

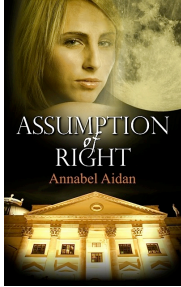
**Media Kit**

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## About The Book: Blurbs and Links

Witchcraft, politics, and theatre collide and combine as Morag D'Anneville and Secret Service agent Simon Keane fight to protect the Vice President of the United States -- or is it Morag who needs Simon's protection more than the VP?

Witch and theatre professional Morag D'Anneville is annoyed when she's assigned to dress the conservative Vice President as he makes a surprise appearance in his favorite Broadway show. Even more irritating, she has to teach Agent Simon Keane, part of the security detail, the backstage ropes in preparation. A strong attraction flares between them which they both recognize is doomed, and Simon must also fight his superior's prejudice that Morag's beliefs make her a threat to the Vice President. When Morag is attacked, Simon's loyalties are torn between protecting the man he's sworn to protect, and protecting the woman he loves.

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Annabel Aidan Webpage:

<http://www.devonellingtonwork.com/AnnabelAidan.html>

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## Excerpt 1:

“Pardon my bluntness, but Beers is an idiot. Either the show can run the way it is supposed to and the Vice President can enjoy being a Broadway star like he’s always wanted, or we’re in lockdown. Then the VP might as well go out at intermission with a cane and a top hat to tap dance.”

“You know that’s not how he wants to do it.”

“Then your team is going to have to meet us halfway.”

“I am not the problem!” Simon felt his temper rise. He resented the schoolmarm act.

“I know that. And believe me, I am unbelievably grateful that I’m dealing with you and not someone incapable of comprehending the complexity of all this and finding a way to make it work. But I want you to understand everything that’s going on.”

“That’s why I’m here,” Simon said through gritted teeth.

“I know. I’m emphasizing the point.”

Simon glared at her. For a moment, he thought he was going to reach out and shake her. Then, he realized what he wanted to do was kiss her. Pull her into his arms, touch his lips to hers, and feel her body against his.

They stared at each other for a moment. He saw an instant of shock in her eyes, followed by comprehension, followed by thoughtfulness. His own thoughts and emotions were in such a muddled state that he stepped back, putting a few feet of physical distance between them..

He'd nearly crossed a line, and he wanted to. He wanted to touch her and kiss her. Not in an abstract way, as when he observed an attractive woman in passing and spent a moment or two wondering what she was like naked or what she enjoyed in bed. He specifically wanted Morag.

It was entirely inappropriate.

## Excerpt #2:

The man's knife flashed in the glow of the streetlight. Morag kicked at him and scrambled away as he lunged for her. She stumbled, but managed to put more distance between her and the attacker. She grabbed the lid of a trashcan to use as a shield.

A couple out for an evening stroll stopped and watched the fight, mouths open. They stood directly in Simon's line of fire. "Move!" he ordered. They turned and stared at him, at the gun, like deer in headlights. He saw Morag twist, avoiding the attacker's next thrust. Simon stepped forward and shoved the couple out of the way. "Get out of here before you get hurt!"

The woman screamed, grabbed the man's hand, and they ran.

"Drop the knife! Drop it or I'll shoot!"

The attacker and Morag continued their jerky dance. If Simon fired, he risked hitting her. He needed to position himself to get a clear shot.

She was trapped between the garbage cans and the iron railing. The attacker charged again and Morag squirmed to one side. His knife scraped the plastic lid. Morag grabbed the lid off another can and threw it at him, left-handed. It hit him and bounced. He took a step back.

Simon fired.

## Excerpt #3:

Simon's mouth twitched. "At least you think I'm worthy guardian material."

"You know I do. You save my life and I—I—" She stopped.

"Yes?" Simon stared at her, interested.

"I can't talk about this right now." She stepped back.

"You're not going alone."

"The man who tried to kill me is dead."

"That doesn't mean there won't be more."

Morag shivered suddenly. "You're not just saying that, are you?" She stared into his eyes and knew he wasn't trying to scare her.

"Until we know more about him, we won't know. We won't know if he's working with Carl Douglas or if this is connected to the Vice President."

"Great. Now I have to worry about someone jumping out from behind every tree, parked car, and garbage can."

Simon pulled her into his arms. "That's why you've got me."

