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DRAGONFLY IN AMBER by Diana Gabaldon. PROLOGUE I woke three times in the dark predawn. First in sorrow, then in joy, and at the last, in solitude. The tears of a bone-deep loss woke me slowly, bathing my face like the comforting touch of a damp cloth in soothing hands. I turned my low and sailed a salty river into the cavernes of grief remembered, into the subternanean depths of sleep. I came awake then in fierce joy, body arched bowlike in the throse of physical pioning, the touch of love or grief. The sight of the stones was fresh in my mind. A small circle, standing stones on the creater in the stones was fresh in my mind. A small circle, standing stones on the creater of the tones. Except me. PART ONE Through a Looking Glass, Darkly **T. Inverness, 1968 I MUSTERIBIN To one knows the function or it he purpose of the stones. Except me. PART ONE Through a Looking Glass, Darkly **T. Inverness, 1968 I MUSTERIBIN To one knows the function or it has possible to expert one the standard papers. And the books—my God, the book's How study where he stood was lined on three stides by bookshelves, every one crammed to study the policy of turniture, replete with antimacessars, plush and afghans, by tiny braided the policy that the policy of the policy that the policy of the stones. The sight of the stones was fresh in my mind and papers. And the books—my God, the book's How study where he stood was lined on three stides by bookshelves, every one crammed to study the policy of the policy of the stones. The study where he stood was lined on three stides by bookshelves, every one crammed by the policy of the stones. The study where he stood was lined on three stides by bookshelves, every one crammed to study the policy of the stones. The study where he stood was lined on three stides by bookshelves, every one crammed to study the policy of the stones. The study where he stood was lined on three stides by bookshelves, every one crammed the policy of the study of the stones. The study was the study that the study was the study
bugnt to last you τιι next Christmas, "Claire observed. "In that case, maybe we shouldn't be disturbing you," said a soft American voice. "Oh our dather's library, that little chore of the porch. "Roger Wakefield—my daughter, Brianna." Brianna Ra our or open wide, momentarily wondering just when he had last changed his shirt. "Not at all, not at all!" he said heartily. "I was just wanting a break. Won't you come in?" He waved the two women down the hall toward the Reverend's study, noting that as well as being moderately attractive, the daughter was one of the tallest girls he'd ever seen close-to. She had to be easily six feet, he thought, seeing her head even with the top of the hall stand as she passed. He study lint a client of the study lint of the Reverend's study was equipped with floor-to-ceiling windows, and the sunlight winked off the pearl clip in her lig ne last year, in fact, and then there was an emergency at the hospital in Boston—I'm a doctor," she explained mouth our line of the study lint of the study lint of the curls were beginning to escape from their confinement, and she tucked one absently behind an ear as she talked "I'd cropped to the curls were beginning to escape from their confinement, and she tucked one absently behind an ear as she talked "I'd cropped to the curls were beginning to escape from their confinement, and she tucked one absently behind an ear as she talked "I'd cropped to the curls were beginning to escape from their confinement, and she tucked one absently behind an ear as she talked "I'd cropped to the curls were beginning to escape from their confinement, and she tucked one absently behind an ear as she talked "I'd cropped to the curls were beginning to escape from their confinement, and she tucked one absently behind an ear as she talked "I'd cropped to the curls were beginning to escape from their confinement, and she tucked one absently behind an ear as she talked "I'd cropped to the curls were beginning to escape from their confinement."
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ht-brown hair. The curls were beginning to escape from their confinement, and she tucked one absently behind an ear as she talked. "I'd arranged to co look of surprise Roger hadn't quite managed to conceal. "But I'm sorry that we didn't; I would have liked so much to see your father again." Roger rat of sightseeing, are you?" "Yes, we drove up from London," Claire answered. She smiled at her daughter. "I wanted Bree to see the country; you would really look English, he thought; aside from the height, she had thick red hair, worn loose over her shoulders, and strong, sharp-angled bones in lot of the country of the really look. The page of the country of the page
air. The fourth wall of the Reverend's study was equipped with floor-to-celling windows, and the sunlight winked off the pearl clip in her lig me last year, in fact, and then there was an emergency at the hospital in Boston—I'm a doctor," she explained, mouth curling a little at the her wondered why they had come now, knowing the Reverend was dead, but it seemed impolite to ask. Instead, he asked, "Enjoying a bit n't think it to hear her talk, but she's as English as I am, though she's never lived here." "Really?" Roger glanced at Brian — na. She didn't face, with the nose long and straight—maybe a touch too long. "I was born in America," Brianna explained, "but both Moth — er and Dad course!" Roger smacked himself on the forehead, and felt his cheeks grow hot at Brianna's giggle. "You're going — to the end of the Reverend's; they had exchanged bits of Jacobite arcana for years, though it was at least ten years sin — e Fraigen yet?" "Not yet," Brianna answered. "We thought we'd go later this week." Her answering smile was polite, b — on the not power and the place has grown a lot since I was last here." "When was that?" Roger — wo — n.d — el Reverend's Resides, a car trip to Fort William in company with two attractive women seemed a much more and provided in the part of the place has grown a lot since I was last here." "When was that?" Roger — aling — n.d — el Reverend's Resides, a car trip to Fort William in company with two attractive women seemed a much more and provided in the part of the 
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                but I've only just realized who you are." The name explained a lot; Frank Randall had been an eminent historian, and a good fr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ast visited the manse. "So—you'll be visiting the historical sites near Inverness?" Roger hazarded. "Have you been to Cullod
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     e booked for a trip down Loch Ness this afternoon," Claire explained. "And perhaps we'll drive down to Fort William tomorn ht to volunteer his services as tour guide. He really shouldn't take the time, but the Randalls had been good friends of the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ore. "We'r
                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ether he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     out the garage, which was next on his list. "Oh, more than twenty years ago. It's been a long time." There was an odd note in the Highlands ..." Claire was still smiling, but something in her face changed. He could almost think she had been waiting the chair. "You don't want to bother Mr. Wakefield! Look at all he's got to do!" She waved a hand at the crowded study, asn't planning to knock him on the head and drag him off," she said tartly. "But he might well know someone to the Roarie Britage's last the Ro
Reverend's. Besides, a car trip to Fort William in company with two attractive women seemed a much more a per notation of the company with two attractives women seemed a much more a per notation of the company with two attractives women seemed a much more a per notation of the company with two attractives women seemed a much more a per notation of the company with a smile. "Well," he ventured, "if there is a company with a smile w
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                                                                                                                                                                                                                               t than c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     while you're i
                                                                                                                                                                                                                               r you,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  aid, sitting up in
                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ghte
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                a quelling look. "I
