



WISHES
THROUGH TIME

Annmarie Ortega

Wishes Through Time
by Annmarie Ortega

Resplendence Publishing, LLC

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For Kate: Everyone should have a best friend as awesome as you.

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Chapter One

Caitlyn thought she might throw up. She sat across from her ex boyfriend at her favorite restaurant, Leona's, stunned beyond belief. He'd called her earlier in the week and asked her to meet him there. Caitlyn agreed, thinking that he wanted to make an effort to fix things between them and get back together.

Wrong.

"I wanted to tell you before you heard from someone else. So the wedding will be next month. Are you all right?"

"I'm ok. I just ... Wow, so you're getting married."

"I know that when we broke up, I told you I never wanted to get married, but you would understand if you met her. She's the most amazing, beautiful woman I've ever met."

Caitlyn sat with a frozen smile on her face, wishing he would stop talking. She couldn't remember ever being so blind sided in her life. The more he talked the sicker she felt. He hadn't invited her here to get back together; he wanted to tell her he was marrying someone else. Someone else whom he thought was amazing and beautiful and ... not her.

She decided if she had to hear another word about his utterly fabulous bride-to-be, she would surely try to kill him.

"Listen, I just remembered I have to be somewhere and I have to go." She got up and took her denim jacket from the back of her chair. She hoped he didn't notice the tremor in her hands as she held her jacket.

"But we haven't even ordered yet. I thought we would have lunch together."

"Yeah, sorry. I totally forgot I was supposed to be elsewhere right now." She needed to be *anywhere* else at that moment.

"Oh, okay. Well I'll be sure to have her send you an invitation to the wedding. I'd really like for you to be there."

As Caitlyn picked up her black messenger bag, she wanted to tell him to take his invitation and shove it where the sun didn't shine. Instead, she offered up the brightest smile she could fake.

"I think I'm busy that day."

"But I haven't even told you the date yet."

"It doesn't matter. I'm busy. I'll see you," she said and turned around and walked out of what used to be her favorite restaurant.

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Chapter Two

Lord Morgan thought he might vomit. He stood in front of the King in his throne room, watching him reread the letter Morgan had found that week on his desk.

"Your Majesty, there must be another option."

"I'm afraid there is not. It was arranged for your younger brother William to marry Lord Adler's daughter Rose. And as it is clearly stated in this letter you brought me, he has his own plans to marry one of your servants. Just because your brother has departed does not change the fact that Rose must get married."

Morgan was beyond angry that his brother had left him a letter and run away with a servant girl in the dark of the night. He hated to have to go before the King and explain that his younger brother disregarded the King's orders and decided to marry someone else. Morgan wished he had paid more attention to his younger brother while he had been dealing with the day to day operations of his land and castle. He let the boy do as he pleased, and now he would pay the price.

"There must be someone else available to marry Rose." Anyone, he didn't care who, as long as it wasn't him.

"There's no time to find someone else. Lord Adler is ill, and his daughter is his only heir. Rose needs to be married so that her husband will be able to take control of his land. Since your brother is no longer here to marry her you will have to take his place. You will marry Rose Adler."

"My Lord, perhaps there is something I can do to get you to reconsider?" Morgan hated how desperate his voice sounded. He had no desire to marry Rose. The last time he saw her she was a very young girl. He imagined she would be around eighteen years old now.

"I don't know why you are so against marriage. It's about time you settled down Morgan."

I'm not against marriage, he thought, I've been waiting my entire life to find the perfect woman for me. He knew there was no way he could explain any of what he felt to the man before him. Arranged marriages were common. Finding a woman and falling in love the way Morgan dreamed of were not. However, there was only one thing he could do.

"I'll marry Rose Atler if that is what you wish." It almost killed him to say the words aloud. He hoped that his brother was out there somewhere happy and in love. If he could not live his dreams, he hoped at least William would get to live his.

He would marry Rose. This was the worst day of his life.

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Chapter Three

Caitlyn sat among the suits of armor at the Art Institute of Chicago holding a sketchpad and a charcoal pencil. She arrived right after the doors opened, before the crowds of tourists and school field trips started piling in. She sat in Gunsaulus Hall all alone.

The room was quiet and lowly lit, with recessed spotlights reflecting on the metal objects filling the display cases. Body armor and weapons such as swords, flails, maces and battle-axes glimmered from behind the glass.

Some cases held complete suits of armor, along with partial pieces in others. One wall had all the full armor suits lined up shoulder to shoulder. It was like a surreal front line that spanned six centuries. Visitors at the museum could see the evolution of the body armor from crude chain mail to the more elaborate plated pieces with intricately etched details.

Caitlyn sketched a suit of armor in the case in front of her while trying to keep her mind off the fact that her ex-boyfriend was getting married to someone else that very day. She glanced over to her bag and saw the creamy white card stock sticking out of her bag. Though the card was face down she knew what was imprinted on it in hunter green calligraphy. *You are cordially invited to the wedding of ...* She sighed and tried not to think about the wedding anymore.

As she drew she could see herself in the reflection of the glass across from her. She wore khaki pants with a black tee shirt topped by a denim jacket. She crossed her feet at the

ankles, wiggling her toes in her black combat boots. They were her favorite shoes, a left over remnant from her rebellious twenties.

Her brown hair hung past her shoulders, straight and thick down her back. Her hair had subtle layers cut into it, with long bangs she kept brushed to the side. She always carried a hair clip or wore an elastic band around her wrist; in case she decided to wear it up. She learned long ago living in Chicago; you never knew what the weather would decide to do.

She added some shading to her drawing when she stopped to stare at the row of armor across from her. She read somewhere once that a suit of armor weighed between forty and fifty pounds. It would take some man to fill out those chest plates, she thought.

It was hard to imagine that knights would wear these cumbersome suits while they were fighting. They must have been really strong, carrying the weight of the armor, plus their weapons. A man who was strong and built, now that wasn't a really bad combo, she thought, her eyes darting down the line of armor.

There was something sexy about a knight who lived by the vows of honor and chivalry. Caitlyn couldn't think of anyone she knew who would ever be able to fill the shoes or the chest plates of the men from the past. Knights pledging their lives to their king and swearing unending devotion to a woman they loved—it was all so romantic. She thought of the long sexy hair and smoldering dark eyes those knights would have, giving a deep sigh.

Caitlyn leaned back to get more comfortable on the wooden bench where she sat. She had nothing to do but spend the afternoon thinking about knights looking for love. It was definitely better than thinking of reality and her ex-boyfriend's wedding. She'd spent many hours wondering why he never wanted to marry her after all the time they'd been together.

Soon, she found herself lost in her daydreaming. She realized that somehow she had been born in the wrong time. Maybe if she had lived in the time of knights and chivalry, she wouldn't have gotten her heart broken so often. Caitlyn wanted the type of love that made her heart skip a beat, her breathing shallow, and the type of sex that made her toes curl. She didn't think that it was asking for too much.

She whispered with a sigh, "I wish I could find my true love."

Her spine straightened with her head cocked to the side as she looked at the armor directly across from her. She thought she saw something moving behind the glass. Logic told her that was impossible.

She turned her head to look down the line of armor again, and she noticed a flickering out of the corner of her eye. Yes, something had moved on the armor directly across from her.

Reaching over she used her sense of touch as she opened her black messenger bag. She looked down for only a second as she shoved her sketchpad and pencil inside.

When Caitlyn looked up while closing the bag, her breath sucked in. Although these were pieces of metal, which could

not move, she swore she saw something move behind the glass. The hair on the back of her neck bristled.

She looked around the room again now wishing for some of those crowds that she usually despised. The room was still empty, except for her. There wasn't even a museum guard in sight. Caitlyn felt goose bumps run up her arms.

She pulled the strap of her messenger bag over her chest as she stood up from the bench and walked closer to the display case to get a better look. The armor where she had seen the movement was different from all the others. Although it was a whole suit of armor, part of the right arm had been ripped off at the shoulder, leaving jagged pieces of metal. Caitlyn read the card next to it.

Armor circa 1400 England

Breastplate damaged from what is believed to be a deathblow.

You had better believe it was a deathblow, she thought. Whoever had worn that armor had some serious damage done to them. There was intricate scrolling designs and curlicues etched into the armor. Caitlyn saw the emblem of a dragon with a sunburst in one of the expanded wings on the breastplate. She reached out and touched the glass in front of her, her finger tracing the dragon on the glass. Suddenly, something told her to take a step away. She did.

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Chapter Four

Morgan Wyndmere could not sleep. He hadn't been able to sleep since he returned from the King's castle a few nights ago. Instead, he found himself constantly thinking about his impending marriage to Rose Atler. If he weren't loyal to the King, he would have refused the marriage and fought tooth and nail against it. He had never regretted at any time swearing loyalty to the King, until now. Duty and honor always dictated the response despite personal feelings when you were a knight.

Morgan didn't know anything about Rose, though he had known her since she was born. His father had been a knight serving Lord Atler for many years. Their family's land and castle were given to his father for saving Lord Atler's life, many years before Morgan was born. When Rose was born, he had been a squire for Lord Atler's son. When Morgan became knighted, she was a young child. He had never even known the girl; it was almost as if they had been raised in different worlds. Now their worlds would become one.

Morgan got out of bed and tugged his nightshirt down. The fire had died out in the next room, leaving only darkness, and a chill. Stooping down he put more wood onto the fire to warm the room. He proceeded to his desk and lit a candle then pulled out the chair to sit down. Placing his elbows on his desk, he ran his fingers through his hair, breaking the silence with a heavy sigh. He never felt so out of control of his own destiny.

Morgan always imagined that he would marry one day. In fact, he knew it was strange that he'd stayed unmarried this long. Once knighted, he hired himself out, traveling from battle to battle for years. Morgan always wanted to eventually settle down and sire an heir. He'd simply never found the right woman.

When he did settle down, he always hoped it would be with a woman he loved. Since he had land and his own wealth, he always thought he wouldn't have to settle on a loveless match. He always thought he would have the luxury to choose a woman he loved. Morgan wanted passion, someone that would make his heart race and his blood boil. He wanted a woman he could make real vows to, with all his heart. He didn't want to say vows to a woman without any meaning behind them.

Morgan was a knight who had seen endless death and horrors in battle, but in his heart, somehow he remained a true romantic. To be totally sated lying with a lover, limbs entwined throughout the night, was a bliss he had never known. It wasn't that he had abstained from sex, far from it. He'd had sex too frequently to count. There were always women available to a knight for pleasure. The sex was always satisfactory but that was all, no caring or emotions and no love involved. It was just a temporary release, only a physical act, which left him empty and alone in the end. He wanted more.

Morgan rose up from his chair to start pacing the room, back and forth in front of the fireplace. If he continued, he thought he could wear a path in the stone floor by morning.

He stopped in front of the fireplace, placed his hands up on the mantle, and gazed down into the fire.

"I wish I could find my true love."

Hearing a noise behind him, he turned around to find the most remarkable woman he had ever seen standing in his room.

Actually, he saw through her, for she was transparent.

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Chapter Five

Caitlyn walked up to the display case glass. Her nose was touching it, pressed up against it. Then the glass was gone. She blinked in amazement and her breathing sounded like a deafening roar in her ears. Hair on her neck stood on end and there was the smell of ozone in the air.

She blinked again. The armor was gone as well. Instead, the most amazing man stood in its place looking at her. He was not entirely there though; it was as if he were a ghost. She could see through him standing there. He was tall, well built, wearing a white, long sleeved shirt partially unbuttoned down the front showing a muscular, bronzed chest underneath. She looked down, seeing well-formed, sinewy legs that showed how athletic he really was and barefoot.

Caitlyn looked back at his face. He was so beautiful it almost physically hurt her to make eye contact with him. His expression looked as surprised as she felt. It was then she noticed his speckled brown eyes peppered with light flecks of gold. Those brown eyes fixed on her, making her feel uncomfortable under his scrutiny.

His hair was brown, all one length, brushing against his shoulders with streaks of blonde, as though he spent time in the sun. She noticed a smile begin to play at the edges of his full lips as his left eyebrow rose, as if questioning her.

Caitlyn wondered how this was happening; maybe she was dreaming, but she had never had a dream like this. This felt so real to her, but all reason told her it couldn't be.

Without thinking, she reached out her hand to try to touch this sexy illusion. She wanted to see whether he was really there. The man did the same to her, his arm stretching out to hers, their eyes locked on each other, neither one of them blinking. She wasn't sure what she would do if they touched. She wasn't thinking that far ahead. All she wanted was the confirmation that he was real. Finally, as her hand neared his, she felt him grab her wrist. He was solid and pulling her to him. Caitlyn screamed.

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Chapter Six

"Let go of me!" She kept trying to break free from the strong hand that was holding her wrist, but the man had a firm hold on her. His grip was like a vise, tight and snug. Caitlyn looked up at him and immediately stopped fighting. They stood staring at each other while he still held her wrist tight.

They both felt an instant attraction between them like magnets pulling to each other. He pulled on Caitlyn's wrist. She stumbled toward him, just stopping herself from falling into him by placing her free hand on his muscular chest. She looked up into his eyes.

Caitlyn bit her lower lip seeing his eyes move down to her mouth, watching her. Inadvertently, she licked her lips as her own eyes moved to his. His looked so inviting to her.

He bent his head to touch his lips to hers, giving her the gentlest kiss she had ever received. His hand left her wrist as he moved both his hands to around her waist. Caitlyn's own hands moved up to his face, gently cupping his cheeks. She opened her mouth to him, letting his tongue slide slowly inside.

