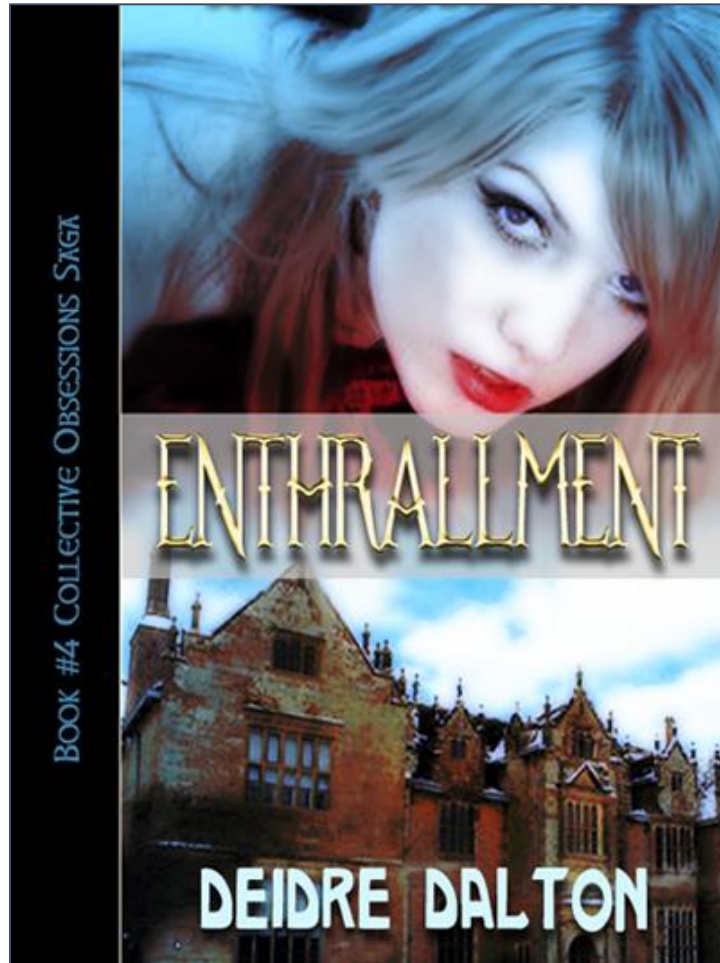


*Excerpts from:*

# **Enthrallment**

*By Deidre Dalton (aka Deborah O'Toole)*



**Book #4 in the Collective Obsessions Saga**

Club Lighthouse Publishing/Historical Romance Edition

ISBN: 978-1-927337-36-3

Copyright ©2012 Deidre Dalton. All rights reserved.

Cover Art: T.L Davison Copyright ©2012.

Book excerpts may not be reproduced in whole or in part without written permission. Book excerpts are from a work of fiction. Any resemblance to actual persons living or dead is purely coincidental.

## **ABOUT "ENTHRALLMENT"**

*Enthrallment* by Deidre Dalton (aka Deborah O'Toole) is the fourth book in the *Collective Obsessions Saga*. The novel was released by Club Lighthouse Publishing in June 2012.

*George Sullivan reunites with long-lost love Susan O'Reilly. Their daughter Carly enters into an unholy alliance to secure her position as Liam Larkin's wife. As secrets unfold and more madness takes root, Carly plots a fatal and twisted scheme to exact revenge on the Larkin family...*

Wary after a miserable marriage to the beautiful but empty Marianne Chamberlain, Sean Larkin finds new love with Shannon's best friend, Dana Maitland. Their union yields another set of twins, Derek and Diana, and provides Sean and Marianne's son Brose with a happy home.

Too late, George Sullivan reunites with his long-lost love Susan O'Reilly. Their daughter Carly, who is also Mike Sullivan's half-sister, works her way into the Larkin family unknowing she is related to them by blood. Her marriage to Liam Larkin is a happy one at first, but she enters into an unholy alliance his father Rory when she discovers Liam cannot father a child.

As secrets unfold and more madness takes root, Carly plots a fatal and twisted scheme to take revenge on the Larkin family with her sister Sara Sullivan.

For more, go to:

<http://deidredalton.com/>

**ENTHRALLMENT:  
Excerpt from Chapter One**

*October 1980  
Larkin City, Maine*

THE COVEN LOUNGE WAS a landmark in Larkin City. It was established by Roderick Larkin in December 1933, a few weeks after the repeal of prohibition. It began as a public house, but was transformed into a private club by his son Patrick ten years later. He renovated the inside, laying down red carpets, dark oaken walls and tables, and plush furniture. He also made additions to the club, building a second level that included an intimate restaurant and a poker room with a half-dozen rounded tables and an individual bar.

Patrick's son Brian abolished the private club policy in mid-1960, opening the Coven Lounge to anyone who had a mind to walk through the front door. The pub and eatery was a popular place in the city, and was typically full to capacity any night of the week. Fridays and Saturdays were particularly festive, most patrons enjoying the end of a work week by having a few drinks and a game of pool in the billiard room.

Kevin Larkin usually tended bar on weekends, taking a break from his position at the family lumber and hardware store. He enjoyed the interaction with locals and meeting new people that walked through the door. Being a bachelor in the environment was also beneficial as Kevin met many women during his sojourn as weekend bartender, loving and leaving several of them along the way.

Liam Larkin often joined the fray on Saturday nights, mingling with his friends and hoping to find a date or two among the throng. October was especially brisk in Larkin City, so Liam arrived at the Coven dressed in tight black jeans, a white polo shirt and his favourite dark green leather jacket. His dark hair was a bit long, but he kept it styled off his face.

Liam went directly to the bar to visit with his brother Kevin. After ordering a beer, Liam asked: "How's business tonight?"

Kevin began to fill another order from the lounge, setting up a tray and glasses. "Two of the waitresses called in sick, so I had to pool my vast resources of local talent to fill in."

Liam laughed. "In other words, you conned a few of your old flames to come in and work. What did you promise them this time? A romantic dinner for two followed by a movie? Or perhaps you lured them with a promise for a rendezvous at the Amber Whale for the night?"

Kevin grinned. "A bit of both, I'm afraid. Jane likes dinner and a movie, and she tends to invite me in when I take her back to her apartment. Beatrice, on the other hand, likes to go straight for the sex. Since her husband is at home, she prefers meeting at the Amber Whale. At my expense, of course."

"Naturally," Liam snorted as he took a sip of beer. "One of these days some jealous husband is going to beat the hell out of you. Try sticking to single women."

"Nah," Kevin replied. "Most single women want a bloody commitment. Married ladies are safe; they want nothing more than a tumble in the hay. Besides, I don't know of

one man in Larkin City who can take me on.”

“True,” Liam admitted. “You’re bigger than an ox.”