with its overflowing cartons and endless stacks of books. "Oh, no bother at all!" Roger protested. "Er ... what I s I t?" Claire shot her who could help. It's a small historical project," she explained to Roger. "I need someone who's fairly well versed in the eighteenth-ce of one of my specialties, but I do know a bit—hard not to, living so close to Culloden. That's where the final battle was, you know," he e s." "Right," said Claire. "And that, in fact, has to do with what I want to find out." She reached into her handbag and drew out a folded pa was a heading: "JACOBITE RISING, 1745—CULLODEN" "Oh, the '45?" Roger said. "These men fought at Culloden, did they?" "They did," chin as he perused the list. "That's a simple question," he said, "but the answer might be hard to find. So many of the Highland clansmen we wes, with no more than a single stone bearing the clan name as a marker." "I know," Claire said. "Brianna hasn't been there, but I have—a logen white finger ran down the marking of one sheet Regultiful hands. Both the property is the control of the property of the said. The property is the marking of one sheet Regultiful hands. Both the property is the control of the property of the prop
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            acobites—Bonnie Pr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ed to Brianna. "Wher
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              e the Bonnie Prince's lo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               t ran up against the Duke of Cumberland and got slaughtered for their pain
                                                                                                                                                                                                                      xpl
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                c kly. It was a list of names—maybe thirty, all men. At the top of the sheet
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          oger opened it and s canned the contents qui
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            Claire replied. "Wh at I want to find out is—h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ow many of the men on this list survived that battle?" Roger rubbed his
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  Field that they weren't buried individually. They were put into mass grain her eyes, though it was quickly hidden as she reached into her handb
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         owed Prince Charles were killed on Culloden
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        e ago." He thought he saw a fleeting shadow
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 mo orland and remember the gallantry and coura
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ge of the Scottish Highlanders who lay slaughtered beneath the grass. S
   unfolded several more typed sheets and handed them to him. A long white finger ran down the margin of one sheet. Beautiful hands, Ro
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 note d; delicately molded, carefully kept, with a si
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   ngle ring on each hand. The silver one on her right hand was especially s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  f the husbands were killed at Culloden, you'd likely find these women rem
  king; a wide Jacobean band in the Highland interlace pattern, embellished with thistle blossoms. "These are the names of the wive
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         now them. I thought that might help, since i
 rrying or emigrating afterward. Those records would surely be in the parish register? They're all from the same parish; the church of thing an historian would think of." "I'm hardly an historian," Claire Randall said dryly. "On the other hand, when you live with on
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  e." "That's a very helpful idea," Roger' said, mildly surprised. "It's the sor f course." A thought struck Roger, and he rose from his chair. "I'm being
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ch Mordha-it's a good bit south of he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   k up the occasional odd thought." "O
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                re kept, and quickly had his guests supplied with whisky. He'd put quite uest, seemed to enjoy it much more. "Well." Roger resumed his seat and
 ւ terrible host; please, let me get you a drink, and then you can tell me a bit more about this. Perhaps I could help you with it myself." Despite t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    he disorder, he knew where the decanters we
 a lot of soda in Brianna's, but noticed that she sipped at it as though her glass c
icked up the paper again. "It's an interesting problem, in terms of historical
                                                                                                                                 ontained ant spray, rather than the best Glenfiddich singl
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    e malt. Claire, who took her whisky neat by req
                                                                                                                                         research. You said these men came from the same pa
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ish? I suppose they came from a single clan
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               or sept—I see a number of them were named Fraser." Claire nodded, hands
                                                                                                                                              a rm called Broch Tuarach—it was known locally as Lallybroch. They were part of clan Fraser, to while Lovat's men didn't come until just before Culloden." "Really? That's interesting
 olded in her lap. "They came from the same estate; a small Highland f
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               hough they never gave a formal allegiance to Lord Lovat as chief. These me
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               Under normal eighteenth-century conditions, such small tenant-farmers wo
  joined the Rising early; they fought in the Battle of Prestonpans—
   d have died where they lived, and be filed tidily away in the villag
                                                                                                                                                                 e churchyard, neatly docketed in the parish register. However, Bonnie Prince Charli
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             s attempt to regain the throne of Scotland in 1745 had disrupted the normal
 course of things in no uncertain terms. In the famine after the dis
                                                                                                                                                                       aster of Culloden, many Highlanders had emigrated to the New World; others ha d
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ed from the glens and moors toward the cities, in search of food and employ
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               fate of a number of individuals, see what happened to them all. Less interesting if the were it not Claire Randall who asked. "Yes, I think I can help you with this," he said, a
                                                                                                                                                                         itions. "It would make a fascinating article," Roger said, thinking aloud. "Follow
 nent. A few stayed on, stubbornly clinging to their land and trad
                                                                                                                                                                                                   would be inclined to take on the project as a welcome break even really? That's wonderful!" she said. "My pleasure," Roger said. He general as the Randalls regaled him with tales of their transatl
  all were killed at Culloden, but chances were that a few made it o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 folded the paper and laid it on the table. "I'll start in on it directly. But tell me, how d
  d was gratified at the warm smile she bestowed on him. "Would y
  you enjoy your drive up from London?" The conversation becam
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    antic journey, and the drive from London. Roger's attention drifted slightly, as he
   gan to plan the research for this project. He felt mildly quilty abou
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     nd, it was an interesting question. And it was possible that he could combine the rtons in the garage, all labeled JACOBITES, MISCELLANEOUS. The thought of it
                                                                                                                                                                                                        taking it on; he really shouldn't take the time. On the other ha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                     al; he knew for a fact that there were forty-eight ca
   oject with some of the necessary clearing-up of the Reverend's m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      tion had made an abrupt change of subject. "Druids?" Roger felt dazed. He peere ire looked slightly disappointed. "Your father—the Reverend—he knew about the right scratched his head, ruffling the thick black hair. "No, I really don't recall. But
                                                                                                                                                                                                                         away from the garage, to find that the conversa ded soda. "You hadn't heard about them?" Cla