Caitlyn didn't even think about what she was doing with this man. It just seemed totally natural to open herself to him though he was a total stranger. He tasted delicious. She wanted more of him as a fire of desire burned over her from her toes to her head. Their tongues brushed against each other, shyly at first. Then they touched with more confidence

as they moved together, dancing a dance of temptation and with promises of more to come.

Finally, they slowed their kisses and pulled away from each other. Caitlyn grazed her fingertips down his jaw line as she took her hands from his face. He removed his hands from her waist, but they still stood close to one another.

"I apologize, my lady. I saw you and the way you looked at me..." the man said looking down at her. He was amazed that the beautiful apparition he had seen was now real and standing there with him.

"Where am I?" she asked. She looked around the room trying to take it all in. It looked as if she were on a set for a medieval movie. The room was large with a fireplace, yet the air felt cold and damp. It was furnished very sparsely. There was a desk with a chair near one wall and a longer bench closer to the fireplace. Tapestries hung on the whitewashed walls depicting hunting scenes. There were a few small windows, but she could tell that it was night outside.

"Where am I and who are you?" This could not be real, but she was not at the Art Institute anymore. She took a few steps back from the man. She thought it was the smartest thing for her to do. Otherwise, she might kiss him again, or touch him, because she was drawn to him and still had no idea who he was.

"I am Sir Morgan Wyndmere. You are in my rooms, in my castle. Can you tell me, how it is I saw you here looking like a specter? Who are you? Why are you dressed like a man?" He smiled at that last question as he ran his fingers through his hair.

Morgan stood staring at his beautiful guest. There was a fire burning in her eyes, and her cheeks were flushed a dark pink color. While he had held her wrist and before they kissed, she had put up quite a fight. He thought she was a fantastic spitfire.

"My name is Caitlyn Johnson. I was in Chicago, at the Art Institute." She stopped talking. She could see from his expression he had no idea what she was talking about. He gave her a blank stare. Although there was a chill in the air, she started to sweat. "This is definitely not Chicago. What country is this?" She was scared to hear the answer. Her heart was in danger of pounding out of her chest. She had a foreboding feeling that she might already know the answer, but she did not want to be right. God, don't let me be right, she thought.

"We are in England," he replied, looking confused. "Are you all right my lady? Perhaps you should sit down," Morgan suggested to her. Caitlyn suddenly looked ill to him.

"What year is this?" Her hands trembled, and her stomach was twisting, turning and felt sour. The breakfast she ate earlier heaved in her stomach. She prayed she would not throw up on this handsome man's bare feet. Tears starting to form in her eyes. She willed herself to stop, to take some type of control of the situation. Her mind started deducing that she was in the past. Could she have traveled through time? She felt as though she were in a bad movie. The problem was she had no idea what her next line was.

"It is the year 1400."

Caitlyn could tell from the tone in his voice that he was telling her the truth.

"Oh my God. I'm in the past." Her breathing was ragged; she could not catch a full breath of air. "I'm in the past."

Caitlyn's knees started to buckle from under her. "I think I'm going to pass out," she said as she stumbled and heard a strange swooshing sound in her ears. Morgan reached out to grab her before she fell. He caught her from behind, under her arm and held her elbow.

* * * *

"Yeah, I think I need to sit down." She leaned back into his muscular chest.

He stood behind her helping to hold her up. She could feel his strong masculine arms around her. As he guided her to the bench, she could feel his muscles flex under his shirt. It was then she realized he did not have pants on. A few minutes ago that would have made her uneasy with him being so close, but now she did not care. She was in the past for God's sake.

They made their way to the bench in front of the fire. She sat down as Morgan stood in front of her leaning against the fireplace. Pulling her bag from her she placed it on the bench next to her. She unzipped the bag and pulled her cell phone to look at the display. It was dead. Seeing her phone was useless she tossed it back into her bag. The light headed feeling returned. She bent over, putting her head between her legs, her hair hanging upside down cascading around her face.

"Do you need something to drink perhaps? Wine or ale?" He was concerned for this woman who actually looked a pale shade of green when she sat down.

"Is ale like beer? Cause that might work for me right now." She thought to ask for something even stronger, like a shot of something, but then reasoned she might want to be level headed right now.

Morgan walked across the room to the corner. He pulled on a thick braided cord as he stood trying to read Caitlyn. Maybe she was in shock. He had seen men behave strangely from shock on the battlefield and her reactions were not that much different.

After a few moments, there was a knock on the door. A young man walked into the room. He looked at Morgan first, then at Caitlyn on the bench. She sat up, flipping her hair back to see the boy, who stood staring at her right side up. He was young, a teenager she would guess, figuring he was some type of servant.

"Yes my lord?"

"Kip."

Morgan cleared his throat and tried again louder. "Kip!"

"Forgive me my lord."

"Kip, a word." He motioned the boy over to him. Caitlyn sat watching the two of them talking across the room. She could not hear what they were saying. Morgan seemed to be giving directions to the boy named Kip. Kip stood nodding his head, then turned to scurry out of the room. When he left, Caitlyn put her head back between her legs. She closed her eyes and tried to concentrate on her breathing.

"You don't happen to have a paper bag I can breathe into, do you? Have bags even been invented yet? Oh, my God!" Caitlyn let out an almost crazed laugh to herself because she was so seriously screwed.

"Is there something that humors you, my lady?" Morgan moved back to the bench where Caitlyn sat. She stood up, walking over to the desk to get away from him. Morgan radiated amazing sexuality. She wanted to keep her distance from him because she knew that if she touched him, she would be lost. A few minutes ago she almost lost herself in his kisses. She didn't know if she would be so lucky again. He didn't even seem to realize the effect he had on her and she wanted to keep it that way.

"Actually, no, there isn't a thing funny at all. This is the least funny thing that has ever happened to me. It seems that I am in real trouble here. I'm not from this time. I belong in the future. I mean, look at me. Do I look as though I belong here?" she asked the man before her. She didn't even give him the chance to answer before she started talking again. "I don't know what I'm supposed to do. I'm in medieval fucking England with a man I don't even know. I don't belong here at all. I've never even been out of the United States before. I don't even have a goddamned passport."

Morgan walked over to where she stood at his desk, on the opposite side. She felt her body stiffen as he approached her. They were close now with only the desk separating them. He was staring at her with those intense sexy brown eyes. Immediately, she thought of their kisses. She thought of how

easy it would be to just lean over a little closer to pick up right where they had left off. It was a good thing for her that he started speaking.

"My lady, let me assure you that you are quite safe here. No harm will ever come to you within these walls. I give you my word as a knight. My word is my honor. These events are as much of a shock to me as they are to you. I would never have believed what has happened here if I had not seen it with mine own eyes. I do not fully understand where you are from, or how it is you came here. It does appear to me that you are not from here as you have said. But, while you are here, you will be my guest in my home. I will make sure of your safety. That I promise you."

He stepped around the desk, moving closer to Caitlyn. Now they were almost touching they were so close. When she looked up at him, her breathing became shallow. He reached for her right hand to bring it up to his lips, lightly grazing her knuckles. She tried to focus on her problems and not let his touch effect her, but he made her insides melt. He had just told her he was a knight, who would protect her. He was like a dream come true.

"You have my word." He gazed into her eyes, refusing to be the one to look away first.

Caitlin's stomach did a flip. His eyes were so intense that they practically seared her. Her hand as it felt as if it were on fire when he touched her. She already knew what his lips felt like against hers. She wondered what they would feel like on other parts of her body.

She experienced a quick moment of clarity, breaking the spell by shaking her head and pulling her hand back from him. He might be a dream come true, but she was stuck in the middle of a real nightmare.

"Thank you." She looked back into those depths of brown and gold that she could get lost in so easily. "I know we just met, but I have a feeling that you are a man of your word."

They just stood there staring at each other, both wanting to touch the other yet each hesitating to make the first move.

Caitlyn saw Kip walk into the room. "Your ale my lord." He was carrying two cups and a container of some kind, which he placed on the desk. She realized that if Morgan was a knight then Kip was most likely his squire. Suddenly, she felt vindicated for all the historical romance novels she read. Some of the information she had learned from those books might end up coming in handy, she thought.

"Thank you Kip. That will be all. I will see you on the morrow."

"Yes my lord." Kip looked at her giving her a final, blatant once over before he left the room.

They were alone again. Morgan gestured to the bench where she had previously sat. "Sit, Caitlyn, and I will pour for you."

Caitlyn did as he suggested, happy to move back to the warmth of the fire and further from Morgan at the same. She looked from the fire to him as he walked across the room to her. He handed her one of the crude looking cups and sat on the bench beside her.

She looked down into the cup wondering when the last time it had been washed and if they had used soap to wash it. Beggars can't be choosers, she thought to herself, taking a swig of the amber liquid. It burned going down her throat, and she started coughing uncontrollably.

"Is it too strong for you?"

"No, no. I'm fine, really." She looked down into the cup pausing for a second as she collected her thoughts. "So why do you think I'm here?" She stopped, and thought for a second before turning to face him. "Wait a minute. You pulled me here so you can put me back. I want to go back to my time. Is there a way you can send me back?" She stared at him, waiting for his answers.

The problem was he had no answers. He didn't know how he had brought her here to him. He had seen her looking at him and felt a strong urge to touch her because she looked so beautiful to him. At the time, he couldn't help himself. He didn't know that he would pull her back through time, and he certainly had no idea how she could go back to where she came from. In truth, he wasn't sure he wanted her to leave. After touching her and tasting her lips, he knew he wanted even more of her.

"I do not know what happened. I cannot even begin to know how to send you back to your time. But, you are most welcome to stay here as long as you need to, that is not a problem."

* * * *

"You don't understand. I can't stay here. I can't just disappear from my time. I have an apartment, a car, friends, and a family. My poor mother will go crazy if I just disappear from the face of the earth."

After thinking on it a bit, she realized that was what would happen back home. Her mail would pile up; her job would call looking for her. Her mom and best friend, Courtney, would be sick with worry. She could imagine them trying to piece together what had happened to her. They knew she was going to the Art Institute that day. They would eventually find her car in a downtown parking garage and assume the worst. Everyone would think she had been abducted and in a way she had been, just not the way they thought.

The severity of her situation sank in. She placed her cup on the floor, once again running her hands through her hair. Tears burned in her eyes as they started to silently slide down her cheeks. Reality sank in that she may be stuck permanently in the past. It was such an overwhelming thought. Though Morgan sat on the bench next to her, she felt alone—more alone than she had ever felt in her life.

Morgan hesitated, unsure what he should do. Caitlyn had come here from the future with no way to go back to her time. He leaned over and put his hand on her shoulder, agreeing with her that she was in a terrible situation. She seemed so sad. He felt her body trembling under his hand and remembered how soft she felt when he caught her earlier. It felt natural then for him to put his arm around her. He considered if he should hold her now, but he was unsure

how she would react to him. The memory of kissing her, of his tongue touching hers made his groin tighten instantly.

Caitlyn wiped her face with her jacket sleeve, forcing a cleansing breath out of her chest as Morgan removed his hand from her shoulder. "Maybe we could figure out what happened. Maybe we did something to cause this. We can do it again, and I can go back.

"I was at the museum in the armor room doing some sketches."

"Museum? What is a museum?" Morgan asked her.

"Oh, that's right. You don't have them here. At least not yet. A museum is a place where you can see objects from the past, or displays on art or nature. I was at an art museum in a hall that had armor and I thought I saw something move ... I was thinking about the knights..." She looked over to the stunning flesh and blood knight who sat next to her, and had just sworn on his honor to protect her. It made her head whirl. She felt her cheeks start to redden in embarrassment.

"I was just sitting there, and I wished..." She stopped talking to stare into the fire. She had no desire to tell him she had wished for true love.

"What did you say? You started to say you wished for something? What was it exactly? Maybe I have it here and can get it for you ... if you still desire it."

Caitlyn closed her eyes upon hearing Morgan's words. If you only knew, she thought. He was not making things any easier. She felt her embarrassment continue to rise to her pale cheeks. There was no easy way out of his questions. She should just answer him, no matter how it made her feel. "I

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wished for true love," she stated, turning to look at him. "I wished for my true love, and then I saw you."

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Chapter Seven

There, it was out, she had said it. She looked over at Morgan, frightened to see his reaction.

"Oh." He brought his cup to his lips, taking another drink, this one much longer than the others. He finished, wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, nodding his head up and down as if agreeing with someone she couldn't hear. "You wished for your true love? Honestly?" He seemed almost in shock with what she had told him and, she didn't understand why.

"What is it?" His strange reaction made her nervous because he would not look at her now. The next words he said left her utterly speechless, since she was not expecting what he said to her.

"I sat at my desk uttering the same words myself before you appeared. I wished for my very own true love." He looked down to find his cup was empty then looked at her. "I need more ale. Do you need more? Nay?"

"No, I'm good." She bent down to pick up her cup with trembling hands, taking a drink. It still burned going down, but she didn't care. She clutched the cup in both of her hands, as if the cup itself were giving off warmth. This time she swallowed the ale without difficulty.

Caitlyn was speechless for once in her life. She watched Morgan get up to walk to his desk. She was trying to process what he had said to her. They had both wished for the same thing.... and now she was here. Did this mean he was her

true love? That she was his? That somehow they were meant to be together? She thought of the undeniable attraction they had experienced and the awesome kiss they had shared. The idea was crazy. But then, so was traveling through time and yet here she was.

Caitlyn studied him as he finished another cup of the ale. He didn't even put the container down this time. He held it, ready to fill the cup again and again. She turned, looking back at the fire, her mind racing, while still searching for logic to this but finding none.

Morgan finished the ale that remained then returned to Caitlyn at the bench. He sat next to her, an awkward silence between them. They both looked to the fire as if it were the most interesting thing they had ever seen.

