

# [PDF] Sleepless In Scotland (The MacLeans)

**Karen Hawkins - pdf download free book**

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**Description:**

**About the Author Karen Hawkins** is a *USA TODAY* and *New York Times* bestselling author. When not stalking hot Australian actors, getting kicked out of West Virginia thanks to the antics of her extended family, or adding to her considerable shoe collection, Karen spends her time writing her next delightfully fun and sexy historical romance.

**Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Chapter 1**

*"There's naught worse than a man who thinks he's  
always right -- 'cept a woman who always is."*

OLD WOMAN NORA TO HER THREE WEE  
GRANDDAUGHTERS ON A COLD WINTER'S NIGHT

*I forbid* you to go." Though merely twenty years old, William Hurst thought himself in charge of Wythburn Vicarage when his father was away. "Be warned, Triona," he added in his deepest voice. "I will do everything in my power to halt this madness!" His oldest sister didn't even look up from digging out a worn portmanteau from her wardrobe. Caitriona -- Triona to her family -- placed the case on her bed and snapped it open, then began packing.

"Did you hear me?" William said more loudly, "I forbid -- "

"What? Oh, yes, I heard you. But *someone* has to go to London and talk some sense into Caitlyn."

"Yes, but -- "

"Since Father and Mother are visiting Uncle Traveres for two more weeks, and you are in the midst of preparing for your exams, that someone will have to be me."

William scowled. A handsome young man possessing considerable height, he was used to being paid more heed. Everyone in the county deferred to him, except his own family, even when he wore his high-collared coat of blue superfine, his cravat tied in an impressive array of knots. "You are not Caitlyn's keeper."

"But I *am* her twin sister, so it falls on me to help her out of this mess she's made."

"William, leave Triona be." Eighteen-year-old Robert stood by the door, his arms wrapped around a huge tome, and smirked at his older brother. "Father expressly placed Triona in charge when he left. I heard him."

William scowled. "Father didn't intend her to go running off to London. As I'm the oldest male, that should be *my* job."

Triona adjusted her spectacles more securely on her nose and laughed. "Ah! I see; you don't wish to miss out on the fun. Well, I promise I won't stay long enough to have any." She crossed her fingers and held them up, saying primly, "Promise is as promise does."

William sighed. "I don't mind you having fun. I just don't wish you to find yourself in an awkward situation. A female -- "

"Who is twenty-three years of age."

" -- traveling alone -- "

"Nurse is going with me."

" -- to the most licentious city on earth, a den of iniquity and vice -- "

"Ooh! Very well said!" She looked him up and down in admiration. "Is that from one of Father's sermon books?"

William couldn't stop a sheepish grin. "You know what I mean."

"I do, and I promise to be careful. But I'm the only one Caitlyn will listen to, so I must go."

"Yes, but -- "

"William!" Seventeen-year-old Mary dropped her knitting with a huff of irritation. "This is an

*emergency!* Caitlyn is acting so badly that poor Aunt Lavinia was forced to write for assistance!" Her lips quivered. "After this, Aunt Lavinia will *never* invite any of us to stay with her for a season!"

William sighed. "I'm not saying we shouldn't rescue Caitlyn from whatever mischief she's bent on; I just wish we could ask Father's opinion on how to deal with it."

"No, you don't," Michael said sharply from beside the fire, wrapped in a blanket to ward off the room's chill. Thin and pale and given to a weak chest, he possessed a sharp wit and a sharper mind that outstripped his fifteen years. Having caught the same ague that had kept Triona from enjoying a season in London with Caitlyn, he had not yet recovered, with an unnatural flush still coloring his thin cheeks and a wretched cough that lingered. "Father is the last person to notify about this. If he knew how badly Caitlyn has been behaving, he'd never allow another of us to visit Aunt Lavinia."

Mary chimed in, "It took *months* to get him to agree to allow Caitlyn and Triona to go, and when Triona became ill and couldn't travel, he tried to cancel the entire trip and Mother had to intervene and -- "

"I know!" William said, clearly exasperated. "I was here, too."

"Then you should know that telling Father anything negative would be a colossal error."

Michael nodded. "Mary's right. Father would -- " He coughed, a long, racking effort that sounded as if his toes might curl inside out.

Triona paused in folding her silver-threaded shawl and gave him a worried glance. The vicarage at Wythburn was a rambling, drafty house given to mysterious creaks and leaks. Besides the uneven stairs that leaned to one side and warped floorboards that no amount of nails could hold flat, cold gusts rattled the doors and windows and kept damp corners from drying out properly.

She frowned at her youngest brother. "Are you taking your medicine?"

Michael grimaced. "No." Before she could protest, he added sullenly, "It makes me too sleepy."