  as enough to make him feel faint. With a wrench, he tore his mind
 suspiciously into his glass, checking to see that he really had ad
em, though only unofficially. Perhaps he didn't think it worth telling
                                                                                                                                                                                                                     you; he thought it something of a joke." Roge on't know that it is." She crossed her legs at th
 ou're right, he may not have thought it anything serious." "Well, I
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           e knee. A streak of sunlight gleamed down the shin of her stockings, emphasi
  ng the delicacy of the long bone beneath. "When I was here last w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                      Frank—God, that was twenty-three years ago
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              !—the Reverend told him that there was a local group of—well, modern Drui
                                                                                                                                                                                                                       most likely not very." Brianna was leaning fo
u kn ow—but his housekeeper, Mrs. Graha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              rward now, interested, the glass of whisky forgotten between her hands. "T m, was involved with the group, so he got wind of their doings from time to Roger nodded, trying to adjust to the idea of elderly Mrs. Graham, that ext
    I suppose you'd call them. I've no idea how authentic they might
   Reverend couldn't take official notice of them—paganism and all the
  ne, and he tipped Frank that there would be a ceremony of some kind on the da
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     n of Beltane—May Day, that is.
 emely proper person, engaging in pagan rites and dancing round stone circles in victims in wicker cages, which seemed still more unlikely behavior for a Scottish pefore dawn to, well, to spy on them," she continued, shrugging apologetically. "Y
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       n. All he could remember of D
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ruid ceremonies himself was that some of them involved burning sacrificial
                                                                                                                                                Presbyt e
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      f advanced years. "There's a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               circle of standing stones on top of a hill, fairly nearby. So we went up there
                                                                                                                                                                        rian I
                                                                                                                                                                                                      ady o
                                                                                                                                                                                                      olars a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               when it comes to their own field, let alone a sense of social delicacy." Roge
  vinced slightly at this, but nodded in wry agreement. "And there they were," sh
                                                                                                                                                         said. "Mrs. Graha
                                                                                                                                                                                                     m included.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               nting things and dancing in the midst of the stone circle. Frank was fascina
  ed," she added, with a smile. "And it was impressive, even to me." She paused
she had any family? I believe membership in such groups is often hereditary
a Graham. In fact, she came to help out here at the manse after her grand
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              s. Graham had passed away a few years ago. But I wonder ... do you know i Well," Roger said slowly. "There is a granddaughter—Fiona's her name, Fio wn." If anything could displace his vision of Mrs. Graham dancing in a beds
                                                                                                                                                                                                 g Roger rather specu latively. "I'd heard that Mr
                                                                                                                                                            ; maybe there's a daughter or granddaughter who could tell me a bit.'
                                                                                                                                                             mother died; the Reverend was really too elderly to be left all on his o
neet, it was the thought of nineteen-year-old Fiona as a guardian of anc
ed a slender hand in dismissal. "Don't trouble yourself. Another time
                                                                                                                                                                ient mystic knowledge, but Roger rallied gamely and went on.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              e isn't here just now, I'm afraid. I could ask her for you, though." Claire way
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             er's dismay, she set down her empty glass on the small table between the cl
vidence of imperfection gave him the nerve to take the next step. She intrigu
                                                                                                                                                                 will do. We've taken up too much of your time already." To Rog
                                                                                                                                                                    ty. He noticed that Brianna Randall bit her nails. This small e
 irs and Brianna added her own full one with what looked like alacri
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ickly. "I believe I know the one you mentioned. It's quite scenic, and not too igh on one cheekbone. "I thought perhaps I'd start on this project with a trip bulky handbag, Claire Randall had bumped both whisky glasses off the table, d, obviously flustered. She bent and began picking up pieces of shattered cry ized from the sideboard, was saying "Really, Mother, how they ever let you do d with whisky!" She knelt on the floor, and began busily mopping up spilled S
ed him, and he didn't want her to go, with no assurance that he wou
ar from town." He smiled directly at Brianna Randall, registering aut
down to Broch Tuarach. It's in the same direction as the stone circle,
                                                                                                                                                                        d see her again. "Speaking of stone circles," he said qu
omatically the fact that she had three small freckles h
                                                                                                                                                                             so maybe ... aaagh!" With a sudden jerk of her
                                                                                                                                                                               ot of soda. "I'm terribly sorry," she apolog
o assist with a handful of linen napkin
 howering Roger's lap and thighs with single malt whisky and quite a
 stal, despite Roger's half-coherent attempts to stop her. Brianna, comi
                                                                                                                                                 ng t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     s se
 surgery, I don't know. You're just not safe with anything smaller than a
                                                                                                                                                                                       -box. Look, you've got his shoes s
                                                                                                                                                   bread
 otch and fragments of crystal. "An dhis pants, too." Whipping a fres
                                                                                                                                                h napkin
                                                                                                                                                                                           from the stack over her arm, sh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          striously polished Roger's toes, her red mane floating deliriously around his