Kevin began mixing drinks for the order. “Yes, I took after Daddy while you have Mum’s delicate frame.”

“I’ll thank you to keep your barbs to yourself,” Liam retorted.

Kevin glanced up from his task to reply, but then suddenly stopped short. “Holy Moses,” he whistled. “Look at the piece of work that just walked in the front door.”

Liam swiveled in his barstool to get a better look at the entryway to the pub. There was a small landing by the door, with a half-dozen wide steps that led into the lounge area. Liam spied the woman Kevin was referring to at once. His eyes widened in surprise and then appreciation. The woman was tall and slender, at least five-foot-ten– inches tall with blonde hair that fell just past her shoulders. Her bangs were overlong, obscuring a clear view of her eyes. She was wearing a dark red dress that came up to her thighs, with a wide gold belt fastened around her slim hips. Her legs were bare, but her feet were encased in pair of high-heeled dark red shoes. Liam noted her breasts were high and firm, but not over-large. The clothes might appear cheap or gaudy on anyone else, but somehow the woman managed to carry herself with an air of reserved austerity.

“I have *never* seen anyone that beautiful in all my life,” Kevin declared from behind the bar. “And she’s not alone.”

The woman appeared to be with a group of girlfriends. As they descended the steps into the lounge, all eyes went to them. However, none of the group held a candle to the blonde woman. As she walked through the tables, not one soul had the temerity to approach her. Her height also made her appear intimidating, and there were few men able to muster the courage to address her directly. She carried a small half-purse under her arm, occasionally brushing her hair behind her ears. Leaving her friends at a table in the middle of the lounge, she made her way to the bar and sat next to Liam. She did not glance his way, but he was highly aware of her presence and the smell of her musky perfume.

“What can I get for you?” Kevin asked the woman.

“A margarita, please, with a slice of lemon.”

“Coming right up,” Kevin replied. “By the way, my name is Kevin Larkin, and this is my brother, Liam. We own the Coven. I haven’t seen you in here before. Are you new in town?”

Liam rolled his eyes. Leave it to Kevin to get the conversation going with small talk. Yet his brother had a way of drawing women into inane discourse in which they revealed more about themselves, more so than they normally would in front of a stranger.

And it worked.

The woman glanced at Liam briefly, and then retuned her eyes to Kevin. “My name is Carly O’Reilly. My friends and I started out this morning for a day trip along the coast. We’ve hit every town between here and Bangor, but as soon as we saw Larkin City we decided to spend the night. We have rooms at the Amber Whale.”

“Interesting choice,” Kevin said as he handed Carly her drink. “The Amber Whale was destroyed by fire in 1904 and was later re-built into a dress shop. Last year my family tore down the dress shop and constructed the Amber Whale from the original 1870 specs. With added modern conveniences, of course.”

Carly smiled, and both Kevin and Liam were stunned by the brilliance of her teeth and the full curve of her lips. She had what they called a “barracuda” smile, full of white

teeth and a sensuous mouth. She brushed the bangs away from her eyes, and for the first time Liam noticed their dark blue color and the heavy black eyeliner that framed her under-eyes.

While observing her beauty, Kevin was nagged by a feeling of familiarity. Had he met her before? He didn't think so. He would have remembered someone with *her* face and body. Yet she struck a chord with him, as if he knew her from another place and time.

Kevin's attention was called away by a waitress with an order, so Liam took the opportunity to take over the conversation with Carly. He watched her take a bite of lemon and then a healthy sip of the margarita. She removed a pack of cigarettes from her purse and was just about to strike a match when Liam flicked his lighter in front of her.

Carly glanced at him. She took in his features, meeting his coal eyes. His hair was as dark as his eyes, and he had a noticeable cleft in his chin. By the looks of it he was as tall as she was but no more, and his lips were full and slightly parted.

She accepted the light, thanking him after exhaling smoke.

"You're welcome," Liam replied. He was not at all intimidated by her as he sensed she wanted him to be, which he supposed came from years of practice and rounds of endless dating. Despite her mysterious and exotic allure, Liam was certain he could literally charm the pants off Carly O'Reilly.

"You made quite an entrance into the lounge, didn't you?" Liam observed, keeping his tone casual. "A fine performance, if I do say so myself."

"If you say so," Carly responded a trifle coolly, not sure if she liked Liam's insight into her operating techniques. He was apparently immune to her charm and beyond any misconceptions of ambiguity, and he was not overawed by speaking with her on an equal level.

"What prompted you and your friends to take a trip along the coast?" Liam asked.

Carly looked away from him. "We like to get together and go off on spontaneous excursions now and then. We all work at the Bella Catering Company in Bangor, and this was one of the few weekends we didn't have a job lined up. We decided to make the most of it."

"Have you ever been to Larkin City before?" Liam pressed.

She shook her head. "This is my first time here. It's quite lovely, if not a bit small and quaint. Have you lived here long?"

Liam laughed. "All my life. My great-great grandfather founded the city."

"Oh really?" Carly said, her interest piqued. "Is that how you and your brother came to own the Coven? Is that how you make your living?"

He drained his beer. "Actually, I come here to relax but Kevin mans the place on weekends. During the week we're working stiffs just like everyone else."

Carly flicked her cigarette in the heavy glass ashtray in front of her. "Oh? Where do you work during the week?"

"We work at the local lumber company," Liam answered her. "I do purchasing, while Kevin supervises the staff. We also fill in where we're needed."

Carly bit into her lemon again, taking another quick drink. "I love the catering business," she said with enthusiasm. "I like creating original ideas and new recipes. Right now I'm just an assistant to Bella's owner in Bangor, but someday I hope to have my own company."

Kevin returned to the bar, noticing Liam and Carly were enjoying an easy

conversation. Liam was making progress but this did not bother Kevin. His brother deserved a beauty like Carly O'Reilly. Someone with her looks and obvious style did not come along too often, and Kevin was glad to see Liam with a lady of class rather than the needy women he cavorted with on occasion.

Liam tapped his beer mug. "Can I have another, brother?"

Kevin gave him a fresh mug filled with frothing beer. He looked to Carly. "Are you ready for another?"

"Please," she replied. She swallowed down the rest of her drink, handing the glass to Kevin. She flashed a smile at Liam. "The tequila is going to my head."

Kevin winked at his brother, but Liam ignored him. "Have you eaten dinner?"

"No. We had a late lunch on the road around four o'clock, but that was hours ago."

"Let's have dinner," Liam suggested.

Carly's eyes lit up. "I would enjoy that."

"We can eat at the restaurant upstairs, or we can go to the Amber Whale and have fresh seafood in the tavern," he told her.

Carly tilted her head slightly, smiling again. "Which would you recommend?"

