeze-kissed evenings researching love scenes with her heart's destiny and husband of nearly eight years. She welcomes hearing from fans.

Brigit welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her author bio page at [www.ellorascave.com](http://www.ellorascave.com).

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