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          closed his eyes and thought frantically of terrible car crashes on the motorway himself utterly as Brianna Randall's warm breath misted softly through the w
nees. Her head was rising, as she p
                                                         eered at his thighs, dabbing ener
                                                                                                                                              getically at d
                                                                                                                                                                                                amp spots on the corduroy. R
                                                               ue and the Blob from Outer Sp
                                                                                                                                                                                                    that might stop him disgra
 et fabric of his trousers. "Er, mayb
                                                               e you'd like to do the rest your
                                                                                                                                               elf?" The voice
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            d the level of his nose, and he opened his eyes to find a pair of deep blue eye
                                                                                                                                                                                                      came from somewhere
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           un
 facing him above a wide grin. He
                                                                 rather weakly took the na
                                                                                                                                             kin she was offeri
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            h he had just been chased by a train. Lowering his head to scrub at his trous
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           d amusement. There was nothing else visible in her expression; nothing of th
as probably his imagination, he thought. For why on earth should she have d
disposed to find something hilarious in the idea; I had noticed her biting the
ers, he caught sight of Claire Randa
                                                                        II watching him
                                                                                                                                            ith an expression of
                                                                         eyes just befo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               m a?" Brianna s
one it on purpose? "Since when ar
 insides of her cheeks while I was cha
                                                                                                                                                                                         akefield, an
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            d the grin she had been hidin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           hen was now plastered across her face. "You going to get your own bedsheet
and join up?" "Bound to be more entertai nin ont of us. "No," I said, switching to seriousness. "It isn't the Druid lad
                                                                                                                                                              than hospita I staff meetings ev
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ery Thursday," I said. "Bit draf
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           though." She hooted with laughter, startling two chickadees off the walk in fr
                                                                                                                                                             I'm after, so much. There's some
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ne I used to know in Scotland
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      at I wanted to find, if I can. I haven't an address for her-I haven't been in touch
                                                                                                                                                                     e that: witchcraft, old bell
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   Sh e once lived near here; I thought if she was still here, she might be involved wi
with her for more than twenty years—but she had an interest in odd thing
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        folklore. All that sort of thing
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ngers and bounced into the deep grass along the walk, "Damn!" I said, stoop
g for it. My fingers were unsteady as I groped through the dense stalks
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          from the wet grass. The thought of Geillis Duncan tended to unnerve me, even
                                                                                                                                                                               I had trouble picking up
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      the clip, slippery with moist
now. "I don't know," I said, brushing the curls back off my flushed face
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ifferent name by now. She was widowed; she might have married again, or be u think of Roger Wakefield, Mama?" I glanced at her; her cheeks were pink, but
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ong time, I'm sure she'd have
using her maiden name." "Oh." Brianna lost interest in the topic, and
                                                                                                                                                                                       along in silence for a little. Suddenly she said, "What did
                                                                                                                                             alked
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        t professors at Oxford." The intelligence I had known about; I wondered wheth said, dreamily ignoring the question of his brain. "Aren't they the greenest you
 it might be from the spring wind. "He seems a very nice young man,
                                                                                                                                           aid ca
                                                                                                                                                                                                     "He's certainly intelligent; he's one of the youn
er he had any imagination. So often scholarly types didn't. But imagi
                                                                                                                                                                                           ould be helpful. "He's got the grooviest eyes," Brian
                                                                                                                                        ion w
or he had any imagnation. So often scholarly types didn't. But imagnation we ever seen?" "Yes, they're very striking," I agreed. "They've alway ou have to say 'My, how you've grown?' when he answered the doo g up his nose," I defended myself, "you can't help remarking the different over to get the whisky." "Mo-THERRR! They'll hear you!" We do stare at us as we came up. "Is this the place for the Loch-side one of the ladies said kindly. "The bus will be comin' along in ten
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        m as a child." Brianna looked down at me, frowning. "Yes, Mother, really! Did y een someone hovering round your navel, and suddenly you find yourself lookin
                                                                                                                                                                                             ke that; I remember noticing them when I first me
mbarrassing!" I laughed. "Well, when you've la
                                                                                                                                    een li
                                                                                                                        r?
                                                                                                                                How e
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        s a very nice bottom, too," I remarked, just to keep her going. "I noticed when h
                                                                                                                                                                                                   "Mother!" But she fizzed with laughter. "He
                                                                                                                         ference.