"The food upstairs is good," Liam admitted. "Kevin brought in a chef from Boston last year, who mainly specializes in Irish food with a few French dishes thrown in. On the other hand, the Amber Whale has the best seafood, steak and pasta in the state of Maine."

Carly was no fool. She knew where Liam was going with his adroit invitation to dinner. He wanted to maneuver her back to the Amber Whale where he knew she had a room for the night. By now Carly found the idea rather appealing, so she acquiesced. "The Amber Whale it is, then," she said softly, her eyes warm as she looked at him.

Liam felt a strong sexual thrill from Carly's gaze, something he had not experienced in a long time. Over the years he entertained plenty of women, but there were few in his memory that made him feel like Carly did now. The desire seemed to be pitted deep in his stomach, winding its way through his entire body. There was something magical about Carly, something undefined and mysterious that he was suddenly desperate to uncover.

"What about your friends?" Liam asked.

Carly glanced over her shoulder at her friends in the lounge. "It looks like they're having fun," she said. "I'll tell them we're leaving, and I'll see them later at the Amber Whale."

"Good. We can leave in my car." Liam motioned to his brother at the other end of the bar. Kevin nodded and came over. "We're going to the Amber Whale for dinner," Liam told him, dropping money on the bar. "That's for our drinks. See you later at home?"

Kevin took the money and stashed it into his bar-apron pocket. "Sure. Have a nice time." He reached across the bar and shook Carly's hand. "It was a pleasure to meet you. Hopefully we'll see you in Larkin City more often."

"Thank you," Carly murmured. "I hope so, too."

Kevin watched as Liam and Carly made their way through the lounge, stopping at her friends table briefly and then moving toward the door.

Kevin took their glasses from the bar and placed them in a sink underneath the counter. He wiped the bar with a small white towel, watching his brother and Carly disappear from the lounge. All of a sudden Kevin had an uneasy rush in the pit of his stomach, but he tried to quell it. The familiar feeling about Carly persisted, but he could not put his finger on the reasons why.

*"Liam needs to enjoy himself,"* Kevin thought as he washed glasses under the counter.  
*"Hell, as long as he doesn't run off and get married, he'll be just fine."*

**ENTHRALLMENT:  
Excerpt from Chapter Four**

*Spring 1981  
Larkin City, Maine*

LESS THAN SIX MONTHS after her wedding, Carly was the proud owner of her own catering company. She mulled long and hard over a name for the business, deciding to eschew with a typical moniker such as using her own name exclusively or that of the city in which she lived. Because Larkin City had its own harbor, she finally settled on calling her company Harbor View Catering. Her office window afforded a clear view of the harbor, so she thought the name was fitting.

Harbor View Catering was housed in a pleasant business court called Brickyard Square on Main Street in Larkin, a few blocks away from the lumber yard. The court was fairly new, having been built by the Larkin Construction Company five years ago. There were several other businesses in the court, including a boutique, a small French restaurant, a printing outfit, a pizza parlor and an aerobics studio. Willow trees were abundant in the center of the court, wafting over pink brick walkways and buildings. Several wooden benches were situated under the willow trees, where locals sometimes took lunch. It was a tranquil setting.

The catering company was on the left side of the court. The front window had white shutters and sparkling clean glass. A large wooden sign, painted light pink to match the brick, rested above the entry door. Black lettering imbedded into the wood announced her business: *Harbor View Catering. By appointment only. Carly O'Reilly, Proprietor.* It was rather old-fashioned and antiquated, but Carly loved it.

The first floor of the building contained light gray carpeting and elegant cherry wood furniture with embroidered cushions. Carly envisioned clients waiting for her in the chairs as she appeared to greet them from her office upstairs. Glass and wood coffee tables were in between the pieces of furniture, on top of which rested tasteful picture books depicting the different parties Carly serviced while working for Bella Catering. The photographs showed the elegance of the decorations used as well as the sumptuousness of the food served. Sample menus printed on parchment paper were also scattered on the tables, listing dishes she used while at Bella, recipes of her own and a few she garnered from the Larkin cook, Mae Jensen.

The kitchen was on the first floor, in the rear of the waiting area. There was alley access in the kitchen, where vendors delivered supplies and where the catering company left with their party arrangements. A few weeks before the grand opening, Carly hired six employees through the locally-owned Clamshell Employment Agency, where she chose a cook, a secretary and four others to help prep food and deliver the goods. Liam purchased a custom-built van for her use, pink in color with black company lettering on the sides.

Carly's large office was up the carpeted stairs above the main floor. The upper level also had a conference room and a small cafeteria, as well as several storage closets and smaller offices. Vendors had already been trying to sell her their food and decorative products, and she had closets full of their free samples, which she intended to make good use of in the future.



The office was built into the corner of the building, with a huge picture window that straddled both Main Street and the entry to Brickyard Square below. The view was lovely, and she often sat at her desk and looked out both sides of the window, appreciating the sight of the harbor and the street below. There were several large indoor trees in wicker baskets around her office, a few of them near the edges of the window.

The days, weeks and months leading up to the grand opening was frenetic for Carly. She was enjoying the first flush of her marriage to Liam, which at times swerved her from her business course. Her husband enthralled her – he was handsome, passionate, humorous and adoring of her. Her life was idyllic, very nearly perfect.

On occasion Carly would drive to Bangor to see her mother, usually without Liam, where they would have lunch and do a bit of shopping. Susan O'Reilly was heartened to see her daughter so happy, and was doubly glad she had not told Carly of her family relationship to Liam.

One day in early March 1981, Carly and her mother met for lunch at Colette's restaurant in Bangor. After finishing their meal, they sat at their table drinking coffee until it was time to leave. Susan took in Carly's rich attire, pleased by her appearance. Carly's blouse was pure white silk, which was tucked neatly into a lime-colored cashmere skirt. Her nails were well-manicured and her hair was straight and shiny.

"I'll say it again," Susan observed. "Marriage agrees with you."

"It's not just the marriage," Carly stated with a smile. "Being with *Liam* agrees with me. He is *so* wonderful, mother. I have never felt so loved and cherished by a man. And the house....I've lived in the mansion for three months and I still haven't seen every room. It's endless, but so beautiful. The view from our room overlooks Banshee Point, and on windy days I can actually smell the sea."

"And what about Liam's family?" Susan wanted to know. "How do you get along with all of them?"

"I adore Liam's father Rory," Carly enthused. "He's sweet and funny, but as hard as nails when he wants to be. Denise is a bit of an airhead, though. She's harmless, really. Brian and Mary Larkin are kind to me, as is Sean. I like Kevin well enough, too, but I don't care for Shannon. She's as cold as ice, and her husband Scott is barely civil to me in front of her. When she's not around he's a bit friendlier, but he knows where his bread is buttered."