## Q & A with Annabel Aidan:

**Q:** Why set this piece backstage during rehearsals and performance?

**AA:** I worked backstage on Broadway for years as a dresser. There's a peculiar type of intensity intrinsic in the relationships backstage, even when they're not romantic or sexual. You spend nights, weekends, holidays with these people in a state of high adrenalin. When a show closes, you even miss the people you didn't like. And the stakes are different on Broadway than they are off-Broadway or off-off Broadway or in a regional theatre or a straw hat theatre or a dinner theatre or a community theatre. Each type of theatre has a unique atmosphere -- and believe me, I've worked all of 'em! ;) So often, backstage is portrayed in very cliched, bitchy, petty terms. We all have bitchy, petty days backstage, but without rising above it to find a manageable working rhythm, you can't sustain a successful, long-running show. People outside the business are always fascinated by my backstage stories, so I thought, why not use it to frame the piece? Besides, Broadway theatres, the old ones, all have ghost stories attached.

**Q:** So the ghost stories are true?

**AA:** The theatre in the book is an amalgam of several of the theatres in which I've worked, all of which have a deep history, and are known for their ghosts. The stories in the book were inspired by some of the ones I've heard over the years, in different theatres, that particularly resonated with me. I changed the details to support the story and gave this fictional theatre its own fictional haunted history.

**Q:** What is it about theatres and ghost stories?

**AA:** You've got a group of highly creative, energetic people in a closed, charged atmosphere filled with history. You've got energy and high adrenalin going for every performance. However you look at the phenomenon known as "ghosts" -- whether a ghost is a spirit who hasn't moved on or residual energy left by someone who's been there before, or energy created in the time and space that draws like energy to it, you have a highly charged, suggestive environment. Almost everyone who's worked in one of the theatres has experiences that can't be explained by normal means, whether they talk about it or not. And every old theatre has its special ghostly history. No one gets too upset about it. It's just part of working in theatre. And, most of the time, the experience is mischievous, not malicious. The ghosts are happy the theatre is occupied, that a show is running. They're happy for the company. There are a lot of great theatre ghost stories out there. Some are funny, some are sad, but all of them are specific to the building's history.

**Q:** Do the Secret Service actually come backstage?

**AA:** Absolutely. I've been in several situations, both on Broadway and on the road, where mucky-mucks come in with Secret Service protection. They don't come in early to learn the show, though -- they're just set up, sweep for bombs, the audience has to go through the whatever search process is deemed necessary on the night of the performance. And I've never had one of the VIPS actually come onstage to perform. That's definitely artistic license! Usually they'll come backstage right after the show to meet the cast and take photos on stage.

**Q:** What's it like, working with the Secret Service?

**AA:** My experiences were totally positive. Great men and women. Smart, interesTING, intereSTED, and funny. They're hired because they have heightened powers of observation and listening, and can think well on their feet. And wardrobe just puzzles them! Secret Service personnel are used to people either intimidated by the suit, the sunglasses, the gun, and the earpiece, or contemptuous of them. Wardrobe is the department most used to integrating new people to the show. Instead of being put off or put out, we're inclusive. We meet them as fellow professionals, with just a different speciality that's a little more life-and-death than what we do. It surprises them. We're so used to running around taking care of everyone, it's always, "Watch out for that pylon, you'll be crushed if you stand there, take a step over HERE" or "there's going to be a loud noise from that part of the stage, don't worry, it's supposed to happen" or "we've got cake in the green room, do you want some?" or "this part is really cool, stand here so you can see" or "if you're allowed to take off your jacket, I'll fix that button that's about to pop off." We make sure they feel included and part of it, without distracting them from what they need to focus on.

**Q:** How did you research the book?

**AA:** A lot of the backstage stuff is inspired by my experiences over the years, although no situation and no character is directly lifted. When you do your job as a writer, the characters evolve to be very distinct individuals and have very little to do with the original inspirations. I created the outline for a big musical to encompass what I wanted to happen both on and offstage -- and, by the end of it, I wished I knew how to write musicals, because it was a fun premise! As far as the Secret Service aspect, whenever I dealt with agents backstage, I talked to them as much as they could talk and asked questions. Some of it, in the moment, was so we could work together smoothly. Some of it was because I'm a writer and everything's material. Procedures change, and, of course, they can't go into certain details, and that has to be respected. Once

I sat down to revise the book -- and we'll get back to why I waited until revisions in a minute -- I read as many memoirs from ex-Secret Service people as I could, to get an idea of the dailiness of it. I re-read diary entries from times I interacted with agents backstage, remembered conversations, looked over notes I'd written once I'd come home. Any errors are entirely my own!