                                                                                                                         e wer
                                                                                                                                                                                                   e nearly at the bus stop. There were two o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ree women and an elderly gentleman in tweeds standing by the sign; they turne
                                                                                                                                                                                                     Tours bus?" I asked, scanning the bewi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ring array of notices and advertisements posted on the signboard. "Och, aye,
                                                                                                                                                                                                      minutes or so." She scanned Brianna
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        o clearly American in blue jeans and white windbreaker. The final patriotic note
was added by the flushed face, red with suppressed laughter. "Yo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        irst time, is it?" I smiled at her. "I sailed down the loch with my husband twenty
                                                                                                                                                                                                        u'll be going to see Loch Ness? Yo
odd years ago, but this is my daughter's first trip to Scotland." "O
                                                                                                                                                                                                         h, is it?" This attracted the attention
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        t he other ladies and they crowded around, suddenly friendly, offering advice a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      mb ing the steps, admiring the picturesque drawing of green serpentine loops we'll see the monster?" "You never know," I said. Roger spent the rest of the
nd asking questions until the big yellow bus came chugging roun
                                                                                                                                                                                                           d the corner. Brianna paused before
                                                                                                                                                                                                            his will be fun," she said, laughing. "Th
undulating through a blue-paint lake, edged with black pines.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      na tion to the Society for the Preservation of Antiquities lay spilling out of their
                                                                                                                                                                                                             o another. The books to be pack ed for
day in a state of abstraction, wandering absently from one task t
carton, the Reverend's ancient flatbed lorry sat in the drive with
                                                                                                                                                                                                                its bonnet up, halfway through
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ch eck , and a cup of tea sat half-drunk and milk-scummed at his elbow as he g
azed blankly out at the falling rain of early evening. What he sho
                                                                                                                                                                                                                 uld do, he knew, was get at th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      smant ling the heart of the Reverend's study. Not the books; massive as that jo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      SPA or the Reverend's old college library. No, sooner or later he would have to
b was, it was only a matter of deciding which to keep himself, a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                  nd which should be dispate
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    hed to t
ackle the enormous desk, which had papers filling each huge d
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           truding
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     m its dozens of pigeonholes. And he'd have to take down and dispose of all of
                                                                                                                                                                                                                   rawer to the brim and pro
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               fro
he miscellany decorating the cork wall that filled one side of th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  t. Aside from a general disinclination to start the tedious job, Roger was
                                                                                                                                                                                                                     e room; a task to daunt
 hampered by something else. He didn't want to be doing these
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      w anted to be working on Claire Randall's project, tracking down the clansmen
of Culloden. It was an interesting enough project in its way, tho
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      search job. But that wasn't it. No, he thought, if he were being honest with himsel
  he wanted to tackle Claire Randall's project because he want
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           s. Thomas's guesthouse and lay his results at the feet of Brianna Randall, as
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                get results on that scale, he urgently wanted some excuse to see her and t
She and her mother both gave that odd impression of having been outline
 knights were supposed to have done with the heads of drago
                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ns. Even if he did
alk with her again. It was a Bronzino painting she reminded h
d somehow, drawn with such vivid strokes and delicate detail
                                                                                                                                                                                                                             that they stoo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ut from their background as though they'd been engraved on it. But Brian
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   e Bronzino's sitters seem to follow you with their eyes, to be about to sp
na had that brilliant coloring, and that air of absolute physical
eak from their frames. He'd never seen a Bronzino painting m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                               aking faces a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     of whisky, but if there had been one, he was sure it would have looked
precisely like Brianna Randall. "Well, bloody hell," he said al
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      me just to look over the records at Culloden House tomorrow, will it?
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ot of ti
 ou," he said, addressing the desk and its multiple burdens,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     you," h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        e said to the wall, and defiantly plucked a mystery novel from the she
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    can wait for a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                d ay. So can
f. He glanced around belligerently, as though daring any of the glanced around belligerently, as though daring any of the light. A
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               1 00
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          as no sound but the whirring of the electric fire. He switched it off a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  he furnishings
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ut there w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             room in the dark, and retrieved the list of names from the table.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      minute later, h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              me back, cr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ossing the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ca
 Vell, bloody hell anyway!" he said, and tucked it into the po
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             n't want to forget the dam
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             n thing in the morning." He patted the pocket, feeling the soft cra
 kle of the paper just over his heart, and went up to bed. We
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             Loch Ness blown
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                with wind and chilled with rain, to the warm comfort of a hot su
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        had come ba
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ck fro
pper and an open fire in the parlor. Brianna had begun to ya
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                xcused herself to go and take a hot bath. I stayed downstairs for
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        wn over the sci
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              eggs, and soon e
r a bit, chatting with Mrs. Thomas, the landlady, and it was n
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ore i made my way
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  up to my own bath and nightgown. Brianna was an early riser
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          early ten o'cloc
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         k b
and an early sleeper; her soft breathing greeted me as I pus
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    r, she was also a sound one; I moved carefully around the ro
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            hed open the bedr oo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              door. An early sleepe
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             re was little danger
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               waking her. The hous
om, hanging up my clothes and tidying things away, but the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      e grew quiet as I went about my work, so that the rustle of m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         oks with me, intending to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       donate them to the Inverness Library. They were laid neatly ne by one, laying them on the bed. Five hardbound volum
 own movements seemed loud in my ears. I had brought s
in the bottom of my suitcase, forming a foundation for the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ems above. I took them out o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               more squashabl
es, glossy in bright dust covers. Nice, substantial things; fi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           x and illustrations. My late husband's Collected Works,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     pages each, not counting inde
n the Fully Annotated editions. Inches of admiring reviews
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     flaps, comments from every re
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            cognized expert in the historical field. Not bad for a Life
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  covered the ja
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    authoritative. I stacked the books
 s Work, I thought. An accomplishment to be proud of. Com
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    pact, weight
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                neatly on the table next to my bag, so as not to forget
 them in the morning. The titles on the spines were differen
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ut I stacked them so that the uniform
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   'Frank W. Randall"'s at the ends lined up, one abov
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      t. of course
e the other. They glowed jewel-bright in the small pool of li
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              bedside lamp. The bed-and-breakfast w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  as quiet; it was early in the year for guests, and tho
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       aht from t
se there were had long since gone to sleep. In the other tw
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           nna made a small whuffling noise and rolle
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    d over in her sleep, leaving long strands of red hair
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         in bed. E
draped across her dreaming face. One long, bare foot prot
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         m the bedclothes, and I pulled the blanket gen
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      tly over it. The impulse to touch a sleeping child n
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ruded 1
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ro
ever fades, no matter that the child is a good deal larger th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            an her
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       other, and a woman-if a young one-in her own
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         right. I smoothed the hair back from her face an
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  flex of contentment, gone as soon as it appeared.