"So, all in all, you like Liam's family?"

"Apart from Shannon, yes," Carly agreed. "I couldn't have wished for a better group of people."

"What about Phoebe McGarren?" Susan asked.

"She's so old she rarely leaves her rooms," Carly replied off-handedly. "Since our wedding I've only seen her about a dozen times. Aunt Phoebe is perhaps one of the classiest people I've ever met, but I'm not sure what she makes of me. She's nice, but very reserved. Liam visits her in her rooms at least four times a week." Carly wrinkled her nose. "That's the only drawback, I think."

"You resent the time Liam spends with Phoebe?" Susan was surprised.

Carly looked embarrassed. "Yes, I *do* resent it. He has some sort of blind loyalty to her, an immense respect he reserves only for *her*."

Susan finished her coffee, taken aback by her daughter's insecurity. "Perhaps if you get to know Phoebe you'll understand and appreciate Liam's devotion to her."

"I don't think so," Carly dismissed the idea.

Susan was dismayed. "You're making a mistake, my dear. Phoebe is like a matriarch in the Larkin family."

Carly stared at her mother. "How did you know that?"

Susan recovered herself quickly. "Despite the fact that it's obvious, I've also heard enough from you and I boned up on the Larkin family history before you married Liam. I wanted to know what my daughter was getting into."

Carly seemed to accept the explanation. She dabbed her mouth with a napkin, smiling prettily. "I have to get back to Larkin, mother. Oh, I almost forgot to ask you – there's going to be a family dinner at the mansion on St. Patrick's Day. Can you come?"

"I'd like nothing better."

Carly stood from the table. "Good. Why don't you come around four o'clock? That way you'll be just in time for tea." She leaned over and kissed her mother on the cheek.

"I'll see you then," Susan said, grasping Carly's hand briefly before letting go.

Susan watched her daughter leave the restaurant, emotion constricting in her throat. Carly was already one of the Larkin's after three short months. While she still saw the mansion as breathtaking and luxurious, it was becoming commonplace to her the longer she lived there.

Carly was being grafted into the Larkin way of life without being aware of it. Susan hoped her daughter remained true to herself and did not allow her natural persona and identity to become swallowed up by her husband's family.

**ENTHRALLMENT:  
Excerpt from Chapter Six**

June 1989  
Larkin City, Maine

PHOEBE WASN'T SLEEPING WELL. She didn't mind, because she knew deep in her heart she would be the eternal state of sleep before too long.

She spent her time daydreaming. She remembered her past with surprising alacrity, preferring to focus on the happy points in her life and skimming over the unpleasant. She pondered on what wisdom to convey to her family, and struggled with parts of her life that were left well enough alone. She felt certain aspects had no bearing or benefit for those in the present or the future.

Although she told herself she dwelled little on the sins of her past, in fact Phoebe obsessed over what she perceived to be her part in Colleen Larkin's death. She felt monumental guilt for her long-ago affair with Patrick Larkin and the subsequent result of her sister's stroke some years later when she learned the truth.

*"No one else needs to know the truth,"* Phoebe told herself as she dozed in her bed one early June morning. *"What purpose would it serve for the family to know that I caused the death of their grandmother, and my sister? No good could ever come of it, and therefore it shall remain unspoken."*

But her perception of the truth continued to gnaw at her. The Larkin's had shown her nothing but kindness, love and complete acceptance since the very start, some seventy-one years ago. How could she not tell them the whole story, including her affair with Patrick, the resulting pregnancy, and the knowledge of which caused Colleen to have a massive stroke that led to her death?

*"They will hate me if the truth was known,"* Phoebe thought fearfully, her eyes wandering around her bedroom. She lovingly took in every detail, from the large picture window, to the white marble fireplace, the small table and chairs which used to be her favourite place for early morning coffee, and the various pictures depicting seascapes and flower gardens that adorned her walls.

*"No one will ever know,"* she continued to ponder drowsily. *"There is nothing written down on paper, no untoward conversations that might lead someone to think I had a hand in Colleen's death. It's all in my head now, which is where it will remain."*

Phoebe fell into a light, fitful slumber, her swaying decisions weighing heavily on her mind.

She dreamed about Patrick Larkin at first, reliving their affair with every excruciating detail. She saw herself as a young woman in her dreams, with tall coltish legs, rich brown hair and lively green eyes. Then she saw her beloved Niles Wharritt, smiling and holding out his hands to her. *"I'm waiting here for you,"* he whispered. *"It's been such a long time, Phoebe, please don't make me wait much longer."*

Her vision dimmed for a moment. When it cleared she saw Niles again, but this time Colleen was standing behind him. Phoebe felt herself turn rigid with fear, her eyes going over Niles' head and short frame to rest on her sister.

It was not a comforting sight. Colleen was as she had died – mismatched eyes from

the stroke, and a menacing twist in her lips that made it impossible for her to speak. Her eyes were wide and staring, accusing in their regard. Beyond Colleen was another figure, that of Nicholas Bertrand, standing motionless and appearing as he had also died: head lolling to one side in near decapitation where Patrick slit his throat, and one eyeball dangling down to his cheek.

Patrick Larkin stood behind all the characters in Phoebe's mind. The bastard was laughing, crossing his arms and leaning forward. She saw the rope burns on his throat, a reminder that he hung himself rather than face the consequences of his deeds. His voice came mockingly, using her nickname as a wicked epithet: "I'm waiting for you too, *Pheeb*."

She felt horror grip her like a vise, cutting off her breath. She touched her throat, sensing the perspiration that covered her entire body.

"Phoebe," she heard a voice as if from far away. "Phoebe, wake up. You're having a bad dream."

She opened her eyes, looking upon the concerned face of Claire Colby. The woman's visage was framed in a cloud-like halo, as if she were part of the dreams that haunted Phoebe's mind. Instead of being menacing or judgmental, however, Claire's appearance was soothing, a declaration of complete trust and selfless devotion.

Phoebe reached over and took Claire's hand. "I was dreaming about people in my life who have already passed," she murmured, without fear this time. "Niles, my fiancé; my sister Colleen; and the family cook Nicholas Bertrand, who was so brutally murdered. I also saw his killer, Patrick Larkin. The dream started off well enough, but the end was less than pleasing." She paused briefly. "I also saw myself as I once was, young and lithe and beautiful."

Claire leaned over the bed, letting go of Phoebe's hand. She pulled the comforter closer to Phoebe's shoulders, and tried to adjust the pillow under her head. Newton came into the room, jumping lightly on the bed. Phoebe regarded the black cat fondly, suddenly recalling her own Siamese feline Lady Sam from many years ago.

"Do you want me to shoo him from the bed?" Claire asked as Newton sniffed the air from his place on the comforter.

