

A romantic couple is shown in a close embrace, about to kiss. The man is shirtless and has dark hair, while the woman has long dark hair and is wearing a dark top. They are positioned in the upper half of the frame. In the background, a large, bright full moon hangs in a dark, cloudy sky. The overall mood is romantic and mysterious.

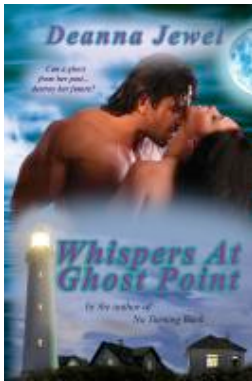
Deanna Jewel

*Can a ghost
from her past...
destroy her future?*

A lighthouse stands on a rocky shore at night. The lighthouse is white with a yellow light glowing from the top. The sky is dark with some clouds. In the foreground, there are several houses with their lights on, suggesting a small town or village.

Whispers At Ghost Point

*by the author of
No Turning Back*



Join Dana as she learns about her past while working toward her future. The dangers that lurk at an abandoned lighthouse pull her into a past she was unaware of but also involve a man she's never met...in this lifetime! Can a ghost from her past destroy her future? Read on and find out...

Whispers at Ghost Point

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Your Free excerpt appears below. Enjoy!

**Whispers at
Ghost Point**

Deanna Jewel

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First Edition

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Chapter One

"I'm glad we got to know each other so much better since you moved here. It's nice to be able to talk to someone else who understands the spirit world. I've not talked about it with many people because, right away, they think you're nuts!" Sarah said, and then licked pizza sauce from her finger.

"I know. I've never understood why most people can't feel spirits around them but I certainly can, even though I might not be good at sensing what they want from us." Dana took a swallow of her wine. "Take that old lighthouse across the inlet for instance. I've seen lights there that go out if you stare over that way for too long."

"But it's abandoned, right? So how could there be lights?"

"You tell me!" Dana watched as Sarah bounded for the patio door to look out over the water. She got up to join her. "The lights aren't always there. That's the eerie part. When they are there, I can almost sense that someone's watching me from the lighthouse."

"That *is* scary. I don't see lights tonight but I can sense a spirit there. I'm sure there's more than one for as old as that lighthouse is! It's strange but not uncommon. Maybe we should call the ParaNormal Society!" Sarah laughed. "I should be going, I suppose. Thanks for the wine and pizza; next time - my treat!" She grabbed her purse and keys and headed out the front door.

Following her to the door, Dana waved as Sarah backed out. "I'll see you at the office in the morning. Drive careful."

Dana watched as Sarah's car headlights lit up the driveway and her car backed out. She closed and locked the six-paneled oak door. Grabbing the newspaper off the ottoman, Dana turned off the living room lights and headed for the kitchen toward the back of her house where she laid the paper on the table.

She enjoyed it whenever Sarah stopped over for pizza and wine. Dana poured herself what little was left of the wine. As she took a sip, she glanced at the envelope on the counter one more time. Refusing to open the attorney's letter just yet, she stepped to the door to enjoy a warm spring evening. A salty breeze came in from the screened patio door as she stood looking out over the inlet at the twinkling city lights below and the neighborhood just beyond her manicured back yard. She looked forward to summer in Wilmington, North Carolina.

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Living on the hill afforded her beautiful views from her covered deck and more of a breeze up here than downtown. She felt safe in the small gated community. The inlet was just off the ocean and one of the marinas was located down the shore from her property. Her eyes caught the glint of flickering lights in the abandoned lighthouse far across the inlet at Ghost Point.

The short hairs on the back of her neck stood up.

The dark tower rose in silence on the wooded, deserted peninsula with the quarter moon just above the peak. Had the light come from a candle? Impossible, no one lived in the tower or the keeper's house attached to the tower. She continued to watch as she waited for the light she knew would re-appear. A few bats flew in and out of the shadows but all stayed dark in the tower.

Then the glow appeared again but only for a few moments. She wasn't sure what caused the lights; the same eerie feeling always crept up her back as though someone watched her from there. No explanation was ever given when she asked the neighbors about it. No one seemed to want to talk about the lights. "*Just stay away from there!*" was all they ever said to her.

The lighthouse had been abandoned for years and it was obvious that the owner didn't care about the appearance of the place. The grass surrounding the property grew taller as spring moved into summer and no one had mowed there yet.

Not caring anymore tonight, Dana shut the door and locked it, drew the curtain and with her wine glass, headed through the kitchen to bed.

The letter on the counter stopped her.

Taking in a deep breath, she chewed her lower lip.

She hated giving the divorce attorney her new address but it couldn't be helped. Would this be the final notice and all would be done? At least she had a PO Box for her mail; that way her address didn't show up anywhere. She set down her glass and with shaking fingers, opened the envelope, unfolding the letter...

Dear Dana,

Please know that your new address is safe with me. This is to inform you that the last installment was deposited into your account and although your divorce was final six months ago, this last payment makes it complete. Thank you for allowing me to help.

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Relief washed over her and her knees nearly buckled. She had actually received her half of their property settlement, which was only fair; he'd been the one to step away with the other woman after winning the lottery jackpot and didn't bother to hide the fact from anyone. He'd sworn she wouldn't receive a dime and kept the winnings in his own account. He told her numerous times that no attorney would bother to represent a woman without money.