"Sleep would be good for you."

"All I *do* is sleep. I'm rested enough as it is."

William frowned. "You can't tell me you slept well last night, for I heard you coughing well into the morning hours."

Triona pointed to the bottle at Michael's elbow. "Take it."

"But -- "

She set her hands on her hips. "Michael John Hurst, don't make me sing."

William turned to his brother. "Michael, take that medicine!"

"*Please*," Mary pleaded fervently.

Clutching his book, Robert pointed to the bottle. "For all our sakes!"

Michael gave a weak laugh that turned into another racking cough. When he could breathe again, he picked up the bottle and a spoon. "Fine, but only because I feel sorry for all of you. I don't mind if

Triona sings to me."

"How can you not?" Mary asked.

He grinned. "Because this ague has stopped up my ears. You all sound like you're very far away."

Triona waited to make sure he took a full dose, then turned back to her packing. "If all goes well, I should be back from London before Father returns. And if I can secure Aunt Lavinia's silence, he need never know."

Mary brightened. "Then he might not protest if she invites another of us to visit her for a season!"

Triona nodded. If Mary didn't eat too many crème tarts, she might well rival Caitlyn in looks one day. Meanwhile, Caitlyn was in full bloom, and it was difficult to imagine a more winsome beauty.

Although Triona and Caitlyn were twins and enjoyed some similarities, there were many more differences between them. Caitlyn was small and slim with golden hair, tilted dark brown eyes, a heart-shaped face, and a mesmerizingly graceful way of floating across a room that left men standing mouths agape, their eyes glued to her. Triona was tall and more rounded, her hair more brown than gold, her hazel eyes hidden by spectacles and lacking the tilt that made Caitlyn's so compelling. And no matter how Triona tried, she couldn't float across the room any more than she could trim a few inches off her ungainly height.

But it was more than that. It was the way Caitlyn laughed, and charmed, and...oh, Triona couldn't define it. Neither could the dozens of besotted young men who'd attempted to describe Caitlyn's charms in laughably bad poetry and gushing conversation.

"Before Triona leaves, we must all do one thing," Michael said, his tone unyielding. "We must all vow not to tell Father about Triona's trip. *All* of us." He gave Robert a pointed stare.

"Yes," William said immediately, his gaze locked on Robert as well. "We must *all* vow to keep our mouths closed."

Robert turned a dull red. "I won't vow any such thing! Father wouldn't wish us to keep secrets from him."

Robert had won Father's approval by applying himself to his studies in a way that left his siblings glaring at him from their respective corners of the dinner table, especially when he smugly answered one of Father's more esoteric questions in flawless Greek or Latin.

"Perhaps you don't understand the situation." Triona picked up a letter from the bed and handed it to Robert. "Aunt Lavinia is at wit's end to know what to do. As much as I esteem our aunt for her good nature and generosity, we all know how Caitlyn can be at times."

Mary nodded. "No one is more stubborn."

"Or impulsive." Michael's voice was faintly slurred, the medicine beginning to take effect.

Robert read the missive, then gave a snort of disgust. "Aunt Lavinia can't think ordering Caitlyn about will help things! It will only make her more determined to do worse."

William sighed. "It doesn't matter how badly Caitlyn mulls things -- none of us have the funds to visit London, anyway."

"But just think," Mary said earnestly. "If Caitlyn makes an advantageous marriage, she can invite us to stay with her in London and take us to balls and plays and all sorts of events!"

Triona smiled dreamily, placing two books into her portmanteau. "I should like to see the British Museum."

Robert brightened. "By Jove, that would be something! I heard the Elgin Marbles are on display."

Michael said, "I'd like to go see Tattersalls auction house."

On her way to fetch her half boots from the wardrobe, Triona paused by the settee to muss Michael's hair. "That would be lovely," she agreed.

William's eyes shone. "I'd like to see that, too! And Gentleman Jackson's Boxing Saloon, and Vauxhall Gardens, and -- "

Triona laughed. "Caitlyn had better marry a man with a very, very large house so we will all fit."

"And she would certainly let us stay with her, for she's very generous," Mary said.

"And foolish," Robert added. "And impulsive and -- "

William balled his hands into fists.

"Well, she is!" Robert eyed his older brother's fists and added hastily, "Not that it's her fault. Caitlyn's behavior is evidence of the decadent influence of London society -- "

"Oh, please." Triona folded a night rail. "Caitlyn was just as impetuous and unthinking while here in the country."

"She wasn't such a flirt," Robert insisted.

"Yes, she was," Triona said in a regretful tone. "Poor Mr. Smythe-Laughton went into a decline when she left for London, and then there was Mr. Lyndon, and Lord H... --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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