"No let him be," Phoebe said as she watched Newton settle down next to her, leaning against her arm. The cat began to clean himself, the rhythmic motion of his paw circling his face with exact precision. She smiled. "I think Lady Sam and Newton would have liked one another."

"Who is Lady Sam?" Claire asked with some trepidation, fearing Phoebe was slipping into dementia.

Phoebe glanced at Claire. "Lady Sam was my Siamese cat. I had her when I owned the dress shop in Larkin. She was my dearest companion until you came along."

"What about your sister Colleen?" Claire queried. "Wasn't she close to you?"

Phoebe was quiet for a moment. "Yes, we were close, but that goes without saying because we were blood-related. What I meant to say was Lady Sam was my dearest companion on a daily basis, like Newton is for you."

"Of course," Claire said. She took the chair next to the bed, gazing at Phoebe as the older woman rested her head against her pillow. "Would you like some tea? If I brought you some soup, would you take a few spoonfuls?"

Phoebe sighed. "Not yet, dear. First, there is something I need to tell you." She wasn't sure if it was the dream prompting her to change her mind again or if her own guilt was the

cause, but Phoebe decided she had to confide her sins to *someone*. Rather than burden the Larkin's, she decided to unload her conscience to Claire instead. At least Claire could be trusted to keep family secrets that were of no concern to the village gossipmongers and busybodies.

"What is it, Phoebe?" Claire asked.

"You must never repeat what I'm about to tell you," Phoebe insisted.

"I would never betray your trust," Claire said, a trifle hurt. "Surely you know that by now."

Phoebe dismissed the remark in her mind. She had one more important requisite to ask of the woman.

"Most of all, never repeat anything I'm about to tell you to a member of the Larkin family."

Claire nodded. "I understand, Phoebe. I promise, I will never repeat a single word of what you tell me in confidence."

Phoebe felt herself relax. She closed her eyes, summoning the physical strength to confess her sins. It had been a long time in coming, and she was more than ready to vocally unburden herself.

She turned her head and opened her eyes, looking at the expectant Claire. "I am responsible for the death of my sister Colleen," she began softly, tears forming in her eyes. "Because of my sins, Colleen suffered a stroke and passed away unable to speak and accuse me of my terrible deeds..."

## ENTHRALLMENT: Excerpt from Chapter Seven

November 1990  
Larkin City, Maine

GEORGE SULLIVAN KNEW HE would experience a deep sadness at the death of his mother, more so than when Jean-Claude passed away because he always felt closer to Jennifer Sullivan despite her faults. They had reconnected in the five years since he reappeared on her porch, having tea most every afternoon and eating Sunday dinner together. It was as if they had never been apart.

Jennifer's death was sudden. She was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer just after Labor Day 1990, and by the dawn of Halloween she was gone. George stayed by her side almost around the clock, with Sara stopping by once a week to visit her grandmother. George took the opportunity to become reacquainted with his daughter, although he asked her not to let Linda know he was back in town and living under an assumed name. Sara took the request in stride, not seeming to be overly concerned by the cloak-and-dagger routine. It wasn't hard to do, seeing that Linda lived in Ellsworth with her second husband Richard Miles.

However, Linda did return to Larkin City to attend her former mother-in-law's funeral. George skipped the service to avoid her, instead waiting for Sara at Jennifer's house on Curry Street. He wandered around, looking at the various rooms and shaking his head at the vast collection of cat figurines his mother kept. *What was he going to do with all her stuff?* And the house? Should he sell the house, or give it to Sara? Maybe sell the house *and* give the money to Sara?

"I'll ask Sara what *she* wants to do," George said to himself as he walked into Jennifer's bedroom. He glanced at the bed, now neatly made after weeks of being the scene of Jennifer Sullivan's last days on earth.

George kept staring at the bed, seeing his mother there as plain as day. She had accepted the fact she was dying without much fuss – as was her way – telling her son: "I'm just glad you came back into my life, and that we had a chance to be a family again." She seemed to have no regrets or recriminations of what her life *might* have been.

He sat on the bed, feeling the firmness of the mattress. "*A good, hard mattress is better for your back,*" Jennifer had told him once. "*If you sleep in a cushy bed, you'll have back troubles for the rest of your days.*"

"Maybe I should take the bed," George thought to himself as he bounced his frame on the mattress lightly. "And perhaps I'll sell the cat artifacts to the local antiques shop, and give the money to the local animal shelter. That would be *quite* fitting."

He stood up, and then bent over to test the heaviness of the mattress by lifting it slightly. "Not bad for a queen-sized bed," he said aloud. "Not too heavy, but certainly comfortable. It should fit in my bedroom nicely."

He started to leave the bedroom, but paused in mid-stride. He glanced around again, seeing nothing else of any real value. Jennifer was as neat as a pin, so there was very little in the way of clutter in the house aside from her cat collection.

He looked in a few drawers, but found only clothes, tidily folded of course. The bed

stand only contained a small tiffany lamp and a black cat figurine. The feline face was twisted into a hiss, the front paws perched and drawn as they rested on the base of the statue.

"Where on earth did she find such a thing?" George wondered. "Who sells hissing cat sculptures, for chrissakes?"

He began to turn away, but stopped when the tip of his shoe came against a hard object under the bed. "What the hell ...?"

He dropped to his knees and looked under the bed. He saw a strongbox, made of gray metal with a black latch. He slid the box from underneath the bed and onto the floor in front of him.

It wasn't locked. He flipped the lid open, peering at the contents inside. There was a small stack of papers and a few envelopes tied together with a red bow. He shuffled through the papers, noting the title to the house, a savings passbook and a life insurance policy worth \$25,000 with "Ben Webb" listed as the beneficiary.

He picked up the bound envelopes, untying the red bow to get a closer look.

The first envelope was marked with his mother's own handwriting: ***Last will & testament of Jennifer Sullivan***. He withdrew a sheet of paper and read the contents quickly, noticing his mother had updated the will just six months before. She left the house on Curry Street to Sara and the singular sum of \$120,000 split between "my dear friend Ben Webb" and "my darling granddaughter Sara Sullivan."

"That answers my question about what to do with the house," George thought. "No problems there."

He picked up the second envelope, reading his mother's handwriting again: ***To be opened by Ben Webb only upon my death***.

Expecting an emotional thesis about their last five years of family togetherness, George was therefore surprised to find something completely different.

It was a long time before George finished staring at his mother's last words to him, and the 1948 letter from Susan O'Reilly he had never seen before now. It was longer still before he was able to get up from the floor.

\* \* \*

IT WAS RAINING ON the day George decided to pay Susan a visit on Downing Road in Bangor. It was mid-November, and the colorful orange foliage was already falling into slick, leafy heaps on the roads and sidewalks.