d, you are so like him." I swallowed the faint thickenin
d stroked the crown of her head. She smiled in her sleep, a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            own smile lingered as I watched her, and whi
spered to her sleep-deaf ears, as I had so many times befo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          g in my throat—it was nearly habit, by now—a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               re,
nd took my dressing gown from the chair back. It was bloo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                Id at night in the Scottish Highlands in April, but I wasn
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            t yet ready to seek the warm sanctuary of my
own twin bed. I had asked the landlady to leave the fire bu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               the sitting room, assuring her that I would bank it before r
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              etiring. I closed the door softly, still seeing t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                ispered to the dark hallway. "Maybe not so ackbone of the main log. I pulled a small a
he sprawl of long limbs, the splash and tumble of red silk
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        acro ss
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            e quilted blue spread. "Not bad for a Life's Work, either," I wh
compact, but damned authoritative." The small parlor was
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           cozy, the fire burnt down to a steady glow of flame along the b
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  hirr of the refrigerator in the basement be
rmchair up before the fire and propped my feet on the fen
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       ar all the small usual sounds of modern life around me; the faint w
low, the hum and whoosh of the central heating that made
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     mfort rather than a necessity; the passing rush of an occasional car
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   outside. But under everything was the d
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  enty years since I last felt it, but the soothing power of the dark was still er—a copy of the list I had given Roger Wakefield. It was too dark to read
eep silence of a Highland night. I sat very still, reaching fo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      I there, cradled between the mountains
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     d ou t the folded p
 I reached into the pocket of my dressing gown and pulle
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        by firelight, but I didn't need to see th
e names. I unfolded the paper on my silk-clad knee and s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            blindly staring at
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   lines of illegible type. I ran my finger slowly across each line, murmuring
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         each man's name to myself like a pra
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           speaking their names as though to
 er. They belonged to the cold spring night, more than I d
                                                                                                                                                                                                                            id. Bu t I kept looking into
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            the flames, letting the dark outside come to fill the empty places inside me. And
summon them, I began the first steps back, crossing the eling of bafflement. What had at first seemed a fairly stra
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             aited. 2 THE PLOT THICKENS Roger left Culloden House next morning with twel
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   y dark to where they w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ve pages of notes and a growing fe
                                                                                                                                                                                                                             b of historical research wa
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               s turning up some odd twists, and no mistake. He had found only three of the n
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              ames from Claire Randall's list a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                ard jo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                the Bonnie Prince apparently on
 nong the rolls of the dead of Culloden. This in itself was
                                                                                                                                                                                        g re mark
                                                                                                                                                                                                                          able. Charles Stuart's army h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   ad rarely had a coherent roll of enlistment, as some clan chieftains had joined
 whim, and many had left for even less reason, before the na
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       could be inscribed on any official document. The Highland army's record-ke
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 eping, haphazard at best, had d
                                                                                                                                                                                       men
                                                                                                                                                                eepin ga
  integrated almost completely toward the end; there was little
                                                                                                              poin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             othing with which to pay the men on it. He carefully folded his lanky frame
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  and inserted himself into his a
  cient Morris, automatically ducking to avoid bumping his head. Ta
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ened it and f
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      pages he had copied. What was odd about it was that nearly all of the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     men on Claire's list had bee
                                                                                                                                      the f older
                                                                                                                                                                                          m under
                                                                                                                                                                                                             his arm, he op
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            rowned
  shown on another army list. Within the ranks of a given clan regiment, m
                                                                                                                                                                            ght have deserted
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       clearer; that would have been nothing unusual. No, what made the wh
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              saster became
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ole thing so incomprehensib
  was that the names on Claire's list had shown up—entire and complete—as pa
                                                                                                                                                                  rt of the Master of Lovat's
                                                                                                                                                                                                                reaiment, s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   ent late in the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             gn to fulfill a promise
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            of support made to the Stuarts by Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat. Yet Cl
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        aire had definitely said—an
  a glance at her original sheets confirmed it—that these men had all come from a sma
                                                                                                                                                         Il estate called Broch Tuarach, we
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   of the MacKenzie clan lands, in fact. More than that, she had sai
                                                                                                                                                                                                                 Il to the s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  outh and west
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             raser lands—on the border
                                                                                                                                           ginning of the campaign. Roger shook hi oath of allegiance to the chief of clan Fraser,
  the Highland army since the Battle of Prestonpans, which had occurred near the be
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           istaken the timing—she had said herself that she was no his
                                                                                                                                                                                                                 s head.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  This made no k
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            nse. Granted, Claire might have m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           torian. But not the locati
 on, surely? And how could men from the estate of Broch Tuarach, who had given no
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            mon Fraser? True, Lord Lovat had been
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   known as "the Old Fox," and for good reason, but Roger
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 een at the dispo sal of Si
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             doubted that even that
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             ives at Culloden House were depressingly i
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       ncomplete: mostly a lot of picturesque letters from Lor
 edoubtable old Earl had had sufficient willness to pull off something like this. Fro
                                                                                                                                  wning to himself, Roger started the car and pulled o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                the parking lot.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             d George Murray, beefi
ng about supply problems, and things that looked good in the museum displark it at Culloden. What does it matter how they got there, so long as they l
                                                                                                                             ys for the tourists. He needed a lot more than that. "Hold
                                                                                                                                                                                                                               . cock." he remin
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             self, squinting in the rearview mirror at the turn
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                "You're meant to be finding out what happened to t he ones that didn't ca
                                                                                                                      eft the battle in one piece?" But he couldn't leave it alone. It w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ce. Names got muddled with enormous frequency,
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         cially in the Highlands, where half the populat ion at any given mo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                             s such an odd cir
 nent seemed to be named "Alexander." Consequently, men had custo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ad of the surnames. "Lochiel," one of the most promine
                                                                                                                marily been known by their place-names, as well as their clan or su
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        nt Jacobite chieftains, was in fact Donald Cam
                                                                                                                                                                                                                             rnames. Sometim
                                                                                                              named Donald. And all the Highland men who hadn't been named Don without place-names attached; just the plain name, and the regime
 ch distinguished him nicely from the hundreds of other Camerons
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            en name d John. Of the three names that he'd found on the death rol
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              Is that matched Claire's list, one was Donald
                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ald or Alec had be
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     Murray, one was
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ed. The Master of Lovat's regiment, the Fraser regiment. But w
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  ithout the place-name, he couldn't be sure that they were the
 Alexander MacKenzie Fraser, and one was John Graham Fraser.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                             nt to which they'd
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            tion to completeness or accuracy—most of the records had been
 same men as the names on Claire's list. There were at least s
                                                                                                  ix John
                                                                                                                    Frasers on the death roll, and even that was incomplete; the Eng
                                                                                                                                                                                                                               lish had given lit
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      compiled after the fact, by clan chieftains counting noses a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           gh his hair with frustration, as though scalp massage might stimul
nd determining who hadn't come home. Frequently the chi
                                                                                                                    mselves hadn't come home, which complicated matters. He rub
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ate his brain. And if the three names weren't the same m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ed his hand har
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            the center of the battle. It was inconceivable that a group of thirty
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            n had survived in that position without one fatality. Th
en, the mystery only deepened. A good half of Charles S
                                                                                                                       had been slaughtered at Culloden. And Lovat's men had been
                                                                                                 art's army
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  the thick of it.