**Q:** Why did you wait until the revision to research?

**AA:** Do I dare admit it? The very first incarnation of this piece was my second year of Nano, National Novel Writing Month. Nano puts editors and publishers into despair from December until March every year, because people dash off a novel, run it through spell check, and then submit. I kept revising this book for FIVE YEARS until it was in a shape I felt was submission-worthy. I wrote the entire first draft during Nano, but over the coming years, I tore it apart and there's very little left from the original except the premise. I've found anything written during Nano needs years of revisions, rather than the months it usually takes me to revise material written outside of Nano. I did Nano for four consecutive years. I'm glad I did it, but I think, at this point, it's become counter-productive to my process. It helped build my process, but now I need to be less concerned with quantity, even in the initial draft. I still like to vomit out a first draft, but not necessarily at the rate of 2500 words a day, which is my Nano pace. What I like about Nano is that it's a playground and I could push myself out of my comfort zone. I might not have attempted romantic suspense if I hadn't been dared to by a Nano pal.

**Q:** Do you write every day?

**AA:** Since this is how I make my living, absolutely! I do my first 1K of the day-- well, usually, it's about 1500 words/day -- first thing in the morning, after yoga and feeding the cats, before anything else. After breakfast, I blog, and then I work on whatever's on deadline, market, etc. But no matter what goes haywire during the day, I always have that initial 1K. And those words start adding up pretty fast. The longer you don't write, the harder it is to get back into the rhythm of it, so writing every day is important. When you don't write, plan not writing. It cuts down on the frustration levels.

**Q:** You publish under different names. Why?

**AA:** Different names for different genres. It's loosening up in the last few years, but there are times when people in the business can't seem to fathom that one can write well in more than one genre. Readers will follow an author from genre to genre, or find an author new-to-them in their favorite genre, but some people in the business just can't wrap their heads around it. I

like to write about whatever captures my interest. Therefore, I do. Also, each pseudonym has a slightly different tone. Another reason is that I like to keep my life MINE. I don't care if someone knows my legal name. I'm not "hiding" anything. But, while I do believe in an integrated life to a certain extent, my public personas are separate from my private one. When I'm working, when I'm "on" doing an event or an appearance, I'm in public and fair game. When I'm on my own time, I'm not, and don't think you can just interrupt my private time or my dinner or knock on my door without invitation, because I will be rude. My life is my own, my work is out there. Period. It's not particularly interesting or scandalous, but it's MINE and no one else's business. Remember, I worked with actors for years -- I've watched the soul-sucking destruction that can occur when there's no separation and you have to be "on" all the time. This "you always have to be available" and "there's no such thing as privacy" is B.S. Create it. Set boundaries. Stick to them. Don't let "Them" dictate what parts of your life belong to you.

**Q:** What's next on your agenda?

**AA:** I'm working on THE SPIRIT REPOSITORY, the next Annabel Aidan romantic suspense novel. It features Bonnie, who's a peripheral character in ASSUMPTION, and her interactions with ghosts from the days when New York was New Amsterdam. Among the research materials I used for inspiration were Washington Irving's diaries. Yes, I did it properly this time, researching before and during the first draft! And then, I'll probably give Amanda her own book. She has an awful lot to say, and my trusted readers loved her. I also started another Annabel Aidan novel, an idea that's been knocking around for awhile that suddenly came together at the worst possible time in my schedule -- isn't that always the way? It deals with a married couple, very much in love, the secrets they've kept, and how those secrets come back to haunt them. Literally and figuratively. I'd love to do something with the ghost stories I set up in this book. And of course, there's plenty going on under the other names, so you'll just have to visit the blog, Ink in My Coffee, <http://devonellington.wordpress.com> to keep up! ;)

## BIO AND CONTACT INFORMATION



Annabel Aidan icon  
(substitutes for author photo)

**Annabel Aidan** writes romantic suspense with a hint of magic. She publishes under a half a dozen names in both fiction and nonfiction. She spent over twenty years working behind the scenes on Broadway, in film and television, mostly working wardrobe. Her plays are produced in New York, London, Edinburgh, and Australia. If you run towards her undoing buttons, she will tear off your clothes and flip you into something else — and then read your tarot cards.

Visit her on the web at [www.devonellingtonwork.com/annabelaidan.html](http://www.devonellingtonwork.com/annabelaidan.html) and explore her worlds.