He was a nervous wreck, like a teenage boy waiting to pick up his first date. Going to Susan was similar to being transported back in time to when he last saw her forty-two years ago. Thereafter both had been left with the impression that their relationship was over, thanks to Jennifer Sullivan, who falsely portrayed her son as a homosexual to Susan and Susan as a fortune seeker to George.

If George was honest with himself, he knew Susan was the only woman he had ever truly loved. He once held great affection for his ex-wife Linda, but theirs had never been a deep, gut-wrenching type of passion. Their sexual romps had also been less than satisfying. Linda never seemed to like the physical aspects of marriage, although she adored being a mother.

To be fair, Linda had been a good wife in all other regards. She had cooked his meals,

cleaned his house and washed his clothes. She never raised her voice in anger to him; in fact she rolled with the flow without complaint. George likened it to living with a semi-robot, which he grew to resent in short order. He realized then that he wanted a woman who spoke her mind, who challenged him on a daily basis and who enjoyed coming to his bed without reservation.

The marriage with Linda never had a chance, not with the memory of Susan O'Reilly poised over them from start to finish.

George slowed his Buick Regal as he turned onto Downing Road from Union Street. A few minutes later he saw Susan's house, a white brick split-level, with the numbers "179 E" stenciled on the curb. He parked in front of the house, his eyes going to the tall windows that overlooked the lawn. The blinds were open, but he could see no activity within.

"It's now or never," he muttered, getting out of the car.

Inside the house, Susan O'Reilly walked into the living room with her afternoon cup of latte in her hands. She had spent the morning designing a marketing campaign for Panda Software, one of the new clients just acquired by her advertising firm *Impression Media Works*. Since her office was only a short distance away on Union Street, Susan often worked from home. She found the peace and quiet in the security of her home more conducive to her creative flow, and since she was the boss no one questioned her.

She sipped her latte as she walked toward the tall windows in the living room. It was a dreary day, the pelting rain now turned to a drizzle, but the sky was leaden gray and threatening more to come. The weather aggravated her recently diagnosed arthritis, but thankfully her condition was not dire yet. She felt only mild stiffening and discomfort in her hands.

"*Maybe I should retire,*" Susan thought as she looked out the window. "*I'm in a good place financially, and if I had more time on my hands I could spend it with Carly and Megan.*" She paused. "*Well, at least Megan might have time for me but I'm not so sure about Carly.*"

She could hardly blame her daughter for her work ethics. Carly was driven and ambitious, just as Susan had been in her younger years. After giving birth at the Sisters of Mercy Convent in 1949, Susan had taken the money give to her by Jennifer Sullivan to make a new life for herself and her baby daughter.

Susan rented a small house in Bangor, and then worked as a waitress while attending business classes at Eastern Maine Community College. She was fascinated by the mechanics of marketing, and since she was a fairly good illustrator she finally decided to major in advertising. The program offered instruction on the creation and execution of commercial "messages" in various media to promote and sell products, services and brands. She studied advertising theory, marketing strategy, advertising design, campaign methods and techniques, media management, and related principles of business management.

Because of the era in which she found herself, Susan was the only woman in her class. At first none of her fellow male students took her seriously, but when her grades and techniques put her ahead of the rest, they began to fight over being her partner in the various labs and workshops.

After graduating with a master's degree in advertising, Susan took work where she could find it. She started low on the totem pole because she was a woman, but her skills and natural instinct made her stand out amongst her contemporaries *and* her peers. She was promoted to junior partner at Gould & Bachman, where she worked for more than



sixteen years. In 1970 she finally took the plunge and opened her own ad agency - *Impression Media Works* - and now, twenty years later, she was a veteran of the business with extraordinary success and an impeccable reputation.

No, money was not a worry. She could not use poor finances as an excuse to avoid retirement now. Aside from her ad agency, Susan had also inherited her father's seafood restaurant chain *The Sand Trap* when he died in 1978. She sold the company for nearly \$2 million, having neither the time nor the desire to take over a slew of eateries. While she reconciled with her parents shortly before Sam O'Reilly's death, she did not want to carry on her father's business legacy. It simply did not interest her.

Susan finished her latte as she continued to look out the front window. "*That was a nice break,*" she thought. "*Now it's back to work.*"

Before she could turn away from the window, she noticed a car parked at the curb in front of her house. She paused, taking in the dusty plum color of the Buick Regal. The car was of an older make, probably ten years old, and the windows were tinted. She groaned out loud. She was *not* in the mood for a traveling salesman or a lost tourist.

She watched as a man alighted from the car, locking the door behind him. He was tall, with a slight paunch. His hair was close-cropped and gray, but he had a full beard that appeared well-kept although it covered the lower half of his face. He wore a dark purple windbreaker and jeans, with blue-striped sneakers. She saw him glance at the house, and then he began to make his way up the walkway towards her front door.

"*I'm going to nip this in the bud before he utters a word,*" Susan thought angrily as she strode to the door. "*His sales pitch will be wasted on me.*"

She flung open the door before he had a chance to ring the bell or use the knocker. "Can I help you?" she snapped.

He stared at her, momentarily speechless.

"I said *can I help you?*" Susan repeated irritably.

He found his voice. "Suz?"

She knew his voice. It might have been decades ago since she last heard it, but the lilt and tone of his voice had not changed.

"George?" She was dumbfounded.

He grinned. "Hi, Suz. How have you been?"

She thought she might faint, but George quickly stepped forward and took her gently into his arms.

"We have a lot to talk about, you and I," he whispered in her ear. "Don't faint on me now."

**ENTHRALLMENT:  
Excerpt from Chapter Eight**

*December 1990  
Larkin City, Maine*

IT WAS STILL DARK when Carly awoke fully dressed in the front seat of her Camry. At first she thought she was coming out of a horrific nightmare, but then she felt the pain and sticky wetness in her lower and upper body, and the pounding throb of an enormous headache.

She tried to adjust her eyes to the inky darkness. The street lamps on Larkin Highway helped bring her vision into focus, and then she knew where she was.

Her Camry was parked on the soft shoulder of the highway, underneath an awning of pine branches one-quarter mile from the entrance road to the mansion. She could smell the clean freshness of rain in the air even though her car windows were closed.

She found her voice, which was working now. "How on *earth* did I get here?" she wondered aloud. "What did I do? What in the hell *happened* to me?"

Bits and pieces began to flood her memory as she sat there. Despite the chill in her car, she felt the heat of shame rising in her body and flaming her cheekbones. She saw Jack in her mind, and two other men, taking turns on her body and then joining with her all at the same time – something she had never thought possible even in her wildest fantasies...