The idea that he was her true love made her stomach knot. Out of the corner of her eye, she looked at his profile, taking him in. He was breathtaking. Never in her life had she thought someone with his looks would be interested in her. She stared at him thinking how he had actually wished for true love. It was so strange. Most men she knew ran from commitment like the devil was nipping at their heels. Morgan was the total opposite; he wanted to find love. She wondered if he were thinking she might be what he wished for, and the very idea made her mind reel. She knew she was attracted to him; there was no denying that. Heat grew between her legs as she looked at him, thinking it would be wonderful to feel his arms around her. When he touched her earlier, it left her wanting more.

When he kissed her hand, she felt as if he had branded her. When she remembered his lips on hers, a fire blazed in her from her pelvis to her beating heart. From the way he had acted toward her, she thought that he might want the same things that she did.

Morgan turned toward her, giving her a little grin. She felt her heart jump inside her chest. This was all so unbelievable. He was so damned attractive. She didn't understand how he could possibly be single. Medieval women must all be blind, or maybe there was something wrong with him she had not discovered yet. That was a chance she knew she was willing to take. She was stuck in the past with Morgan, this man that she realized she wanted more than anything. They both had wished for love. She had traveled through centuries to end up there with him; surely that meant something. Besides, who was she to turn her back to Fate? She decided she couldn't just sit there waiting for him to make the first move. She would find out right now if he felt the same way she did.

"Morgan, what would you say if I told you that I wanted you to kiss me again? Would you do it? Or am I being too forward?"

Morgan looked at her with surprise. He had been sitting there thinking how he wished he could kiss her again but unsure if he should. He didn't want her to think he was taking advantage of her being in a vulnerable position.

"I would say, follow me this way to my sleep chamber." He stood up, offering her his hand. "Unless now you think I am being too forward Lady Caitlyn?" His brown eyes were sparkling with anticipation.

Caitlyn looked at his hand before her and looked up at him smiling as she placed her hand in his. She let him lead her to the next room.

She saw that he led her into his bedroom. It did not have much furniture in it, similar to the previous room. There were two large wooden trunks with a wardrobe against one wall. Two chairs sat by another fireplace with a table in the corner with a pitcher and basin. The focal point of the room was the massive bed; it was bigger than any she'd ever seen.

The bed was made of a dark wood, with large, round posts. There were dark green velvet curtains hanging around it, which were now tied back. The mattress was overstuffed, looking very high to her with different dark colored animal furs scattered across the top.

Morgan led her by the hand to the foot of the bed. He turned to look at her, putting his hands on her waist, drawing her closer to him. He leaned down to her upturned face whispering a gentle kiss on her lips before she pulled herself away from him.

"Morgan, so you know, I'm not like this back home. I don't go to bed with men I just met. Not even after I go on a first or second date with them. I don't know, I can't explain it, I just..."

"Shh," he said as he placed a gentle finger across her lips. "I have never had a woman here before in my room. You are the first, Caitlyn. I am so drawn to you I cannot fight it, and honestly, I do not want to. I look at you, and I know that I want to make love to you ... if you will let me."

Caitlyn gave him his answer even before she spoke another word. He went down on his knees to untie the laces of her boots removing each boot and sock from her feet. His fingers brushed against the arch of her foot sending chills up and down her spine.

She unbuttoned her pants to pull them down over her hips. He finished pulling them down to her ankles so that she could step out of them. She removed her jean jacket, peeling off her black tee shirt letting them both fall down to the floor. He stood up looking at her in her shell pink bra and panties and his erection strained at the sight of her.

"What unusual underclothes," Morgan commented.

Caitlyn smiled as she looked him in the eyes as she unhooked her bra, letting it fall to the floor in front of her. "This is what women wear from my time." She removed her panties next. Now she was naked in front of him. The combination of the chilly room and her arousal for him made her nipples stand erect.

Morgan pulled off his nightshirt and let it fall to the floor next to her clothes.

Caitlyn thought that maybe she had not traveled through time, but had actually died and gone to heaven instead. Morgan had the body that all women dreamed of. His shoulders were wide, with sculpted pectorals and abs to die for. His waist was narrow, his thighs and legs were made of solid muscle. She couldn't help but notice his long, thick erection straining against him, aroused. The tip glistened with wetness.

It struck her that his arousal was for her. She knew if he touched her, he would find out she was soaking wet for him. She could not remember ever being so aroused for a man before from just looking at him. It was as if her body physically needed her to be joined with his. She never ached to make love with a man the way she ached now.

Their eyes locked while they stood there looking at each other. Morgan stepped up to her to brush her hair back, off her shoulders. His erection pressed against her stomach, and she felt wetness leak from the tip of his penis.

Caitlyn reached up to place her hands onto his chest. Her fingers found his nipples, and they hardened under her fingertips. Her hand moved down to his abdominal muscles rising and falling over each and every contour. She had never touched a man with a body like his before.

Morgan scooped her up into his arms. Caitlyn squealed then wrapped her arms around his neck. She leaned her head against his neck to breathe in his spicy scent. He placed her on top of the furs that were ever so soft against her skin. He climbed onto the bed crawling over her body, his knees straddling her at her waist. Placing his hands on either side of her head he bent down to kiss her trembling lips.

When Caitlyn saw he was going to kiss her, she ran her tongue across his lips as she had thought of doing before. A low groan escaped him. He kissed her hard as his tongue eagerly sought entrance into her mouth, which she allowed. This time when their tongues touched, it caused their already intense arousal to escalate even more.

Caitlyn reached up to put her hands on Morgan's back, running her hands over his skin, his muscles moving and flexing under her opened palms. His mouth left hers to trail down her neck kissing and nibbling the soft skin there. She sighed giving him a little moan as his tongue ran from her neck to her breastbone to finally reach her breasts.

Morgan's mouth sought one of her breasts licking around the areola before kissing the hardened nipple. He sucked it, gently at first, then harder until Caitlyn could sense a connection from her nipples that ran straight down to her belly button. She rubbed her thighs together noticing they were wet from the juices escaping from between her legs.

As Morgan sucked one breast, his hand found the other, gently squeezing the flesh, and then his thumb and pointer finger rolled the nipple until it was hard as a stone between his fingers. As he did this, Caitlyn's hips rose. She was dying to grind against him, wanting his sex in her, pumping in her, rubbing her aching, swollen clit.

His mouth moved to the other breast licking the erect pink skin and flicking his tongue over it. Although she was lost in the sensations he was raining on her, she moved her hands down to grab his throbbing cock with one hand stroking him up and down while with the other hand she firmly cupped his scrotum. Caitlyn touched the tip of his penis where the pre-cum was still leaking, to rub it up and down his shaft, so it glided smoothly in her hand. He groaned at her stroking him but never once stopped sucking her breast.

As she held him in her hand, she was struck with just how big he really was. She thought of how it would feel to slowly

slide his length inside of her. Just the thought of him filling her was overwhelming.

"Morgan," she whispered, trying to get his attention. He looked up at her with questioning eyes. "Now, I need you inside me now, please."

He looked at her and nodded. She placed her hands above her head, running her fingers through her hair, looking down to watch him. He guided himself to her opening, her slit, wet and swollen, waiting for him to enter her. As he guided his cock's head into her, he looked at her, locking his eyes with hers. He removed his hand from his erection shifting his upper weight to both hands. Then he lowered himself to rest on his forearms still holding most of his weight from her. He was gentle as he pushed his penis forward with his hips, inching into her. She moved her hands from her hair to his waist pulling him closer, wanting to feel all of him deep inside her.

She hissed as he entered her all the way, filling her completely. Her body needed to adjust to his largeness inside her. She ran her hands over his buttocks as he started to slide in and out of her slowly at first, pulling himself back so far that his head just barely stayed inside of her, then plunging himself back into her as deep as he could go.

Morgan's pumping became faster and with each thrust into her she could feel him stroke her clit with his cock. Caitlyn felt the first waves of her orgasm awaken deep within her. She moved her hips to match his movements. When she touched his back again, she could feel damp sweat covering his skin. His breathing became shallow as Caitlyn felt the most

amazing orgasm she had ever experienced take over her, literally taking her breath away. As her body contracted around Morgan's, he groaned. He came inside her, spurting his seed into her as she milked his shaft with her own muscle contractions.

Morgan caught his breath before he pulled out of her then lie down next to her, reaching his arm around her to hold her close. Caitlyn turned her body toward his, moving close to cuddle against him, still wanting to feel close to him. She lifted one leg to throw it over his, so her bent knee rested on his belly, her head resting on his chest.

"Morgan, remember before when I said I didn't belong here?"

"Aye. I remember because I did not like hearing you say those words."

"Well, maybe I was wrong." She felt like she was where she belonged—with him. He was exactly what she had wished for earlier that morning.

"Aye." He took her hand in his and interlacing his fingers with hers. "I think you are exactly where you should be."

Caitlyn whispered a quiet "Yeah," before she kissed his chest again then laid her head back on him.

Morgan sighed, feeling totally sated with Caitlyn, this incredible woman from the future who was everything he ever wanted in a mate. It was like a miracle she had shown up on the night when he wished for his true love. Surely, it was a sign they were meant to be together. After they had made love, she moved to him like she belonged at his side, even throwing her leg across his body. He heard her gentle snore,

and he smiled knowing that she was relaxed enough around him to let herself go to sleep.

Now all he had to do was figure out how to tell her he was supposed to marry someone else.

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Chapter Eight

Caitlyn woke up wrapped in the softness of furs, with her limbs still entwined around Morgan. She was lying in his arms, just as she had when she had fallen asleep after they made love. She tilted her head up to see that he was already awake, watching her.

"Lady Caitlyn finally rises," he teased her, still smiling. When he had first woken, he was surprised to find Caitlyn still in his bed, then relief washed over him. Part of him thought that the night he spent with her was only a dream. He didn't want to move and disturb her so he had just lain in bed and watched her sleep. She looked like an angel to him. His very own angel.

Caitlyn didn't know what time it was, but she imagined she had been asleep a long time. The shutters that had been closed were now opened with bright sunlight streaming in through the windows.

"Wow, I must have been really tired." She rubbed the remnants of sleep from her eyes. Time travel gives you the worst jet lag you could ever imagine, she thought. "I'm sorry if I kept you from something," she apologized to him.

He shook his head at her. "There is nowhere else I would rather be than where I am right now." She hugged him as she kissed his chest, before realizing she smelled food. Suddenly, she realized she was starving.

"Do I smell bacon?"

He laughed at her, nodding. Sitting up, he slid away from her to stand next to the bed letting Caitlyn see he was still naked from the night before. He went over to where they had left their clothes and picked up his nightshirt. He slid it over his head then picked up her clothes and brought them over to her. "I'll be right back."

Caitlyn put on her tee shirt and underpants as Morgan came back carrying a tray loaded with food. She looked at him, her very own knight carrying their breakfast to the bed. The whole idea of living in the past kept looking better and better to her. She knew she would gladly give up her bi-weekly pedicure for this kind of treatment any day. The one thing that bothered her most about her traveling to the past was thinking of her mother and best friend Courtney. She hated thinking how her mother would handle her sudden disappearance. Courtney would be upset too, but Caitlyn felt comforted knowing Courtney would be there to help her mother. She wished there was some way she could let them know that she was okay so they wouldn't worry.

Morgan placed the tray on the bed and walked around to the other side to sit down next to Caitlyn.

"What is it Caitlyn?" She had seemed fine a few moments ago, but something had changed.

"I was just thinking about my mom and best friend. I wish there was some way I could let them know where I am or that I'm okay."

"Aye, I understand." He did. Although William had left him a letter when he'd gone and Morgan knew his brother was all right, he still missed him. Morgan could only imagine the pain

Caitlyn's mother and friend would go through when they discovered she was gone. "I do not think there is anything we can do."

"Yeah, you're right." She looked down at the tray he had brought for them trying not to think of her mom anymore. Morgan was right, what could she do? "This is the best looking breakfast in bed ever," she told him changing the subject.

Morgan picked up a piece of bacon and reached over, holding it to her lips. She opened her mouth to take a bite, finding it delicious. They sat on the bed eating the bacon along with cheese and bread until their stomachs were full.

"So what do you think I should do today? You can't stay with me always. I'm sure you are a busy man with many responsibilities here."

"Well, while you were asleep I talked with my squire, Kip, when he brought in the tray. You saw him here yesterday night. He will have a servant girl named Alicia bring out the dresses my sister Elizabeth left here after she married. I think you two are almost the same size. Alicia will help you dress then I would love to show you around the castle. While you are here this will be your home."

She was overwhelmed by his generosity. "Thank you Morgan, that is really nice of you." Yesterday she was sitting in the museum day dreaming about knights, and now it seemed she had a living, breathing knight of her own.

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Chapter Nine

"Thank you for helping me Alicia. I would have been lost without your help."

Caitlyn stood in the chamber that used to belong to Morgan's sister Elizabeth. She really was glad she had someone to help her get dressed. She was amazed at how heavy the dresses were. There was so much material, not like what she was used to wearing at all.

"Of course my lady," Alicia replied as she smoothed out Caitlyn's skirts.

Caitlyn thought it was lucky for her Elizabeth had left a few gowns behind when she left the castle. She assumed they were the ones she didn't like although Caitlyn thought even the plainest of the left behind dresses was absolutely beautiful. She now wore a navy blue dress that fell to the floor with long sleeves that belled at the wrists. White and gold floral embroidery along the bodice dipped low in front, and fitted at the hips. Caitlyn felt like a princess from a fairy tale. Smiling, she lifted the skirt to see her combat boots peeking out from under the dress.

