



Bewitching Season
Young Adult Historical Fantasy

Author: Marissa Doyle

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More information: www.marissadoyle.com

Like its 19th century heroines, Marissa Doyle's young adult novel *Bewitching Season* (Henry Holt Books for Young Readers) is making its debut in bookstores this spring.

Set in 1837 London, *Bewitching Season* tells the story of twin sisters embarking on their first society "season" to do what girls of that era did: look for suitably well-born, wealthy husbands. Penelope Leland is excited by the prospect, but her shyer sister Persephone (the book's narrator) would far rather stay home with their governess Ally and continue her secret studies...in magic. But when Ally disappears from a busy London street, Persy and Pen decide to search for clues to her whereabouts--and unearth a nefarious plot to control the heiress to the throne of England, Princess Victoria. Meanwhile Persy impulsively casts a love spell on handsome Lochinvar Seton, then realizes after it's too late that she doesn't want to marry a man whose love for her is forced...but is it really?

Combining historical characters and facts--the young Victoria really did have to contend with the machinations of her mother's steward--with fantasy and romance, *Bewitching Season* will appeal to lovers of mystery, history, and magic aged 14 and up. It will be followed in Spring 2009 by a sequel, also from Henry Holt.

Author Marissa Doyle lives in Massachusetts with her family, too many books and antiques (all bought for research purposes, of course) and a bossy pet rabbit. *Bewitching Season* is her first book.



About the Author

Marissa Doyle originally planned to be an archaeologist but ended up as a writer. But she's okay with that, because both careers allow her to explore the past and bring back to life the people who lived (or might have lived) there. She lives in her native Massachusetts with her family, a ludicrous number of books and antiques which she of course buys *purely* for research purposes, and a bossy pet rabbit. You can visit her at her website, www.marissadoyle.com, or at the blog on nineteenth century teen life that she shares with fellow YA author Regina Scott, www.nineteenteen.blogspot.com

Reviews of Bewitching Season

Booklist (*starred review, January 1, 2008*)

Twins Persephone and Penelope are of two minds about their coming-out season. Pen is excited about the social whirl. Persephone would rather be home studying magic with their beloved governess, Ally. But when Ally disappears somewhere in Kensington Palace, the girls must harness their magical skills amidst the swirl of balls and presentations to find her. This wonderfully crafted debut novel braids several very different story lines into an utterly satisfying whole. The mystery of Ally's whereabouts mingles with a plot to control the throne of the soon-to-be Queen Victoria. Persephone's strong attraction to her handsome neighbor, Lochinvar, provides a romantic element that makes for twists and turns, some of which are obvious ploys, but fun nonetheless. All of this is spread with a patina of magic, which somehow never overwhelms, leaving the story in the world of reality rather than in the realm of fantasy. In the midst of all this plotting, characters might have been lost, but Doyle takes as much care with characters (even minor ones) as with story details. This delightful *mélange* of genres makes for a great alternative to the depressing overload of chick lit. — *Ilene Cooper*

Kirkus (*March 1, 2008*)

In her debut, Doyle offers a heart-throbbing romance full of magic and royal-court intrigue. Penelope and Persephone Leland, 17-year-old twins, will be presented at court in London of 1837. Outgoing Pen is excited about the balls and parties, whereas bookish Persy is full of dread: She'd much rather continue to study magic and become a teacher. When the two arrive in London, their beloved governess, Ally, goes missing and the sisters try to discover her whereabouts. Persy overhears a plot against the soon-to-be-crowned Queen, and the twins must match their magical abilities against those of a powerful wizard. Amidst all the pomp and glory, Persy struggles with her own tumultuous feelings for the dashing Lord Seton, whom she's loved since they were children. Is it truly his heart professing love, or is it the result of a magic potion? There are many many plot twists and turns, which the author successfully keeps from unraveling. Though magic plays a major part, the story, with references to historical people and events, is firmly grounded in reality. Fans of historical mysteries will find this a page-turner.