She rested her forehead on the steering wheel. Certainly it was a nightmare. *It had to be a nightmare.* Jack Sansovino was her trusted sous-chef, in her employ for more than a year. He would never harm her, or expose her to danger. *Or would he?*

Carly considered the possibilities. Did she get so drunk at the HVC Christmas party that she didn't remember her own actions? Did she seduce Jack, and then agree to go back to his flat with him? Did she invite trouble upon herself? Or did Jack take advantage of *her* in a weak and unguarded moment? Worst yet, did someone slip her a roofoo at the party? Is that why she was having difficulty recalling the evening that had just passed behind her?

But how did she get *here*, barely a quarter-mile from the mansion? If she *had* been intoxicated, how did she make it this far alone? Did she pull over to the side of the road of her own volition, realizing her limitations and unwilling to stumble drunk into the bedroom she shared with her husband?

She lifted her head and glanced at the dashboard clock. It was four-thirty in the morning. If she hurried, she could make it into the mansion before anyone detected her, and slide into bed with Liam before he noticed her early-bird arrival.

Her keys were in the ignition. She started the Camry, letting it hum for a few minutes before she flipped on the heat switch. Her brain still felt a bit foggy, and her headache had reached a new level of raw, but she was not experiencing the epic dizziness that seemed to mark much of the previous night.

Taking a deep breath, Carly shifted the Camry gear into drive and slowly pulled out onto the highway.

\* \* \*

CARLY MADE IT THROUGH the lower region of the mansion without running into a soul. She entered through the kitchen, hoping everyone was still abed. She half-expected to find the bitch Shannon standing there, brewing a pot of coffee, but she was nowhere in sight.

The mansion was eerily quiet as Carly made her way upstairs. Grateful, she moved swiftly to the fourth floor, slipping into the bedroom she shared with Liam.

Her husband wasn't in their large king-sized bed, but she could hear the water running in the bathroom shower. Her heart sank. How was she going to explain herself to Liam? What must he be thinking of her now?

Before she could formulate a plan in her mind, Liam was standing in the doorway of the bathroom, a towel wrapped around his middle. His hair was wet and flat on his head as he regarded her coldly, but his eyes were clear and alert.

"What the hell happened to you?" he asked crossly.

She sat on the end of the bed, trying not to wince from the pain. "That damned Christmas party," she said lightly. "I drank too much wine and ended up sleeping it off in my car for a few hours."

He said nothing, but he continued to glare at her.

"You know it's not like me to drink too much or stay out all night," she said nervously, avoiding his accusatory stare. "I guess I was swept up in the gaiety of it all ... you know, celebrating HVC's tenth anniversary, handing out bonus checks ..."

"You'd better go and look at yourself in the mirror before you spew out any more lies," Liam finally said, his eyes hostile.

"What do you mean?" she asked indignantly.

"Go look in the mirror," he repeated.

She flounced past him into the bedroom, stopping in front of the mirror over the sink. She gasped.

Her hair hung lank and greasy. Her eyeliner was visibly smudged, giving her the look of a hollow-eyed junkie. Her lips were swollen and red, and her face was dirty with what appeared to be dried saliva and semen at the corners of her mouth and on her cheeks. At least her clothes were in place, although it did little to detract from her shabby countenance.

"Oh my God, I look awful," she said aloud.

"Yeah, you do," Liam agreed behind her. "I'm going to ask you again – *what happened to you?*"

She whirled to face him. "I don't know ... I mean, I'm not sure why my make-up is melting or why my face is so filthy. I *do* know there was dancing at the party and the room seemed overly warm, so maybe I did a few turns too many and ..." she bit her bottom lip for effect. "Good grief, I must've made a fool of myself. The only thing I *really* remember is waking up in my car ..."

Liam regarded her silently for a moment, almost believing her. *Wanting to believe her.* "Why didn't you call me?" he asked, some of the hostility gone from his voice now. "I would've come into town and picked you up."

Carly shrugged, relieved that he seemed to believe her but not wanting to push the issue. "I don't even remember getting into my car, much less having the presence of mind to call for help."

"Why don't you take a shower and get some sleep?" he suggested. "I'll bring you

some breakfast later, and I'll take Megan to school."

She brightened considerably. "Oh thank you, Liam. That sounds like just the ticket."

He nodded and turned away, going back into the bedroom to dress.

Carly stripped of her clothes, leaving them in a heap on the floor. She stepped into the still-wet shower, anxious to wash away all the real or imaginary traces of the men who ravaged her body inside and out. She took her time, leisurely soaping her sore muscles and hair, and allowing the warm water to rinse and cleanse her perfidy.

Finally, she finished and stepped out of the shower. She did not see Liam as she reached for a towel on a nearby rack.

"You lying, whoring bitch," he spat.

She jumped, startled by his voice. "What in the hell is wrong with you?" she cried out.

"With *me*?" he raged, pointing at her. "Have a glance at your body, Carly. You look like you've been manhandled by the New England Patriots."

She stepped in front of the full-length mirror next to the shower towel rack, her eyes widening in sick horror when she saw the bruises on her thighs, buttocks and breasts. There was no way she could explain-away the marks, no matter how hard she rummaged around her brain for an excuse.

"Don't go and tell me you fell down drunk in the parking lot of the Amber Whale," Liam snarled at her. "I know those kinds of bruises when I see them. Hell, I used to give you those kinds of bruises once upon a time, granted on a smaller scale. Who's your lover, Carly? And how long have you been screwing around behind my back?"

Something snapped in her then. Whether it was a culmination of her husband's choice to view *her* as the guilty party without the benefit of doubt or the knowledge she may have been brutally raped, she wasn't sure. She suddenly felt as if she had the weight of the world was on her shoulders, and instead of taking her side Liam was castigating and accusing her.

She spun around to look at him, fury written on her face. "How *dare* you stand there and talk to me like that?" she cried angrily.

"Because I'm witness to your whoredom," he shouted over her, his eyes flashing dangerously. "You avoid me like the plague in our bed, and yet you think nothing of spreading your legs for another man. Or is it *men*, I wonder? What kind of woman *are* you?"

"And what kind of man are *you*?" she screamed, losing the control she always prided herself in maintaining. "If you were a *real* man, I wouldn't *have* to take a lover. If you were a *real* man," she spat in contempt. "I wouldn't have been forced to sleep with your father in order to get pregnant and keep the bloodline in the family ..."

She wept openly as Liam stared at her in shock. Her body began to shake violently, the hysterical sobs reaching into her belly. She stumbled to the towel rack and wrapped herself, keeping her back to Liam. "*There's no going back now,*" she thought in despair. "*Liam might forgive me for having an affair, but he will never forgive me for the immoral lengths I went to have a child.*"

"Don't you *ever* repeat one word of what you just said to me," his voice came as cold as ice. "If you do, I'll make sure you end up like Marianne Chamberlain, without a cent to your name and with no hopes of ever seeing Megan again. I will *destroy* your business – and don't think for a minute that I can't or won't do it. I'll file so many liens and lawsuits against you and your company that you'll be lucky to limp out alive with the clothes on your back.