"There, perfect," Alicia commented.

"You think I look all right?" She was feeling nervous not knowing how Morgan would react when he saw her dressed in clothes from his own time. She wished there was a mirror so she could get a look at herself.

"The gown is stunning on you, truly."

"Ok, well I guess I'm going to have to take your word on that. Can you do me a favor and take me back to Morgan's rooms? That's where I'm supposed to meet him. I think he said he would go send a letter then come back and get me. I have no idea how to get back."

"Of course, follow me this way."

It didn't take long to get back to Morgan's rooms and Alicia left Caitlyn alone to wait for him. She was pretty nervous waiting for him to arrive, so she went to sit in one of his chairs to wait for him rather than pace back and forth.

Caitlyn heard footsteps come from down the hall that stopped in front of Morgan's door. She looked up at the open doorway, and he stepped inside the room. Her heart fluttered at the sight of him.

Morgan wore all black today, down to his shoes. His black hose clung to his muscular legs with a black tunic shirred as a black belt caressed his waist making it more pronounced. Looking at him almost made her melt.

Caitlyn stood up from the chair taking two steps forward then stopped. She was staring at him waiting for his reaction.

"It is as if that dress was made just for you," he said to her, as he reached up to touch her cheek.

Caitlyn turned her head to kiss his open palm. When she turned her head back to look at him, he leaned down to kiss her. Her whole body reacted to his kiss, desire washing over her like a warm wave as each kiss became harder and more passionate than the ones before it. He reached up and wrapped his fingers in her hair, then pulled her head back, exposing her neck. He started to kiss the soft skin down her

delicate, pale throat. Then he stopped to step back from her, his eyes blazing and his mouth reddened from all their kisses.

"I promised to show you the castle today. I fear if I kiss you again though, we will never make it out of my rooms," he said with a wicked grin. "But let us go. I want to show you off to everyone so they can see my beautiful guest."

She laughed at what he said, knowing it was the truth. One more kiss from him, and she would be trying to figure out how to take off the clothes it had taken her half the morning to put on. She reached out and took his hand he now offered her and followed him out of his rooms for her tour of his castle.

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Chapter Ten

It had been a long day, and Caitlyn was exhausted. She had no idea that the castle was so big; it was like a self-contained city. There were so many hallways and stairways that one could get lost in. She didn't know whether she would ever remember her way around.

Many people were going in and out of the building, with everyone greeting Morgan. He spoke with everyone, not seeming to care if they were below his station or not. He treated them all with the same respect.

When he took her outside, she caught her breath at all the activity. He walked her around the outside of the keep where she could see the main building surrounded by a stone wall that had round turrets. There was a gatehouse at the front of the castle entrance with the portcullis raised so the villagers could come and go as they pleased. She thought the whole experience was like going to the biggest Renaissance Faire on steroids. It was one of the most crazy, wonderful experiences of her life. She definitely wanted to go back outside and look around some more.

Though she now found herself in the great hall, their last meal of the day having finished hours ago. She sat waiting for Morgan to go upstairs to his chambers. Bored, she looked around the room taking it all in. The great hall was a large room with whitewashed walls and tapestries hanging throughout. There were dark wood beams overhead with chandeliers lit with candles hanging from the ceiling. The

fireplace in the room was huge, the biggest Caitlyn had ever seen. There were rushes on the floor that made the room smell sweet with a hint of spice.

There were two tables that had long benches for people to sit on, with a head table that was raised and had individual chairs. Caitlyn sat at the head table next to Morgan during the meal and shared a trencher with him eating things she could not even identify. She saw people give her looks, curious about who she was and obviously wondering why she appeared to be close to him.

When Morgan introduced her at the beginning of the evening as "Caitlyn from," and had paused to think of what to say, she had finished with "from the land of Lincoln," and laughed to herself at her joke that no one else, not even Morgan, would understand.

Now, sitting in the hall, it didn't seem that the activity there would ever end. She was tired of sitting against the wall watching other people dancing and getting drunk. Morgan was still talking to the same men he had been talking with for a while now. She didn't think he would ever be able to get away from them. Occasionally, they would make eye contact from across the room. They would smile at each other, but he had yet to break free from his conversations. She wanted to be alone with him, and she knew he felt the same. When they were close to each other, it was hard to keep their hands off each other. All during dinner, he had given her looks, brushing his hand against her leg sending sparks to her flesh through the material of her dress. Each time he touched her; she would get aroused, thinking of getting him alone and

making love with him again. She would think of all the things they had not done yet, but that she was looking forward to doing with him.

Caitlyn saw Alicia walk by her carrying some dirty goblets.

"Alicia, can you please tell Morgan that I've gone upstairs? And can you please come up and help me get out of this dress? I'm exhausted."

"Of course Lady Caitlyn, right away," she replied setting the goblets on a nearby table. Alicia turned and worked her way through the crowd of people toward Morgan.

Caitlyn turned one last time to look at him, but now his back was to her, so he wouldn't even know she was gone from the great hall.

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Chapter Eleven

Caitlyn lay in Morgan's bed, wearing one of his white nightshirts like the one he had on last night when she arrived, just on the brink of sleep. She heard the door open, and she sat up to see who had entered the room.

It was he, finally free from the men down in the great hall, walking quietly so he would not disturb her as she slept.

"Hey, they finally let you go."

"Caitlyn, did I waken you? I did not mean to," he said as he undressed to his naked skin. He took the nightshirt lying on the bed waiting for him and pulled it on over his head.

"No, I couldn't really sleep. I was waiting for you." She knew she would not sleep peacefully until he was in bed with her.

"I apologize for leaving you alone for so long. I did not plan on you having to sit by yourself this evening. It seems that everyone had a problem tonight. They all come to me to solve issues since they live on my land."

He climbed into the bed next to her and opened his arms to her. She snuggled against him as if it were second nature to her. They faced each other, starting to kiss—slow, gentle kisses, lips opening to each other, tongues touching and gliding smooth as silk against each other.

Morgan eased Caitlyn down onto her back, rolled over, then straddled her. He grabbed both of her wrists in one of his hands holding them over her head. With his other hand, he reached to touch her breasts through the material of the

nightshirt. When his hand brushed over her breasts, her nipples stiffened under his palms.

Caitlyn writhed under him, loving the way he had taken over their lovemaking. Her body burned in anticipation of his touch. The tiny blaze that started between her legs grew hotter and stronger with each pass of his hand over her breasts. He leaned down to kiss the hardened nubs of skin pushing against the thin material.

"I wanted to touch you all night," he said with a growl, "I wanted to taste you all night." He released her wrists, moving down her body, lifting her shift up to her stomach. He parted her legs with his hands, spreading her legs wide, moving between them, and exposing her sex to him. His ravenous eyes were looking down on her as if she were the most delicious creature in the world. The way he was looking at her aroused Caitlyn more, causing her wetness to moisten her thighs. She had waited all night for this, for him. All night long she knew he would be worth the wait.

Morgan touched the curls between her legs that were damp with anticipation. Caitlyn inhaled a large breath as he bent down and placed a kiss on her silky hair at the top of her mound. She instinctively raised her hips to his lips, wanting to feel his mouth on her body. He sat back on his knees between her legs and slowly slid a finger inside her then drew his hand back. When he entered her again, he used two fingers, sliding them inside her as deep as they would go. She moved her hips grinding against his fingers closing her eyes when his fingers rubbed against her clit.

He removed his fingers from her. There was a pause for a few seconds until his tongue started to languidly work its way up her slit, to the top. He used his hands to open her wider to him as his tongue slid inside her folds. He played with her clit, taking turns at flicking his tongue across it as he swallowed down the juices that escaped her.

Caitlyn raised her hands over her head, abandoning herself in the pure sensations that took over her. A low moan purred out of her as he continued his ministrations. She was gone now. There were only the sensations, and feelings he made her feel. She was unaware of the world around her.

This was the kind of lovemaking Caitlyn had dreamed of, the curl-your-toes sort of thing she had craved. When Morgan slid his fingers back inside her as his tongue continued to lave her, her body tensed, readying itself for her peak that would soon be reached.

Morgan's own groans of desire for her as well as his whisperings of his love for her body brought her closer to her own release. His fingers slid in and out of her as his tongue danced across her clit. She tensed, crying out as her orgasm rolled over her. As she came he never stopped, so her orgasm was all the more intense and mind shattering.

"Morgan, stop, stop," she cried and panted to him, begging him to stop, her mind reeling in pleasure.

He stopped as she asked, moving from between her legs, to lie next to her where she curled into his side. She wondered how long it would take before she would be able to catch her breath.

"Caitlyn, there's something I want to ask you. Last night, you mentioned going on a 'date' with men? What does that mean?"

Caitlyn paused to think about how to explain dating in the twenty-first century to a man who knew only of life in the fourteenth century. It took a few minutes of thinking before she could even decide where to start.

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Chapter Twelve

Caitlyn walked hand in hand with Morgan toward the stable, thinking it was so sweet he wanted to take her on a date, though she knew he didn't fully understand the concept. She found his desire to attempt something from her time endearing, especially after everything they had done last night. Considering how frequently they had made love, they were way beyond a first date, but he seemed to have his heart set on it.

They spent part of the night talking about dating in the twenty-first century. He seemed fascinated by everything she had to tell him. She explained that some cultures still believed in arranged marriages, but where she was from, men and women chose their mates themselves. He was especially interested in the fact that men and women could choose whom they wanted to marry.

When they reached the stable, the hands brought out two horses. Caitlyn looked at the large animals and turned pale. She never realized that she would be expected to ride a horse. Plus, as she looked down at the dress she was wearing, she assumed she would have to ride sidesaddle. Not gonna happen, no way, no how.

"Oh, umm, Morgan, I can't ride a horse," she confessed to him with terror in her eyes. The closest she had come to a horse was while being pulled down Michigan Avenue in a buggy after a prom in the late eighties.

"You do not ride?" He had just assumed she knew how to ride a horse. Everyone he knew rode.

"No way. Where I come from, we don't ride horses. I'm sorry."

Morgan looked at her with disappointment, and then his eyes sparkled as an idea came to him. "No worry, we will just take my mount, then," he told her. He instructed the stable hands to take away the horse meant for her. He swung up onto his horse then offered her his hand to help her up. She felt very self-conscious and awkward as she raised her arm up to him. She knew she would not be graceful getting onto the horse and felt embarrassed. There was no need for her to worry though; he grabbed her arm pulling her up onto the horse in front of him, sidesaddle in one swift motion seemingly with no effort at all. As he held the reins in front of her, she leaned back into his chest.

"This is much better than riding a horse alone," she said to him. "So where are we going for our date?"

"You will see very soon. It will not take long for us to get there."

They rode from the stables to the front entrance of the castle and through the portcullis. They followed a well-worn road lined with trees away from the castle, passing villagers along the way who waved, shouting greetings at them, to which Morgan answered every single one, no matter who they were.

After they had ridden for a while, they started seeing fewer people on the road, until finally the road became deserted. At one point, there was a path off the road that a person might

not even notice if they didn't know that it was there. He guided the horse onto this almost invisible pathway.

They rode for a while until they seemed to reach the end of the Earth itself. The trees opened. Suddenly, there was just open air and land in front of them dropping off to the sea. Morgan had brought her to a secluded cliff. At the base of the cliff, Caitlyn saw bright blue water wherever she looked—left or right. She hadn't realized they were actually up high or that there was water far below them.

Morgan stopped the horse, swinging off the saddle to reach up his arms to slide Caitlyn down off the horse. He held her for a moment before he took her hand, leading her even closer to the edge of the cliff. She looked around at the view; it literally took her breath away. The sky was light blue with puffy white clouds, the water a shimmering blue sparkling from the sun as if it were filled with twinkling jewels, while the green of the grass beneath their feet was the brightest shade of Kelly green. It was a beautiful, untouched open space that made her ache with its beauty.

"I've never seen anything so amazing," she murmured, staring out at the water and sky. The only open water she knew was Lake Michigan at the North Avenue beach in Chicago. While she loved hanging out on the beach back home, this was an incredible place like she had never seen.

Morgan slid his arm around Caitlyn's waist, easing behind her so that his arms wrapped around her.

"That's exactly what I thought when I first saw you," he whispered into her ear then kissed her neck. "I have never seen anything so amazing."

Caitlyn smiled, placing her hands over his. She leaned back into him sighing aloud as his mouth maneuvered down her neck. Caitlyn rubbed herself against him and she felt him harden almost immediately.

"Do many people come out here?" She had an idea that would require the two of them to be alone and uninterrupted.

"Nay, I do not think that many people know of the path off the road. I have never seen another person here, and I have come here often."

Caitlyn turned around to face him and pulled at his pants. "Take these off, Morgan," she told him with a wicked gleam in her eye. She decided that if yesterday was his day to taste her, today would be her day to taste him. Caitlyn was willing to bet he would go along with her plan. She knew she was right as she stood there watching him take off his boots, then undo his pants and take them off. He pulled off his tunic as well so he was standing in front of her in the bright sunshine completely naked.

Every time she saw him naked, an immeasurable thrill shot through her making her heart quicken. His muscular body always amazed her. Caitlyn knelt in front of him reaching up to run her palms over his chiseled chest. She looked at his erection and could see his arousal growing in front of her. First, she took him in her hand then looked up at him before she ran her tongue down his cock from the tip all the way to the base. Caitlyn pulled her head back to look at the tip of his penis; the slit at the end was leaking clear fluid. She stuck out her tongue to lick the fluid from him. Ever so slowly, she slid him inside her mouth. Her lips were soft as she slid him

into her mouth as far as she could, relaxing her throat enough to take him deeper. She moved her tongue along the underside, feeling the vein that ran up and down his length.