 Master of Lovat's men had come late to the Rising;
                                                                                                                        d been rife in other regiments, who had served long enough
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ey were in for, the Frasers had been remarkably loyal-and suff
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 consequence. A loud horn-blast from behind startle
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ided. End up smashed against a stone wall, if he kept this up.
d him out of his concentration, and he pulled to the
                                                                                                                           noyed lorry rumble past. Thinking and driving were not c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    for a moment, pondering. His natural impulse wa
                                                                                   side to I
                                                                                                   et a large, an
                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ompati
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ble activities
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               He sat still
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           nce of Brianna Randall enhanced the appeal of this idea. On
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            the other hand, all his historian's instincts cried out for more d
s to go to Mrs. Thomas's bed-and-breakfast, and
                                                                                                                             nd to date. The fact that this might involve basking for
                                                                                                                                                                                                                    a few mo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ments in th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           e prese
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           time, interfere with its completion by giving him inaccurate information. It was n't sensible, and Claire Randall struck him as done it on purpose—and as she didn't really seem the so rt for practical jokes, he was compelled to assume she'd done it to
ata. And he wasn't at all sure that Claire was the e person to pro
                                                                                                                               dn't imagine why she should commission him to do t
                                                                                                    vide it. He coul
                                                                                                                                                                                                                    his project, and at th
an eminently sensible person. Still, there wa s that business w
                                                                                                                                  His cheeks grew hot in memory. He was positive s
                                                                                                      ith the whisky.
 stop him inviting Brianna to Broch Tuarac
                                                                                                       t to keep him aw
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                here? The more he thought about the incident, the more convinced he became the hat Claire Randall was keeping somethin
                                                                            h. Did she wan
                                                                                                                                    ay from the place, or only to stop him t
                                                                                                                                                                                                                               aking Brianna t
  from her daughter, but what it was, he
                                                                                                                                      he think what connection it had
                                                                                                                                                                                                         with him, or the project he had undertaken. H
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          e'd give it up, were it not for two things. Bri anna, and simple curiosity. He wanted to know what was going on, an
                                                                                                         . Still less could
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     the engine again and pulled into the road. At the next roundabout, he t Papers had been a close friend of the Reverend. And he had one clue to start with, puzzling as it was
  he bloody well intended to find out.
                                                          He rapped hi
                                                                                                         softly against the
                                                                                                                                         wheel, thinking, ignorin
                                                                                                                                                                                          g the rush of passing traffic. At last, decision made, he started
                                                                                                                                                                                uld have him in Edinburgh in three hours. The curator in charge of the Stuar
                                                         erness, and the rai
                                                                                                         oad station. The FI
 nd headed for the town center of Inv
                                                                                                                                          ying Scotsman co
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       pparent link between Broch Tuarach and the Frasers of Lovat. He wondered wind blow past his ear. He had had to stay overnight in Edinburgh, and comin
 The roll that had listed the names
                                                                                                                                                                        y men as being under the command of a Captain James Fraser—of Broch Tuarach. Th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    is man was the only a
                                                         in the Master of Lovat's
                                                                                                           regiment had shown
                                                                                                                                                                  id-April, and Roger made the most of it by cranking down the tiny window on the driver's side,
 why James Fraser had not appea red on Claire's list. The sun wa
                                                                                                               s out: a rare event
                                                                                                                                                for m
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         to let the bright
 back late the next day, had be en so tired from the long train ride
                                                                                                                                                           e little more than eat the hot supper Fiona insisted on fixing him before he fell into bed. But today he ha
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     of renewed energy and determination, and moto red down to the small village o
                                                                                                                       that he had do
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              d risen full
                                             of the estate called Broch Tuarach. If
                                                                                                                                                     n't want Brianna Randall going to Broch Tuarach, there was nothing stopping him from having a look at the pla 💎 ce. He
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    had actually found Broch Tuarach itself, or at least he assumed so; there was a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ving and for de
n enormous pile of fallen sto ne, surrounding the collapsed remnant
                                                                                                                                                                                              r brochs, or towers, used in the distant past both for li
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                nse. He had sufficient Gaelic to know that the name meant "north-facing tower,
                                                                                                                                               e ancient circula
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              uins, though a good deal more of it was left. An estate ag ent's sign, weathered alm
                                           ust how a circular tower could have com
                                                                                                                                           name. There was a
                                                                                                                                                                                                            manor house and
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 its outbuildings
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             nearby, also in r
                                          cked to a stake in the dooryard. Roger stoo
                                                                                                                                      pe above the house, loo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       around. At a glance, he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 could see nothing that would explain Claire's wanting to keep her daughter from
ost to illegibility, stood ta
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  had taken him nearly forty-five
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  minutes of careful maneuvering to get his Morris down the rutted country lane
coming here. He parked
                                         the Morris in the dooryard, and climbed out.