Don't forget *Charlene*," he sneered. "We're in Larkin City and there is *no way* you can win a battle against me, or my family. We'll crush you like the whoring little pissant that you are."

She hung her head. "What do you want from me?"

"You'll stay here and play the part of wife and mother until Megan is old enough to understand what divorce means," Liam said callously, not a wisp of compassion in his voice. "We're probably stuck in this marriage roughly another ten years. If you can keep your mouth shut and do as you're told, I'll give you a divorce and make sure you leave here with your little company intact. However, you will also give up all rights to Megan when you leave. I will never allow you to take her, or wield your noxious influence over her."

Carly's nose began to run. She sniffled loudly, knowing she had but only one choice to make. "I'll do as you say," she said quietly. "I'll stay until Megan is old enough, I won't try to get custody of her, and I *will* leave with my company free and clear."

"Good," Liam said, not surprised by her lack of concern over Megan. "And don't worry – your dramatic role as my wife will not include the physical aspects of marriage. I wouldn't touch you with a barge pole now." With one final passive look in her direction, he left the room.

She sank to the floor, sobs racking her body. In one fell swoop – in one unintentional declaration of the truth – she had destroyed her marriage and almost everything she had worked for.

*"And none of it was my fault,"* she thought, feeling sorry for herself. *"I'm not the one who couldn't deliver when we wanted to get pregnant. That was Liam's failure, not mine, so I had to resort to drastic measures. And I didn't go out last night with the intention of sleeping with Jack Sansovino, or anyone else for that matter, but it happened."* She reiterated. *"Through no fault of my own."*

Carly used the rim of the bathroom sink to help her to her feet. She took a tissue from the box on the counter and blew her nose, then wiped her face with a hand towel. Only then did she dare look into the mirror again.

She was gaunt and ghostly pallid, but looked a damned sight better than she did just thirty minutes ago. She felt her resolve and strength returning in small surges, her intense anger banked for the time being.

She had ten years to squirrel away money before Liam divorced her, a decade in which to ensure her complete financial security and to bring her business to new heights. However, she would request that Liam put their new agreement in writing – with strict legal confidentiality, of course - before going another step further.

Carly began to run a brush through her wet hair, staring at herself in the mirror.

*"And I also have ten long years to devise some form of revenge on Liam and his God-awful family,"* she thought. *"One way or another, they will pay for what they have put me through."*

It never occurred to Carly that her own daughter Megan was part of that family equation as well.

## "ENTHRALLMENT" INFORMATION

*Enthrallment* by Deidre Dalton (aka Deborah O'Toole) is available from Amazon (*Kindle*), Barnes & Noble (*Nook*) and the Club Lighthouse Publishing web site.

**Amazon** (*Kindle edition*):

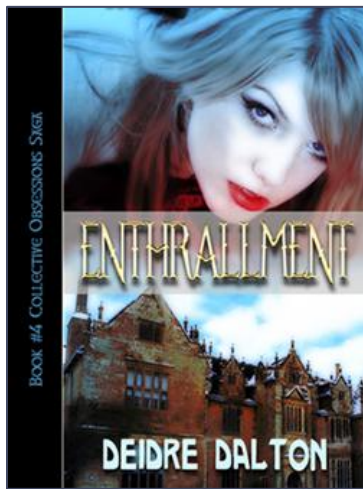
<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B008FJ4K4A/>

**Barnes & Noble** (*Nook edition*):

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/enthrallment-deidre-dalton/1112760027>

**Club Lighthouse Publishing** (*multiple formats*):

<http://clublighthousepublishing.com/productpage.asp?bNumb=299>



### BOOK DETAILS:

Club Lighthouse Historical Romance Edition.

**Series:** Collective Obsessions, Book Four.

**ISBN:** 978-1-927337-36-3.

**ASIN:** B008FJ4K4A.

**BNID:** 2940015144369.

**Released:** 22 June 2012.

**Cover Art:** T.L. Davison.

### EXTRAS:

***Enthrallment*** @ Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Enthrallment/325110954238830>

**"Collective Obsessions Saga"** web site:

<http://websdivine.tripod.com/collective/index.htm>

**ABOUT THE COLLECTIVE OBSESSIONS SAGA:**

The *Collective Obsessions Saga* chronicles the extraordinary loves and intricate obsessions between two families sweeping a span of more than one-hundred-forty years, all set against the backdrop of a Gothic seaside mansion in Maine.

Follow the twists and turns of the Larkin and Sullivan families, who settle in America in the mid-1800s. John Larkin builds his vast business empire while daughter Molly and lighthouse keeper Colm Sullivan establish a connection that will endure for generations.

Amidst murder, madness, perverse self-indulgence and avarice the two families struggle to free themselves from a dark legacy of secrets and obsessions.

More than twenty years in the making, *Collective Obsessions* is a unique family saga set in the combined genres of mystery, the paranormal, historical romance, and dotted with a touch of the macabre and hints of classic Gothicism.

The eight-part family saga includes *The Advent*, *Quixotic Crossings*, *The Twain Shall Meet*, *Enthrallment*, *The Keeper's Journal*, *Hearts Desires*, *The Twilight* and *Megan's Legacy*.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

Deborah O'Toole is the author of *Celtic Remnants*, a novel of enduring yet impossible love and betrayal set in the turbulence of Ireland, glamour of London and the wilds of Scotland. She is also author of *Mind Sweeper*, a mystery/suspense novel available in Kindle and Nook-Book editions.

Writing as Deidre Dalton, Deborah is author of the "Collective Obsessions Saga," which chronicles the extraordinary loves and obsessions between two families sweeping a span of more than one hundred years, all set against the backdrop of a Gothic seaside mansion in Maine.

Also writing as Deidre Dalton, Deborah is author of the "Bloodline Trilogy," which follows the uniquely magical journey of one family through time. Books in the trilogy include *Bloodfrost*, *Bloodlust* and *Blood & Soul*. All titles will be released through 2012-17.

Deborah writes short-story Juvenile Fiction and darkly abstract Poetry, and is the author of a series of articles and book reviews for *Ambermont Magazine* and *Class Notes*.

Using the pseudonym Shenanchie O'Toole, she also writes for the cooking/recipe web site Food Fare. She is writer and co-editor of the *Ambrosia Cookbook*, *Community Garden Cookbook*, *Food Fare Cookbook*, *Furry Friends Cookbook*, *Larkin Community Cookbook*, *Recipes-on-a-Budget Cookbook* and the *Soups & Stews Cookbook*, along with more than forty titles in the *Food Fare Culinary Collection*.