Caitlyn looked up at him to see that his eyes were closed, his mouth partially opened, totally relaxed. She imagined the pleasure he was experiencing, and her own nipples tightened under the dress she wore. But, this time was about him and his pleasure and not hers, she reminded herself. She wanted to make him feel as remarkable as he made her feel last night. She wanted to take his breath away the same way he had done to her.

Caitlyn reached up with her free hand to gently cup his testicles and heard a low groan escape his lips.

She pulled her head back, so only the tip of him was still in her mouth, gently sucking while pursing her lips tighter around his erection. Caitlyn could feel him throb, slowly losing control of himself.

Caitlyn licked the outside of his cock, her saliva coating it, making it glistening wet. She slid him back into her mouth; deep into her throat then sliding it back out to the head. She held him at his base moving her head back and forth, gliding him in and out of her mouth. Occasionally she would run her tongue along the throbbing vein running along his length. Caitlyn tilted her head to run her tongue over his balls, gently sucking them before taking him into her mouth once again.

She pulled back and used her hand to stroke him a few times, then plunging him deep inside her throat again, even further than before. He gasped reaching down to tangle his

fingers into her hair. His hips started to move matching the movements of her head.

Caitlyn sensed a change in his cock. She knew that he was going to come in her mouth soon. Suddenly, he stopped moving his hips. He pulled her hair harder as his cock spurted his warm seed into her open mouth. Caitlyn waited a few seconds until she knew he had emptied himself completely then she swallowed the slightly salty fluid he had given her.

She leaned back onto her heels. He opened his eyes to look down at her, totally out of breath. He knelt down in front of her to kiss her on the lips, pulling her back up on her knees toward him.

"Caitlyn, you are truly amazing," he told her between showering her with kisses. "I can honestly say I quite enjoy your dating."

She laughed at his comment as he playfully pushed her down on the grass to continue their first date.

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Chapter Thirteen

Caitlyn sat in the grass watching Morgan and some other knights practicing with their swords. She had been in the past almost a full week. Once she started coming to watch them practice, she could tell that the knights treated the time Morgan spent with them very seriously. Even though he had hardly even begun to break a sweat, the others were drenched from their practice. For every movement that they used to attempt to disarm him, he would thwart them. It was almost as if he knew ahead of time what they were going to do. The couple of times she had watched them, it was the same, and from what she had seen, he never lost. He was an amazing swordsman.

Suddenly, there was a lot of yelling and shouting coming from the direction of the stables. Morgan and the others swords stopped in mid air as they listened to the rising voices. He looked down at her. His eyebrows furrowed together as he shrugged his shoulders, shaking his head, telling her he had no idea what was happening.

From around the corner of one of the outer buildings, a small group of men came walking in their direction. The men were laughing and joking, as they pushed and elbowed each other.

"Spenser," he muttered aloud to no one in particular.

One of the men looked at Morgan, stopped walking to extend his arms indicating that the other men should stop walking as well. The man was tall and very muscular with

shoulder length black hair. He was male model beautiful, and he would stop traffic in Chicago, Caitlyn thought staring at him.

"Morgan," the man yelled since they were still a good forty feet from each other, "did you honestly think you were going to be able to keep your big news from us?" The man had a teasing tone in his voice and was grinning from ear to ear.

Morgan looked down at Caitlyn, giving her a small, sad smile and simply said to her "I'm sorry."

She frowned; not understanding what he was talking about or what was happening. She got up from the ground to go stand next to Morgan. "Sorry? Sorry for what?" He didn't answer her, in fact, he wouldn't even look at her now. Apparently, Morgan and Spenser knew each other. She understood he was being teased for something, but she didn't know for what. She could tell from the look on his face he was unhappy with the teasing at all. In fact, he was looking a little pissed off to her.

Morgan shook his head as he shouted back "Spenser, don't—not now."

"We heard your little brother ran away with a servant girl, and now you are required by the King to take his place. Did you think you could marry Rose Adler and none of us would find out about it? When is the marriage to take place? We hear it is to be soon."

Caitlyn stood there next to Morgan breaking her silence. "You have a brother? You only told me about your sister. What is he talking about? Are you marrying someone named Rose?" she demanded. She looked at Morgan in disbelief as

her stomach burned with dread of his answer. The week she'd been there he had never mentioned another woman, especially while in his bed.

"Spenser, you ass," Morgan said to Spenser as he looked down at the ground and ran a hand through his hair.

"Is it true? You're engaged?" He still didn't say anything to her, which was just as good as an admission to guilt in her mind. She grabbed his arm and tried to turn him to her, to force him to look at her in the eyes. He hardly budged at all, but finally turned and looked down at her with a grim expression on his face.

"It's true then? The entire time I've been here you've been planning to marry someone else? Are you kidding me?" Caitlyn yelled, waiting for an answer. None came. She looked at all the men who were standing there in silence staring at her. Some looked at her with pity, some looking as embarrassed as she felt. Her cheeks were flaming red with humiliation. She turned on her heels away from Morgan, starting to walk across the bailey to the castle.

"Caitlyn, please let me explain," Morgan yelled at her as she reached the castle entrance.

Her body paused for a slight moment against her will before she continued walking through the doorway.

As she went up the stairs to his bedroom, she replayed what had just happened in her head. Each time she was left with a myriad of emotions—hurt, anger, and betrayal. He had never given her any indication, no hint at all, of being engaged to someone. If she had known he would get married she would have never slept with him.

Caitlyn thought that Morgan hadn't seemed happy at all when Spenser brought up the wedding. In fact, he looked as though he wanted to kill Spenser, then and there. There had to be more to the story and she wanted to know what it was. She just didn't want to hear it now. Now she wanted to be alone.

She didn't understand any of this at all. He talked to her about love, promising to love her forever. Why do that when he was getting married to someone else? She hated to think that he would use her, play with her emotions, just to get her into his bed.

God, she wished she could just pick up a phone and call Courtney to get her opinion of everything that had just happened. Her best friend always had a way of helping her through all her problems, but now she was unfortunately on her own.

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Chapter Fourteen

It was a miserable day, and not just because of the nonstop rain that started and refused to slow down since she woke up that morning. Caitlyn was still trying to come to terms with the fact that Morgan would marry another woman.

Everything had appeared so fairy tale perfect with him. She thought she was adjusting well to her new life in the fifteenth century. Then, Spenser arrived and everything fell to pieces. She decided it wasn't really fair to hate Spenser because he revealed Morgan's marriage to Rose as if it were no big deal. He didn't even know she existed when he got to the castle, or that she and Morgan were together. He looked shocked when she questioned Morgan in front of everyone.

Caitlyn was crushed that Morgan was supposed to marry someone else. Plus she was so humiliated she found out about the engagement in front of a group of people. She was so embarrassed.

There was a knock on the door, and she knew it was Morgan. He had stayed away yesterday after the incident with Spenser. She'd spent the night alone thinking about everything.

"Go away!" She didn't want to see him right now so she yelled at him through his chamber door.

"Please Caitlyn, can I come in and talk to you? I want to explain everything to you. I did not want you to find out I was getting married this way. I do not want to, believe me. You

are the only woman I want. I swear to you. Please, let me talk to you."

Caitlyn went to the door and opened it.

"I really don't want to talk to you right now. I'm so embarrassed that other people knew you were getting married, and I didn't." Caitlyn willed herself not to cry in front of him, but she could feel herself losing the battle. "When did you find out you had to get married? Why didn't you tell me?"

"A few days before you appeared. I have not even seen the girl in years. After my brother ran away, the King ordered me to take his place and marry her. I didn't tell you because I thought it would upset you."

"You think so? I can't believe this. How soon is the wedding going to take place?"

"I am waiting to hear back from the King. We should have plenty of notice when it will happen."

Caitlyn sighed. "I don't know what to think about all this. I need to be alone and try to figure things out. This is a lot for me to deal with."

"As you wish. I will leave you, but if you need anything please send word with Alicia. I'll stay in a different chamber again tonight so you can have time to yourself. Good night Caitlyn."

"Good night," she replied before she closed the door separating her from him. After a second she heard his footsteps as he walked away down the hall. She went to his desk, her mind racing, trying to decide what she would do, knowing she could not stay here much longer. She sat and considered her options. Before today she never thought she

would have to leave Morgan's castle and live on her own. She thought that she and Morgan really were meant to be together and would have a life together. Now she would have to go learn a trade, or maybe sell some of her artwork for a living. She needed a plan, and she needed one fast. Who knew when the King would say the wedding would take place.

She opened her sketchbook and started to work on her drawing of the baker's young daughter, which she had started the other day. She stopped when she heard someone enter Morgan's rooms.

"Morgan, are you here?" Caitlyn recognized the voice. Spenser. She rolled her eyes thinking she did not really want to talk to him right now. She sat, pencil hovering over the paper, hoping he would just leave when Morgan didn't answer, but of course he did not. Spenser popped his head into the room and immediately saw her at the desk.

"Ah, Lady Caitlyn, I was hoping to see you as well as Morgan," he said as he entered the room. "I wanted to apologize for not being properly introduced. I also wanted to apologize for what happened when I arrived. Although Morgan and I are best friends, you must know I had no idea about the two of you. I am so sorry you had to find out about the wedding with my crude remarks."

Caitlyn could see that he was uncomfortable talking to her. He kept looking down at the floor and could barely look her in the eye.

"You must hate me, and I do not blame you if you do, but honestly ... I am ashamed of myself," he said as he walked

from the doorway across the room toward her, looking nervous.

Up close she noticed his eyes were the most incredible ice blue color she had ever seen. They were a fantastic contrast to his jet-black hair.

"He told me everything last night by the way. I mean, how you came to be here," he stressed his last sentence, so when he said everything, she would know he meant everything.

"He told you everything, and you believed him?" It was difficult for her to believe, and it had actually happened to her.

"Aye, it was an amazing story to be sure. I will admit I was skeptical, but I know Morgan is no liar. If he said you traveled here from some other time I believe him." Spenser's dark hair fell forward as he looked down at her drawing, then back up to her again.

"I am so sorry that I hurt your feelings. You should know when Morgan talked about you; he told me he loved you. I've never heard him even say those words before. You know, he told me the day after you arrived he sent Kip, his squire, to the King with a letter begging him to be free from the upcoming marriage? Morgan has never begged for anything in his entire life, but he's willing to beg for his freedom to be with you."

She remembered when Morgan told her he had sent Kip with an urgent letter to the King. She had no idea he'd written trying to get out of his wedding. Knowing he did that made her heart ache even more.

She felt sorry for Morgan that his life and love life were in the hands of someone else. Spenser stood staring at her and she was uneasy with his bright blue eyes so intent on her. "I knew he sent Kip with a letter, but I didn't know what it was about. He obviously never told me it was to try to cancel his wedding. If the King allows him to be free, then that will solve everything, but what if he doesn't? Just because he asks for the engagement to be broken, doesn't mean he'll get what he wants."

"You are right, of course. That is why I wanted to talk to you. If the King says no to him, I would imagine that when Rose arrives that you will not want to stay here any longer. Now I know you do not know me, but I am Morgan's best friend. I would like to offer you the hospitality of my home, if you wish. It is the least I could do for all the pain I have caused you."

Caitlyn looked at him with amazement. She had just been thinking about where she would go and Spenser comes in with the answer to her problem.

"I promise you, if you want to go back with me I would expect nothing from you in return. It is a bad situation you find yourself in, through no fault of your own. I would like to help if I may, especially after being a horse's ass earlier," he finished with a smile. "Am I correct in guessing that you will want to leave here?"

"You are absolutely correct," Caitlyn agreed. "I hate the idea of leaving, but there is no way I can stay here if he is married to someone else. As a matter of fact, I have been

sitting here trying to figure out what I could do. I don't have many options."

As she looked at Spenser, she realized he wasn't a bad guy at all. He was really trying to compensate for being such a jerk before joking about the wedding. Spenser was still looking at her humbly, as if still looking for forgiveness. He had the best puppy-dog sad eyes she had ever seen on a man.

"Spenser, look, don't worry about what was said outside. I'm not mad at you, okay? And thank you so much for your offer. I think accompanying you is a great idea," she said as she put down her pencil.

"Good, it's settled then," he responded with relief in his eyes. "We will work out the details later." He looked down at the drawing again on the desk, noticing her drawings.

"Go ahead," Caitlyn said as she pushed her sketchpad toward him. "You can look." She had seen him eyeing her sketchpad and he seemed interested in looking at it.

Spenser smiled at her and she noticed he had a dimple that she hadn't seen before. He took her book and opened it to the beginning then started to turn the pages. There were drawings of the flowers she had done at the Botanic Gardens and at Marquette Park. There was a drawing of Morgan standing next to his horse. Spenser paused to look at it.

"That's a great likeness of him," he said to her.

"I like that one too," she said, turning melancholy. "I thought he was my knight in shining armor," she mumbled. Spenser gave her a questioning look to what she said but didn't respond.

He turned the page to a drawing of her best friend Courtney. Spenser froze. Caitlyn heard him suck in his breath as he stared at the drawing.

"Who is she?" he asked her as he stared down at the page, never taking his eyes away.

"That would be my best friend Courtney." She realized Spenser liked what he saw on the page before him.

"She is beautiful," he said as his fingers skimmed the page, careful not to smudge the drawing. The woman he saw had short hair and an enticing smile.

"Yeah, she is. I miss her tons. You know, I bet the two of you would get along."

"Do you think so?" he asked as he looked from the drawing of Courtney to Caitlyn. His eyes twinkled, seeming to enjoy the idea of doing anything with Courtney.