                                                                                                                                   beautiful site, but very remote; it
from the main highwa y without fracturing his oil pan. He didn't go int o the
                                                                                                                               house; it was plainly abandoned, and po
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        ssibly dangerous—there would be noth ing there. The name FRASER was carved into the lintel , though, and the sam
                                                                                                                           e family graveyard—those that were legible. Not a great help, th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        at, he reflected. None of these stones bore the names of men o n his list. He'd have to go on along the road; according g to the AA map, the
                                                                                                                          small village church had fallen into disuse and been kn
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            ocked down years ago. Persistent knockings on do ors elicited blank stares, dour looks, and finally a dou btful speculation fr
village of Broch Mh
                                 orda was three miles farther on. As he'd feared, the
                                  that the old parish records might have gone to the
                                                                                                                    museum in Fort William, or maybe up to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   verness; there was a minister up that
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               way who collected such rubbish. Tired and dusty, b ut not yet discour
om an aged farmer
                                  ed back to his car, sheltering in the lane by the vi
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         o often attended historical field rese arch, and he was used to it. A quick pint—well,
aged, Roger trudg
                                                                                                                 llage pub. This was the sort of setbac
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    kth ats
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        two, maybe, it w
                                   rm day—and then on to Fort William. Serve hi m right, he reflected wryly, if the recor
as an unusually
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 ds he was lo
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           oking for turned out to be in the Rev erend's archives all along. That's what he
                                      -goose chases to impress a girl. His trip t o Edinburgh had done little more than ser
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        three names he'd found at Culloden Hou se; all three men proved to have com e from d ifferent regime
his work to go o n wild
                                                                                                                                                                                                                           ve to elim inate the
                                       arach group. The Stuart Papers took u
                                                                                                        p three entire rooms, as well as untold packing cases in t he basement of the mu seum, so he could har dly claim to have made an exhaustive study. Still, he had f ound a duplicate of the payroll h e'd seen at C ulloden Hous
ents, not the B roch Tu
                                            he men as part of a regiment under
                                                                                                         the overall command of the Master of Lovat—the Old Fox's son, that would have been, Young Simon. Cagy old bastard split his vote, Roger thought; sent the heir to fight
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                for the Stuarts, and stayed home himself, c laiming to h
e, listing the joining of t
                                              King Geordie all along. Much g ood it did him. That document had listed Simon Fraser the Younger as commander, and made no mention of James Fraser was mentioned in a number of ar my dispatches, memor anda, and other documents, thou
ave been a lo yal subject of
gh. If it was the same man.
                                                 he'd been fairly active in the
                                                                                                   campaign. Still, with only the name "James Fraser," it was impossible to tell if it was the Broch Tuarach one; James was as common a Highland name as Duncan or Robert. In
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    only one spot was
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     a James Fraser listed wi th additio
                                                   help in identification, but t hat document made no mention of his men. He shrugged, irritably waving off a sudden clou d of voracious midges. To go through those records in coherent fashion would take sev ed into the dark, brewe ry atmosphere of the pub, leaving them to mill outside in a frenzied cloud of inquiry. Sipping the cool, bitter ale, he mentally reviewed the steps taken so far, and the options open to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     eral years. Un able to shake the attentio
nal middle
                  names that might
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           lli am toda
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      him. He
midges, h
                                     e ďuck
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          had time to go to Fort Wi
                                                                                           it would mean getting back to Inverness late. And if the Fort William museum turned up noth ing, then a good rummage through the Reverend's archives was the logical, if ironic, next glass. Well, if it came down to it, a tramp round every kirkyard and burying ground in the gener al vicinity of Broch Tuarach was likely the best he could do in the short term. He doubted the
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         . And after that? He dra
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ined th e last dr
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          step
y, though
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   at the Randalls would
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             stay in Inver ness fo
ops of bi
              r the ne xt two or three years, patient ly awaiting res ults. He felt in his pocket for the notebook that is the historian's constant companion. Before he left Broch Mhorda, he should at least have a look at what was left of the old kirkyard. You ne
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     turn up, and it wo uld at
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               ver knew what might
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               d any who died for sure at C
                                                                  afternoon, t he Randalls came to take tea at Roger's invitation, and to hear his progress report. "I've found se veral of the names on your list," he told Claire, leading the way into the study. "It's very odd; I
least sa ve him coming back. The next
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               haven't yet foun
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           down?" Roger invited, and with
ullode n. I thought I had three, but they t urned ou
                                                                                    t to be different men with the same names." He glanced at Dr. Randall; she was standing quite still , one hand clasping the back of a wing chair, as though she'd forgotten where she was. "Er, wo n't you sit
a sma II, startled jerk, she nodded and sat
                                                                                    tly on the edge of the seat. Roger eyed her curiously, but went on, pulling out his folder of research notes and handing it to her. "As I say, it's odd. I haven't tracked down all the names; I think I'll need to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      go nose about among the paris h re
                                                                                  ound most of these records among my father's papers. But you'd think I'd have turned up one or two battle-deaths at least, given that they were all at Culloden. Especially if, as you say, they were wi
gister s and graveyards near Broch Tuarach
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             h one of the Fraser regiments: those we ere
near
         ly all in the center of the battle, where the
                                                                                  fighting was thickest." "I know." There was something in her voice that made him look at her, puzzled, but her face was invisible as she bent over the desk. Most of the records were copies, made in R
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       oger's own hand, as the exotic technology of
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ds with a gentle finger, careful not to touch the
                                                                                 vernment archive that guarded the Stuart Papers, but there were a few original sheets, unearthed from the late Reverend Wakefield's hoard of eighteenth-century documents. She turned over the recor
        ocopying had not yet penetrated to the go
frag ile paper more than necessary. "You're righ
                                                                               t; that is odd." Now he recognized the emotion in her voice—it was excitement, but mingled with satisf action and relief. She had been in some way expecting this—or hoping for it. "Tell me ..." She hesit
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      ated. "The names you've found. What happe ne
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