

SONGS OF AUTUMN by Lauren Sevier

EXCERPT

Before she could say anything else, Smitty's meaty arms swept her into a lively country dance.

Her head spun as her feet flew over the ground, and she lost herself in the rhythm. Her hair fell in waves from her careful plait, and she caught sight of Mat again over Smitty's shoulder. He ruffled Finn's hair, grinning that crooked grin of his, looking over with laughter dancing in his eyes. She couldn't help but think about what it would have been like if Mat kissed her that night under the stars.

Would she still fidget incessantly, driven to madness by this heat in her blood? Perhaps she'd drunk too much wine, but when Smitty clapped his hands and spun her around wildly, she laughed and danced without a thought to his hands wrapped around her waist. If he'd done this a couple of moons ago, those same hands would have been cut off for his impertinence. Tia pulled Gareth up and forced him into a stiff rendition of her twirling, her skirts spinning around her in a swish of thick brocade. Her beauty became luminous when she smiled so wide. Her light spilled over, filling up the entire room. At this moment, feet stomping and hearts beating in perfect synchronicity, they were infinite.