"You know how you're such a good friend to Morgan? That's how she is with me. I know she would do anything for me, no questions asked." She looked at Spenser knowing that Courtney would think he was a hottie with his long, dark hair and ice blue eyes. They would most definitely get along, she thought, if only there weren't over six hundred years separating them.

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Chapter Fifteen

Spenser found Morgan sitting in the darkened chapel alone, the stained glass windows giving the entire chapel an eerie blue cast. After talking to Caitlyn, he had gone around looking for Morgan but he could not find him anywhere. Then he heard that Kip had just arrived back from the King with a letter for Morgan. Finding Morgan sitting there in the chapel alone was not a good sign. If the news were good, he would be trying to talk to Caitlyn; he would not be sitting here in the chapel in the dark.

As Spenser moved closer to his friend, he saw Morgan had the opened letter clutched in his hand. The seal was broken, and the paper crumpled.

"So what did the King say? Will he allow you to forgo the marriage?" He hoped for some good news, but could see the despair on Morgan's face as he moved closer to sit down.

Morgan clenched his jaw before he answered his best friend. He did not want to acknowledge what the letter said because if he repeated what he read in the letter, it would somehow make it real. He had never felt so disappointed in his King before. He had been let down by him in the worst way.

"The wedding will continue as planned, and will happen sooner than I expected," Morgan told him, facing forward, never turning to look at his friend. "Our good King has decided to have the ceremony next month. The King himself is even going to bless us with his attendance," Morgan

finished crumpling the letter into a ball. He threw it across the chapel where it bounced off a stained glass window and fell to the floor. "Rose and her father have already been told that the marriage will be sooner than originally planned."

Spenser looked down at his lap, sorry to hear his friend's news. He had hoped the King would have a heart, especially after all Morgan had done for him in the past. He thought the King should have allowed the marriage to be put aside. He would have volunteered to take Morgan's place himself, but Spenser had sworn to himself years ago that he would never get married.

"I am sorry to hear your news, Morgan. I hoped the King would decide in your favor. It troubles me that he has decided to continue with the marriage, even when he knows how you feel. You have never asked for any sort of favor, ever. All you have been is loyal."

Morgan nodded at Spenser's words, not saying anything. While everything Spenser said was true, none of it helped the situation at hand. All Morgan could do was think about Caitlyn sitting up in his rooms. He was trying to figure out just how he would tell her the wedding would be sooner than expected. He had hoped that the King would call off the nuptials, and he could tell her they would be able to be together. It sickened him to know he had finally found true happiness, true love, and now it would be lost. Also, it worried him that she would insist on leaving.

Of course, he knew there was no way she would stay there. The first night she had arrived there, he had sworn to ensure her safety. That had not changed, just like his love for

her would never change. He had to think of where she could go and still be safe.

"Morgan, I spoke with Caitlyn earlier to apologize," Spenser started, "She and I have come to an agreement. We agreed that if the King made you marry Rose, she would come home with me."

Morgan looked at Spenser, thoroughly surprised at his announcement. He thought that Caitlyn would hate him after he blurted out Morgan was getting married. He knew he was giving Spenser a look of utter surprise, but he couldn't help it.

"I felt so bad how I blurted everything out like a fool," Spenser started to explain, "So I went to apologize and found her quite troubled about what she should do. I thought taking her with me would be acceptable with you. You know that I will always protect her for you. You must realize that she will not stay while you are married to Rose. And Caitlyn does not seem the type to be a mistress."

"No, Caitlyn is the wife type, Spenser. I was going to discuss her with you later. I am quite surprised the two of you settled everything on your own," Morgan admitted. "It means a lot to me that the love of my life and my best friend get along with each other. I know you will take the best care of her for me. I do not know what I will do when she is gone. She is my other half, she makes me whole," Morgan confessed, running his hands through his hair.

Spenser reached out to place his hand on Morgan's shoulder. "I am leaving today for home. I will come back before the wedding to get Caitlyn and take her back with me. I would imagine you would want to spend every minute that

you can with her. I am truly sorry, my friend, that these events are transpiring against you."

Morgan nodded his head in understanding, but didn't speak a word. Spenser turned, walking out of the chapel to head toward the stables. His men were already there with his horse saddled, ready to leave.

Morgan gave a huge sigh then got up from the bench to leave the chapel to go to his chambers Caitlyn and give her his news.

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Chapter Sixteen

Caitlyn walked across the bailey to the stables where Kip was helping Morgan put on his armor for battle. She didn't like the idea of him going to fight. She would much rather keep him safe here with her in the castle, but she understood that wasn't an option for him. He lived by duty and honor and had to go when he was called. She compared his being a knight to someone being a firefighter or a police officer, constantly putting their lives on the line; it was part of their job.

Since Spenser was the one requesting help, there was no way he would say no. They received word late the night before that there was fighting on one of his borders. Of course, Morgan would get some men and go help his best friend. He had to make certain that Spenser's land was safe since Caitlyn would be living there soon.

After she found out about the wedding date being moved closer, she and Morgan decided to simply make the most of the time they had left together. She knew he didn't love Rose; he was only following orders from the King.

As she walked toward the stables, she was amazed how at home she felt, as if this was where she belonged. She had fallen into the routine of life here very easily. There were still the occasional moments when she would kill for an iced mocha or some really good hair conditioner, or a toilet that flushed, but generally she enjoyed her life in the past. The more she thought about it the more she realized that it wasn't

really the place—it was because this was Morgan's home. She remembered she would be leaving this place and him before too long, and her heart hurt inside her chest. She tried not to think about leaving, but it was so damned difficult.

Caitlyn reached the stable and entered it just as Kip finished helping Morgan into his armor. He stood with his back to her, but even that was an amazing sight. He was so tall, and his shoulders were so wide in the shining silver metal.

Kip looked at her and smiled. "Lord Morgan, Lady Caitlyn is here."

He turned around to face her. Her heart stopped when he turned to face her in his armor. Dressed in his full suit of armor, he was breathtaking. And though he was getting ready to go fight, he still looked at her with such a fiery passion, as if he would never have enough of her. No matter how much time they spent together, or how often he took her body, she would never grow tired of him.

There is my knight in shining armor, she thought. She felt a fire spread from between her legs, rushing over her whole body. Whenever she was near him, he made her crazy.

"My love," he said to her as he reached out a metal-covered hand to her.

"Morgan, I had to see you before you left. I..." she stopped, looking at the armor he wore up close. Her vision grew spotted with black and the air sucked out of her lungs as if she had stepped into a giant vacuum.

"I know this armor," she said, stepping back and remembering the day Morgan had pulled her through time

from the museum. Her eyes danced over the scrolling designs and curlicues, stopping on the left part of the breastplate with a dragon with a sunburst in the wing. She had seen this armor before.

"You can't go help Spenser," she commanded him point blank, staring at him straight in the eyes. Her mind kept repeating the words she read off the card at the museum that day. Fatal deathblow. She knew he would die if he went to this battle.

"Of course I will go, Spenser awaits my men and me," he told her. He thought she was frightened seeing him ready to fight, not realizing that she knew he would his certain death.

Caitlyn stood there thinking of what she knew would happen to him. She could not let him go and die. She had to tell him what she knew.

"Morgan, the day you brought me here from the museum, I saw this exact same armor with this dragon on it," she said, lightly touching the dragon on his breastplate. "It was ripped apart here," she explained pointing to the shoulder, "and whoever wore it had to have died," she finished with tears forming in her eyes.

"You are sure you saw this same armor? The same crest?" Morgan asked, though he knew she was sure of what she had seen from the look on her face. He placed his hands on her shoulders, wishing he could touch her skin. He felt himself growing erect against the hard metal of his armor just thinking about touching her.

"Caitlyn, it will be all right. I promise I'll be on my guard. Nothing will happen to me," he promised her, looking into her eyes full of fear for him.

"Please be careful, if something happens to you, I don't know what I'll do," she told him.

"On my word, I will be back here to you as soon as I can," he swore leaning down to kiss her. She kissed him back harder, deeper, branding the feel of his lips on hers into her memory. She pulled back from him and looked him in the eyes.

"You better come back to me," she told him. "We still have a little time left before..." she didn't finish; she didn't have to. The wedding hung over their heads every day like a dark cloud that followed them everywhere. They tried to ignore it, but it was always there.

"And when I come back, you had better be ready for me," he told her with that familiar fire in his eyes. His eyes told her he would do everything to come back to her. "Come, Kip, let us go now," he said to his squire and nodded again to her with a wink before he left.

"Lady Caitlyn, I will not let him out of my sight, I swear it to you," Kip swore to her. "I'll not let any harm befall him," Kip said to her over his shoulder as he walked from the tent.

"Thank you Kip. I know you'll look out for him," Caitlyn called to him knowing Kip would lay down his own life for Morgan if it came down to it. She prayed it wouldn't come to that for all their sakes. She turned and walked back to the entrance of the castle alone.

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Chapter Seventeen

Caitlyn lay in Morgan's bed, trying to sleep but unable to do so. She had not stopped worrying about him since he left days ago, though he had told her not to worry. Every waking moment she wished for his return, for him to be back in her arms though she knew it would only be temporary. She hated that this time before his wedding when they should be together was spent separated from her, fighting, putting his life on the line.

His bed seemed so empty and large without him there to share it and keep her warm. She imagined him next to her, his skin touching her, and her nipples hardened at the memory. The now familiar longing she experienced since he left returned between her legs. She couldn't wait for him to return to her so she could make love to him and let him take her every way possible. She felt herself grow wet for him, rubbing her legs together, wishing she had her vibrator with her. She could picture where she had left it in her underwear drawer under some black panties. God, she hoped Courtney was the one to find it and not her mother, she thought.

Caitlyn reached under the covers. She needed to touch herself between her legs to relieve some of the ache that tormented her to the core. Pulling up on her shift she ran her hand across her stomach, over the curly hair that covered her mound. Her hand paused there for a second. All of a sudden, there was a knock on the door.

She sat up shouting out, "Come in," worrying that it must be news of Morgan at this late hour. Alicia walked into the room with a few other servants who were carrying the large wooden tub and steaming buckets of water. One of the men put more wood onto the fire as the others positioned the tub in front of the fireplace. The servants with buckets poured the water into the tub.

Alicia came over to the bed, her eyes twinkling with what she knew that Caitlyn did not. "He's back, Lady Caitlyn. They're removing his armor right now, downstairs. He has just arrived and ordered a bath be made ready for him," she breathlessly explained.

Caitlyn trembled at the news closing her eyes for a moment, thanking God for his safe return. Her hands shook with nervous anticipation of seeing Morgan again. He was back to her, and most importantly, he was alive. "Thank you for telling me Alicia," she told her.

With the tub filled the servants started to leave the room. Alicia was the last to leave, closing the door with a wide smile, knowing how happy Caitlyn was.

Caitlyn sat in the bed anxious for him to be back in her arms. After waiting for what seemed like forever, the door swung open with Morgan standing there, filling the doorway. His hair was dirty and matted, and his clothing was filthy, stained by unnamed things that she didn't want to think about.

As they looked at each other from across the room neither one of them moved. Caitlyn's breathing was jagged, and her eyes swelled with tears of relief and joy. He was home at last.

Suddenly, just as she sprang from the bed to run to him, he strode across the room toward her. They met almost halfway, in front of the fireplace and the tub. She jumped up into his open arms not caring that he was filthy or that he smelled so badly. Her eyes had more tears filling them. Her arms wrapped around his neck as if she would never let go, and her legs wrapped around his waist, her ankles locked behind him.

Morgan wrapped his arms under her buttocks while he buried his face in her hair and side of her neck. He breathed in her smell, the smell he longed for and thought about the days he was gone.

Caitlyn felt him tremble as he held her, moving his face out from her neck and hair to look into her eyes. She thought he had the look of a starving man. She had seen the same look in men's eyes when she volunteered at a soup kitchen on State Street when she lived in Chicago.

"Are you hungry? Do you want me to call for something for you?" she asked him while still in his arms.

"Aye, I'm starving, but not for food," he told her with a growl that made her tremble against him.

"But first," he said as he set her back down onto the floor, "I need to take a bath," he told her.

Caitlyn agreed, standing to watch him as he undressed and eased himself into the steaming tub. A sigh of relief escaped him as he sat back into the water. She handed him the chunk of soap and sat next to the tub.

"I am so glad to see you're okay. I've been worried about you always. After you left I kept thinking about that armor I

saw in the museum I told you about. I was terrified that you were going to be injured or killed."

"No need to worry as you can see. I made it back in one piece just as I promised you. I will confess that you telling me about that armor made me more cautious during the fighting. Perhaps something bad would have happened to me if you were not here to warn me," Morgan stated.

"Maybe so," Caitlyn answered back, not wanting to think about what could have happened to Morgan if she hadn't warned him. "How is everything now at Spenser's? Is it all okay now?"

"Aye, everything was taken care of and his land is quiet again."

Caitlyn watched Morgan scrub himself with the bar of soap until his skin was pink. He rubbed soap into his hair and sank down to submerge himself in the water to rinse away the last of the soap. She had a clean nightshirt ready for him when he got out of the tub. He slid it on over his head.

Once he was dressed, he folded Caitlyn in his arms kissing her with fierceness he never had before. As his tongue probed her mouth, he lifted her up, carrying her over to the bed, and set her down on it. He got down on his knees in front of her to part her legs with his hands. He kissed the insides of her thighs, trailing his tongue up to between her legs. His hair was wet and cold between her legs. She breathed deeply, her thighs quivering out of control. He nudged his head further between her legs, licking the length of her hot, wet opening with his tongue.

