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The following mini-excerpt is near the beginning of Temptation of a Highland Scoundrel. Isobel is at her home, Castle Haven. She's in the bedchamber of her friend and sister-in-law, Catriona MacDonald, heroine of Sins of a Highland Devil. Because Catriona is now pregnant, she's resting in her bed.

It is Midsummer Eve and their topic is Kendrew Mackintosh. His clan is famed for their raucous celebration of the pagan festival. The Midsummer revels take place in the heart of Kendrew's Nought territory, in the shadows of the dreagan stones. (stone burial cairns, older than time and very mysterious)

Here's the mini-excerpt:

Temptation of a Highland Scoundrel

Before the Revels...

"Kendrew Mackintosh is a howling madman." Catriona found her tongue at last, proving she knew the source of Isobel's agitation.

Isobel flicked at her sleeve, too irritated to care.

"It is summer solstice." She spoke her mind, images of Kendrew's big, powerfully muscled body kissed by the glow of bonfires making her breath catch and her skin tingle. "The Mackintoshes celebrate Midsummer in the old way." She glanced at the room's tall window arches, her pulse quickening at the polished gleam of the twilight sky. "On such a night, I can't help but wonder if he really does leap naked onto the cairns."

"He is surely bold enough." Catriona smoothed the bed covers, resting her hands atop her slightly swollen belly. "Everyone knows he's wholly untamed."

Isobel could've added more. She did imagine him standing in the heart of his rock-hewn land, cold mist blowing around him, the gold of his Thor's hammer and arm rings glinting brightly.

"He fought ferociously at the trial by combat." She bit back how much his bravery impressed her. "The earth shook when he stamped the haft of his war ax on the ground after the battle."

"He is fearless, true enough." Catriona shivered when a chill wind swept the room, stirring the floor rushes. "Word is

he can trace his line back to the Berserkers, Odin's
bloodthirsty, half-mythic body guards.

"So-o-o..." She laced her fingers. "He could well be doing
anything this night, including leaping naked onto his dreagan
stones."

Isobel agreed.

But unlike her friend, she didn't find the notion
disturbing.

The brisk air filling the chamber brought traces of damp
earth and pine, just a hint of distant woodsmoke. Soon the first
stars would start to glimmer. Beyond the thick forest that
separated their lands, Mackintosh bonfires would crackle and
blaze.

Those who prayed to Odin would gather. Men would touch
hammer amulets and drink from mead horns. Blood would heat,
passions rising as the revelry commenced...

Isobel's heart pounded.

"I wouldn't mind seeing Kendrew on those stones." She glanced again at the windows, the night's magic calling to her, making her restless.

"The sight would ruin you for life." Catriona sounded sure.

Isobel lifted her chin. "I think I'd be rather intrigued."