Caitlyn exhaled, running her fingers through Morgan's still-wet hair, pressing him closer to her sex. She tilted her head back, gasping as his tongue slid inside her, separating her folds, finding her already swollen clit. His tongue flicked across it back and forth. She groaned a throaty groan digging her hands and nails into Morgan's muscular shoulders. He knew exactly what to do to make her weak.

Morgan stopped to stand up, offering a hand to Caitlyn, who was disappointed he had stopped. Her eyebrows furrowed together questioningly. She wondered just what he had in mind for them to do, but she knew whatever it was she was sure she would enjoy it. She placed her hand in his and he helped her stand up from the bed. He turned her around to face the bed as he leaned forward, pressing against her back, and whispering in her ear.

"Bend over and put your head down on the bed," he instructed her, unable to hide the passion in his voice.

She slowly leaned forward putting her head down on the bed, giving him total access to her from behind. Her core pulsed in anticipation of making love this way, her breathing turning shallow before he even began.

Morgan stepped up behind her raising the shift she wore, uncovering her backside. He pulled the shift up to her waist, drawing in a breath at her body so exposed to him. He raised his own nightshirt to grab his rock-hard cock in his hand, stepping closer to Caitlyn and guiding his erection into her.

Caitlyn gasped as he slid into her, deep, deeper until she could feel his balls pressing against her. He held onto her

waist as he started pounding in and out of her, slowly at first, relishing every stroke into her tightness.

Morgan reached around with one hand to rub a finger against her clit causing her to gasp aloud. As he drilled himself into her faster and faster, he continually stroked her sex. She started pushing herself back into his thrusts.

Both of them moaned aloud, reaching their orgasms simultaneously.

Caitlyn slid further down on the bed with all Morgan's thrusts pushing into her. Her knees got wobbly as her orgasm overtook her, and her legs shook uncontrollably.

From behind, he released the growl of a man at the peak of his pleasure. He removed his hand from her clit to use both hands to pull her back to his body as tightly as he could. When he released inside of her, he let out a curse for he had never made love with her so intensely before. He swore to God that she had made his very toes curl.

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Chapter Eighteen

Caitlyn stood looking out the window, the sunshine bright, the weather perfect, and her mood miserable. Tomorrow was the day she would leave Morgan's castle to go live with Spenser. She stayed as long as she could. Rose would be arriving soon for the wedding scheduled to take place a few days later. Even though she was heartbroken at the thought of leaving Morgan, she didn't want to be in the same castle as Rose.

Taking one last look out the window she turned back to finish packing the dresses she planned to take with her. All of a sudden she heard a great commotion outside in the bailey. There were people yelling, the sound of footsteps running and horses neighing, excited. Caitlyn paused, listening for a moment and hoped people were yelling at Spenser's arrival. She put the dress she was holding on the bed and went to the window facing the front of the castle. She immediately felt sick. Spenser was nowhere to be seen.

Caitlyn heard a squire greet an old man on a horse as "Lord Atler" and her stomach dropped. Rose had arrived early. Caitlyn's stomach turned into a knot. They were early. Caitlyn silently told herself that everything would be all right. She would avoid Rose for the rest of the day. It shouldn't be that difficult, the castle was huge. She had no desire to meet the girl face to face.

After a few moments Alicia came running through the door, out of breath. "Lady Caitlyn," she started.

"Yes, I see, Rose has arrived," she mumbled, barely audible and turned to Alicia. "Thanks Alicia," she said to her with a sad smile and turned back to look at the spectacle outside the window. Rose and her father did not travel light. Aside from the many trunks they brought, there were several riders with them as well.

Caitlyn scanned the group of riders then finally saw Rose. Of course, she saw her; she was a woman who couldn't be missed. She wore a blood red gown that was a perfect contrast to the golden blonde hair that hung down her back to her waist in exquisite, loose curls. Even from high above, Caitlyn could see she was drop-dead gorgeous.

Caitlyn felt a vice tighten around her chest so she could not get a full breath of air. Just then, Rose looked up to Morgan's window, staring directly at her. Caitlyn stopped breathing altogether, taking a quick step back out of her view away from the window. Tears swelled in her eyes. All she wanted was Spenser to come to take her away.

With tears rolling down her cheeks, she went back to the dress on the bed. She held it up, but her hands were shaking so much that she put it back down. She went to sit on a chair by the fireplace and tried to calm herself.

Morgan appeared in the chamber doorway, concern on his face. "Caitlyn," he called out before he saw her sitting on the chair. She looked up at him, while she continued to cry. He walked across the room to lift her from the chair, gathering her in his arms and holding her tight.

"You saw; she's here," he said to her, his voice full of concern for her as he pulled back to study her eyes.

"Yeah, I saw her. She is a beautiful woman. I knew I was leaving tomorrow, but actually seeing her makes you marrying someone else more real now. I'm so jealous she gets you and I don't." She started to cry uncontrollably. There was no way for her to keep her emotions in check any longer. They overwhelmed her.

He grabbed her in a fierce hug, as though he would not let her go, though they both knew she would be gone the next day.

She felt that her heart would burst into a million pieces.

"I'm sorry. I'm sorry," he murmured into her hair holding her tight.

"Not as much as me," she whispered so softly he never even heard her.

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Chapter Nineteen

Caitlyn spent the rest of the day avoiding Rose without too much effort while she waited for Spenser to arrive. The entire castle was bustling all day preparing for the upcoming ceremony, which would be held in the great hall. Caitlyn wanted some peace and quiet from the chaos of the preparations. She walked into the chapel finding the whole place bathed in a blue tint from the stained glass windows. Caitlyn walked halfway up the aisle when she noticed someone in the front row, sitting all the way to the side, almost out of view. Her hair looked a shade of blue, her dress almost purple. It was Rose. She stopped and turned to leave the chapel, hoping she wouldn't be noticed.

"Caitlyn, wait," Rose said as she turned to look at Caitlyn.

Caitlyn slowly turned around to look at Rose unsure of what she should do. Part of her wanted to bolt out of the chapel and keep on going, while another part of her was curious about this girl who would marry Morgan.

Rose stood up and walked over to her. Up close Caitlyn thought she was looking at a living, breathing Barbie doll. Rose had the perfect figure, beautiful eyes and the most flawless skin she'd ever seen. Rose smiled at her and Caitlyn saw that for living in medieval times, Rose even had the most perfect, even teeth. She felt ill looking at her, this girl who would be Morgan's wife.

"I have wanted to talk to you since I saw you up in the window earlier today," Rose started, "Would you sit with me for a few moments, please?"

Caitlyn was stunned and could only nod yes in agreement. Rose sat in a pew and motioned for Caitlyn to sit next to her.

Her mind raced, wondering why Rose wanted to talk to her or how she even knew she existed. She sat next to Rose clearing her throat into her hand, not knowing what to do or how to act. She was in the exact position she had been trying to avoid all day.

Rose looked over at Caitlyn and looked down at her hands, which rested on her lap. Finally, after the most excruciating silence either had ever endured, Rose began to speak.

"I wanted to tell you how sorry I am about all this. I heard how in love you and Morgan are," she said, her voice cracking as she spoke. She paused to look at her hands that were now clutching each other.

"Believe me please, I do not want this anymore than he does, really. I know that Morgan is a wonderful man. I have known him my entire life although we hardly ever spoke with each other. But, I do not love Morgan. And I despise the idea of being wed to a man whose heart belongs to another."

As she watched Rose speak, she noticed that Rose's eyes were full of tears, ready to spill out at any time. Her perfect skin became splotched and red.

"Then why do it?" Caitlyn asked her, watching this young girl fall to pieces in front of her.

"Why? I do not have a choice. My father is so ill, if I am not wed before he is gone; all our land will be lost. I simply

do not have a choice," she explained to Caitlyn. "The King said it must happen."

Caitlyn turned her body to look Rose eye to eye before she spoke and chose her words carefully. "Listen Rose, no matter how bad a situation may look, you always have a choice. No one can ever make you do something you really don't want to do, not even a King. It's just sometimes it's hard to be brave and defend what you believe, no matter what other people tell you."

"But I've always done what I have been told," Rose told her, the tears now spilling over streaming down her cheeks.

"Well, if it's something you really believe in, you take a chance and do what your heart tells you to do. You can make your own decisions. You don't need to have someone else make them for you always. Maybe if you thought about it, you could come up with another way to help your family's land stay safe besides marrying Morgan," Caitlyn offered to Rose.

Rose nodded her head. Caitlyn stood up to leave looking down at Rose, who, with her tear streaked face and splotchy skin looked like a child. She actually felt sorry for her at that moment, realizing that Rose was just as miserable as she was.

"Thank you for talking to me Caitlyn. I know this is not easy..." she said trailing off and staring at her hands again.

"You're right, it's not easy. Leaving here and leaving Morgan is the hardest thing that I have ever had to do. I would do anything to be able to be with him; to marry him. And you get him and you don't even want him. This is all

killing me inside." she said as she started to leave the chapel, then turned and walked back to say one last thing to Rose before she left. "Rose," Caitlyn said, "When you end up marrying Morgan, please promise me that you will try to love him. I know you don't now, and it might seem to you as though you never will, but please try. He is the kindest, gentlest, loving man. He deserves so much to be loved. Promise me you will try to love him." Caitlyn felt a huge lump forming in her throat. If she could not have Morgan and make him happy, she wanted to know that Rose would at least try.

"Aye, Caitlyn, I promise you I will do my best by Morgan," she swore to her.

Caitlyn nodded to Rose, then walked out of the chapel. There was nothing else for her to say. What she and Morgan had was over.

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Chapter Twenty

"Caitlyn, Caitlyn," Morgan whispered to her, nudging her trying to wake her up.

Caitlyn was dreaming she was kissing Morgan. His lips were against hers, his tongue sweeping up against her lips. As she opened her mouth to his tongue, she realized she wasn't dreaming. She was really kissing him. She must have fallen asleep while she waited for him to come upstairs.

She groaned as he slipped his tongue into her mouth. She wrapped her arms around his neck, and then ran her hands down his naked back. Her hands lingered on his back before running down to his bare buttocks where she squeezed his flesh causing him to groan in return.

"I tried to stay up and wait for you," Caitlyn told him after she pulled away from him, running her fingers through his hair. How she loved the silky feel of his hair between her fingers ... Something else she would miss about him.

"I could not leave any sooner," he apologized. "I tried, knowing you were up here waiting for me and that this was our last night together," Morgan told her. "All I could think about was coming to you and making love to you until the morning."

Caitlyn sat up pulling off the blankets covering her, revealing her naked body underneath. This was their last night together; she would not waste a second getting undressed.

He helped pull back the blankets so Caitlyn was uncovered from head to toe. She watched him as he looked up and down her body, memorizing every inch of her. It was so bittersweet, wanting him so incredibly and knowing that this was it—after tonight there would be no more of him for her. It was so important to make every second count, which was what she fully intended to do, starting with this very minute.

"Make love to me, Morgan. I don't ever want to forget what it was like to be with you. I'll never love anyone else the way I love you. I know this is a hell of a time to tell you, but I think you were right about what you said, the night I came here," she stopped pausing for a second before continuing. "You are my true love." She debated all day whether she should tell him how she felt, deciding it had to be now, or it would be never. After this night, she would never see him again.

"Caitlyn," Morgan growled at her as he grabbed a fistful of her hair and pulled her head to his for the most intense, passion-filled kiss he had ever given her. He pushed her down onto the bed, on her back climbing over her and parting her knees with his own. She knew what he was experiencing, because she felt the same way. At that moment, there was no need for sweet caresses or the foreplay they usually enjoyed. At that moment, there was only the intense need for them to be joined—him into her, as deep as he could go, buried in her warmth, claiming her as his own if for only one night more.

Caitlyn held his erection and guided it him into her. He slid in deep, grinding his hips against hers. She put her hands over her head as he slid down on his forearms over her,

lacing his fingers through hers, their chests touching. Caitlyn turned her head to the side and Morgan buried his face into her neck and hair. She felt him sucking and nibbling the skin there as a low growl came from deep within his throat. He was leaving love marks on her skin, knowing his claim on her would be seen by others, if only for a few days.

Caitlyn closed her eyes thinking of how this moment was pure heaven—the man she loved on top of her, in her, filling her completely. The moment was seared in her mind, never to be forgotten.

Morgan started with small thrusts in and out of her, then unlaced his fingers from hers to raise his upper body over hers, looking down at her. She found the look of excruciating pain in his eyes and understanding it, whispered, "It's okay," quietly to him as he bent down to kiss her again.

Caitlyn started moving her hips to match his thrusts as the small flame of her orgasm ignited, growing with each stroke of his hardened cock against her swollen clit. She raked his back with her nails, not caring that Rose would see the evidence of their lovemaking. As she peaked she cried his name, the last time he would hear his name said by her with such unbridled passion. Her muscles contracted around his cock as he shot his seed deep into her.

Morgan pulled himself out of her and lay down next to her. She curled into his side as she always did. "I love you Caitlyn. I will love you forever, for the rest of my life," he told her as he held her hand lacing his fingers with hers again. "Saying goodbye to you will be the hardest thing I have ever had to

do in my life. The hardest thing I will ever have to do," he told her.

"Then let's promise each other we won't say the words. We both know I'm leaving so there's really no reason to say them out loud, right?" If she had to actually say the words to him, she knew she would lose it. She didn't want to do that to him or herself.

"Aye then, we will not say the words," he agreed as his hand unlaced from hers to trail down to her stomach, to her belly button, to the mound of curly hair between her legs before sliding into her wetness. They still had a few hours until sunrise came. He intended to use every minute they had until they were fully sated and physically exhausted.

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Chapter Twenty-One

Caitlyn woke up the next morning alone in Morgan's bed the way they planned. She sat up in bed thinking about how drastically her life would be changing again that very day. There was a commotion outside breaking the morning quiet. She got up out of bed, pulling on the shift she had thrown on the floor last night when she went to bed. She went to the window, hoping it was finally Spenser arriving to take her to his castle.

When she got to the window and looked down she saw Spenser still on his horse, looking up to her smiling and waving. Caitlyn smiled at him waving back, and then stepped away from the window. She got dressed and was finishing the last bit of packing she had to do when Alicia knocked and entered, carrying a tray.

"Morning Alicia," she said to her, thankful she brought the tray so she wouldn't have to go to the hall, which she knew was already decorated for the wedding party.

Alicia placed the tray on the bed then turned to Caitlyn looking as if her best friend had died.

"What is it, Alicia?" she asked, wondering why she looked like she would burst into tears at any moment.

"I wish you were not leaving," Alicia blurted out, surprising her with her sudden onslaught of emotions.

"Oh, Alicia, I wish I weren't leaving either, but I have to you know."

"I know. I just wish things had happened differently."

"You and I both, believe me. Today will be one of the hardest days of my life. I hate leaving here."

Caitlyn walked over to the young girl giving her a hug. Alicia surprised her again when she hugged Caitlyn back twice as hard.

"It'll be okay, really," Caitlyn told her as they stepped back from each other. Alicia nodded wiping a few stray tears from her eyes, trying to give her a smile.

"Can you tell Kip all my things are ready to go?" she asked Alicia before the girl left.

Alicia nodded to her and left the room. Caitlyn went to the tray ripping off a hunk of the bread, taking a bite slowly as she took a last look around Morgan's room. She walked to where she first appeared, remembering that night and the attraction she and Morgan shared. Caitlyn smiled to herself thinking of how she would never forget a moment with him, no matter how long she lived. Everywhere she looked, she had memories of them making love, of him taking her and claiming her as his forever. She sighed as she turned around to put the piece of bread back on the tray, realizing she was not that hungry after all.

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Chapter Twenty-Two

A few hours later, Caitlyn stood in the bailey with Spenser, getting ready to leave. She was dressed for the long ride in her own clothes, her khakis, black tee shirt and denim jacket. She thought the ride would be grueling on her, so why not at least be comfortable.

She was able to get through the morning without seeing Morgan or Rose, which was a huge relief. The men were just finishing the securing of her trunks to the horses, and then they would be ready to ride. Caitlyn looked around the outside of the castle, trying to remember everything, as she had no plans to come back.

"We are ready now," Spenser said to her as he walked up to stand beside her. He turned to look down at her. "Are you ready Caitlyn?" he asked her with genuine concern showing in his eyes.

"Yeah, I'm as ready as I will ever be," she told him as she nodded.

Spenser mounted his horse then offered Caitlyn his arm so she could get up onto his horse behind him. Once on the horse, she held onto his shirt at his waist and tried to steady herself. All the time she'd been there and she still couldn't ride a horse by herself.

"Are you sure you are all right?" he asked her as he turned his head so she could see his profile.

"I'll live, thanks," she told him as she turned her head with a heavy sigh pressing the side of her face against his back as they all started to ride away.

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Chapter Twenty-Three

They had been riding for hours now and Caitlyn didn't know how much longer her butt would be able to sit on a horse. She didn't want to complain to Spenser, though, since he was being nice enough to take her with him and agreeing to help her. The last thing she wanted to do was start whining about her aching butt.

Caitlyn tried to focus on Spenser talking to her. She knew he was telling her about his home. Although she tried, she couldn't focus on what he was saying. Occasionally she would answer him with a "yes," or an "Uh huh," so he would think she was really paying attention.

In her mind, she kept going over everything that happened to her, from traveling through time to meeting Morgan, to all the time they spent together and how much she loved him. Of course, there was also the amazing sex they had. She knew she would miss Morgan with all her heart and knew she would never meet another man who would set her on fire the way he did.

Caitlyn was so wrapped up in her own thoughts that she did not even notice when Spenser and the other riders stopped their horses. There was shouting from behind them and the pounding of a single horse's approaching gallop.

Around the bend from where they had just come Morgan appeared on his horse, dressed in his armor minus his headgear.

"Caitlyn, wait! Wait!" he yelled as his horse charged at them. The men around her were all murmuring to each other, speculating as to why Morgan was chasing them and not back at his castle preparing for his upcoming nuptials.

"Caitlyn," Spenser said with a turned head to her as she sat behind him.

"Let me down Spenser," she said to him with a shaky voice, not yet believing what she was seeing.

"But why would Morgan..." Spenser started to say, but she didn't give him a chance to finish.

"Let me down, Spenser!" she said again, this time much more demanding, as her voice rose.

Spenser extended an arm for her to hold on to and she swung herself down off his horse turning toward Morgan.

Caitlyn stood there, her mind racing, almost going insane right there. They agreed they would not see each other again. Yet there he was, racing toward her.

Morgan didn't even let his horse stop before he dismounted. He took a few steps to Caitlyn so he was standing right before her.

She stood there looking into Morgan's eyes questioning why he followed her there. This was not part of the plan.

"Morgan, what are you doing?"

"Rose announced today she refused to marry me," he told her, out of breath, his eyes unable to hide the excitement of his news.

"She what?" She couldn't believe her ears.

"She what?" Spenser echoed from his mount next to them. Caitlyn snapped her head around to Spenser. "Spenser!"

"Sorry, sorry." He turned his horse and walked away from them to give them some privacy.

Morgan and Caitlyn stood looking at each other. She thought her heart would burst out of her chest it was beating so fast.

"Rose refused to marry you?" she asked him quietly, as if speaking more loudly might make what he said not true.

"Aye. Right in the great hall in front of everyone. Even the King arrived in time to hear her," he explained, as he finally started to get his breath back.

"I don't understand." She thought back to her conversation with Rose in the chapel, considering that maybe something she had said to her got through to her.

"Rose told me you talked to her yesterday. Something you said made her decide to consider her options, and marrying me was not one of them. She even had her own plans as an alternative to our marriage. The girl is actually quite smart."

"That's right, we spoke, but I didn't think anything I said would matter to her. She seemed pretty set on doing what she was told to do." She was amazed Rose had actually taken her advice and refused to get married. "What was her plan? What did she say?"

"Instead of our marrying, I agreed to oversee her family's land if anything happens to her father before she marries. And when she does marry, it will be a man of her own choosing. Sound familiar, Caitlyn?" he asked her with a grin.

"No way," she said as she smiled at Rose's decision to defend herself after all. She did not think the girl had it in her. For once, she was grateful she was wrong.

"What about the King? What did he say?" She could imagine the King was none too happy with the recent events.

"He agreed. He said if we were so adamantly against the union, he would not force it."

"Wow, I am shocked. So now what happens?" she asked her mind racing at the implications of everything he was telling her.

"So now, Caitlyn," Morgan said to her as he kneeled down on one knee in front of her, holding her hands in his, "Now I kneel here before you, asking you to agree to marry me." He held her hands over his heart and told her "I'll be your knight in shining armor forever."

Caitlyn looked over at Spenser to see him just shrug his shoulders and look away. She would deal with him later, she thought.

She looked back down at Morgan through her tears. Her heart was aching with all the love she felt for this man. She stood there and knew she was about to live her very own happily ever after with her very own knight in shining armor.

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Epilogue

Spenser absently handed the brush he was using on his horse to the waiting stable boy standing next to him. He walked out of the stable thinking of the past few days' events. As he walked across the bailey to the keep, he thought of Morgan and Caitlyn. After everything had seemed so hopeless for them, in the end they would be together after all. He was shocked when Morgan caught up with them to tell them the wedding would not be taking place. Spenser was surprised that Rose had actually refused to marry Morgan. He had never thought that would happen.

Spenser thought of the way Morgan and Caitlyn looked at each other, touched each other with a love that was obvious to anyone watching them. He ran his hands through his hair thinking that he would never get to experience anything even close to what they had. He adored women, loved sex, but he would never be in a serious relationship, and he would never, ever get married. It was a decision he made long ago.

He nodded, greeting people he passed as he entered the keep. He made his way inside and to his chambers. All he wanted was a hot bath. It should be waiting for him by now as he sent his squire ahead to see to it when they had first entered the castle walls. He entered his bedchamber finding the servants leaving and the tub sitting in front of the fireplace. After the last servant left, he pulled off his tunic. It felt as if his tunic had grown to his skin since he had worn it for the past few days. He threw it on the floor, and then

started to untie his chausses. He heard a noise behind him, coming from the fireplace. It alarmed him because he knew he was the only person in the room.

Spenser turned around, and there before him was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen; only she was transparent. His eyes widened when he realized he recognized the ghostly woman before him from Caitlyn's sketchbook. Courtney. He saw her look him up and down, lingering on his naked chest, then back to his face, which must have shown surprise.

Spenser looked at her, seeing her whole body for the first time, since Caitlyn had only drawn a portrait of her face. Spenser thought everything about her was perfect. He could not help but notice the filmy little thing she wore that was so sheer it was almost as if she wore nothing at all. His eyes lingered on her breasts and the darkened areolas and nipples that showed through the material. There was a small triangle of material between her legs, but he could still see the dark curls at the juncture between her legs. Spenser felt his erection push against the material that constrained him, wondering if she could tell how hard he was just from looking at her. He said her name, but he did not know if she could hear him. Suddenly, she reached forward to grab his wrist, solid, and pulled him to her...

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About the Author

Annmarie Ortega is a lifelong resident of Chicago. She is a member of the Romance Writers of America and the RWA Chicago North Chapter. Annmarie is known to have a weakness for sizzling hot romance and heroes with great abs. Her work is available in both e book and print. You can visit her MySpace page at www.myspace.com/annmarieortega. Her blog can be viewed at www.annmarieauthor.blogspot.com
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A Knight in Shining Amour by Demi Alex

An uncharacteristic storm catapults Effie Genes to the night medieval Rhodes fell into the Ottoman hands. Pulled onto Lord Kavin's stallion, the modern day Effie experiences the war and degrading occupation of her birthplace, as passion and danger dictate the fate of lovers born five hundred years apart.

Lord Kavin risks his life to keep Effie out of a Sultanzada's bed and claim her as his own. But once he has her in his arms, will he need to release her in order to save her?

Wishes Through Time by Annmarie Ortega

When Caitlyn wishes to meet the man of her dreams, she has no idea her wish will take her to medieval England.

Caitlyn is in the armor hall at the Art Institute of Chicago when Morgan, a real live knight, appears and pulls her through time to medieval England. He believes she is his one true love, and Caitlyn quickly starts to believe he may be right. Caitlyn discovers finding true love and adjusting to life in 1400 much more difficult than she could have ever imagined. Will true love prevail or will they just be two people passing each other in time?

My Lord Raven by Jan Scarbrough

Bran ap Madog, bastard son of a Welsh prince, has devoted his life to serving the English king. At Edward's behest, he nourishes his reputation for savagery, taking as his badge the raven, a scavenger bird that feeds off rotting

spoils. He wants, as his reward for service, the hand of a wealthy wife, as well as the land and power she will bring to his bed.

When her father and twin brother are murdered, Lady Catrin Fitzalen sets out to learn the truth about the awful rumors. Were they killed by the king's own champion, the vicious King's Raven? She will do anything to protect her remaining family, including switching places with her cousin when the king forces the pious girl into marriage with his wicked champion.

A Liar's Truth by Kimberly Garland

Ellsworth Castle is the only home Christina Edmund has ever known, and it has just been conquered by the evil Lord Renault Brandon. Now she is at the mercy of a man whose legendary cruelty has earned him such names as the *Blood of Berlin*, the *Sorrow of Sicily*, and the *Agony of Athens*.

When Christina finds herself face to face with the notorious Lord Brandon, she is stunned. Such a man should be no better than a slathering, red-eyed dog, but instead she finds him intelligent, loyal, and irresistibly handsome. He even has a sense of humor. How can this be the same unrepentant fiend who tortured, raped, and murdered his way across the known world?

Love Not a Thief by Cara Hart

Robert DeLyon has had enough of war after returning from Crusade. His new task seems simple enough: travel north and collect the bride his father has chosen for him. Yet, beneath the façade of suitor, he is charged with learning the identity of the mastermind of a coup to displace the absent King

Richard. And despite his abhorrence of thieves, the group who attacked him in the woods outside his betrothed's home has given him the perfect reason to wander the manor in search of information.

Marianne DuBois has watched her guardian strip her people of their health and livelihoods all in the name of greed. Tired of his abuse, she gathers the men he banished from the property into a band of rogues. Together, they steal back the money their families have surrendered to her guardian. None have found them, none can stop them. Marianne is determined to save her people from starvation, outwitting every man in Nottingham. Every man, that is, save the one who has arrived to marry her.

A Dusting of Syn by Melinda Barron

As the seventh son of a duke, Keran of Bristol never thought to have his own lordship. So when King Edward IV offers him a bride and a castle near the Scottish border, he is ecstatic. However, when he arrives at the country keep, he finds that His Majesty's court is not the only place where intrigue resides.

Syndra of Mardoon knew that after her father's death, her stepmother would never allow her to be anything more than a servant in her own home. Threatened with the death of her friend if she doesn't cooperate, she hides in the shadows while her younger half sister is introduced to the new lord as his intended.

With the scheming ploys put forth by her stepmother already in play, Syndra is reluctant to believe that the handsome new lord can set things right at Mardoon. But one

touch of Keran's lips convinces Syndra otherwise, and she finds herself surrendering to him ... mind, body and soul.

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