Who was laughing now? Best of all, thanks to her attorney, the judge had charged all the legal fees to her ex-husband when he heard about him trying to hide the winnings. Now she could sleep in peace knowing her future would be secure. She could go ahead with her plans to open the shop she'd always wanted, but *when* would be the question.

Dana thought back on her haunting past. Her ex always laughed at her when she mentioned wanting to own her own business and especially when she actually received her general contractors license years ago in Michigan. He couldn't believe they actually licensed females! Two months ago, she received her Unlimited General Contractors license in North Carolina after passing that exam. She almost wished she could shove that in his face!

Forget all the pain he caused you! You have a fresh start now!

Holding the attorney's letter against her chest, Dana took in another deep breath. No one had to know she now had money. She didn't need those kinds of people in her life who just wanted to be friends so they could take her money or worse yet, a man who wanted to get his hands on it without a thought to loving her.

She'd already been down that road.

Tucking the letter in the file cabinet and grabbing her wine glass, Dana headed to bed with a peaceful heart. Tomorrow, when she ran her errands for the Historical Society and before hitting the library for research, she would try to get away so she could go to the lighthouse.

After slipping into her tee shirt for bed and turning out the lights, she peeked through the blinds to take one last look out the window toward the lighthouse tower. Only darkness met her eyes but she couldn't step away from the window.

She watched...longer....waiting.

A cool breeze swirled around her yet she'd already closed the window. Then something cold seemed to press against her back. *Had the spirit actually left the lighthouse and come into her own home?*

There! The glow happened again; stopped, then twinkled. She waited, thinking she should grab her robe to stay warm. Several minutes passed but

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no more lights. Refusing to let the frustration destroy her happy mood, Dana swallowed the last of her wine and went to bed. Her cat joined her as always, purring close at her side; she knew tomorrow she would search for answers.

* * * * *

Dana slipped on her sunglasses as she left her office at the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society on Third Street – a new bounce in her step. The warm afternoon breeze swirled around her like a silk scarf as she strode to her car. Eager for the peaceful ride out to Ghost Point on such a beautiful summer day, she hoped to find an answer to the nagging feelings of last night. Again, she'd seen the twinkle of lights in the tower of the abandoned lighthouse visible from her bedroom window across the inlet. There had to be a logical reason for the lights.

Though nagging feelings weren't new to her, this particular one was. Something, or someone, was trying very hard to get her attention.

She headed toward the lighthouse to see it one more time before starting her research to get some answers from the past; it had been weeks since she'd last visited. There had to be a way inside that she'd missed finding then. If she were careful, old man Wyndham would never know she'd been out there.

Discovering the Wyndham name had at least been one thing she'd found out. This particular lighthouse had held her interest even while she lived in Michigan and lately, too many signs were pointing her to get the research done. Several lighthouses back home had wonderful history that she'd enjoyed looking into.

The research she did on the Society lighthouses along the coast excited her, but this one held a mystery. The flickering lights she'd seen in the tower so often now pulled her more and more toward the property, along with the ghost stories she'd heard. The research info might produce an interest for Mr. Wyndham and perhaps prompt him to call.

As she drove along the shoreline, stopping here and there for a tourist trolley car, the afternoon sun warmed the car's interior. She turned off the air conditioner and rolled down the window to smell the magnolia trees. Dana took a deep breath of the fresh spring breeze mixed with the floral and salt from the inlet, thankful the humidity was low today.

Happy childhood memories drifted through her mind of fishing in Ludington, Michigan as a child on the end of the pier with her grandfather. She loved it here and would find more happy memories. The wind whipped her long dark hair, sending tendrils around her face, and she gathered them

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together in her fingers at her nape as she sang to an old classic rock song on the radio.

Now that her divorce was finalized, she'd be so much more at ease with her life and she enjoyed being single. A relationship at this point still was not in her plans. Her cheating ex-husband was out of her life, hopefully for good now, and she had a new city and a new life. He'd contacted her a few months ago, before she'd changed her number, and they'd had words. She told him never to call again. Their eight-year marriage had left her low on self-esteem and trust of men but she refused to join the Society of Depressed Divorcees. She was better off alone fending for herself. That way, she had no one else to blame when things didn't go right.

And now, things were going so right for her. She loved her job and the research she did; it allowed her to help with the restoration and redecorating she enjoyed so much, though doing it in her own bed and breakfast would be better...another dream she refused to let die. One could never have too many dreams! Dana envisioned owning a lighthouse and restoring it for a bed and breakfast. If she opened an interior decorating business, now having her general contractor's license, she could buy supplies at cost and that would lower the remodeling expenses.

Rounding the bend in the gravel road, Dana slowed her silver Dodge Charger and took the turn onto a wooded, deserted road toward the lighthouse, the tires crunching over the small stones. Even in the daytime the area was eerie and cold. No other cars appeared behind her as she glanced in her mirror, and none came from up ahead.

The closer she got to the tower, the more her heart pounded with the sheer excitement of exploration.

A few miles farther down the road, she made the last turn toward the lighthouse. A small peninsula jutted into the bay; the lighthouse and main residence sat at the end. Dana parked as close to the house and tower as she could. On a foggy day this place was shrouded from view, leaving merely the top of the tower visible from her place.

* * * * *

She stepped from her car and quietly shut the door.

Shading her eyes from the sun, she gazed out over the water. Her home sat a mile on the other side, where she could see the lighthouse from her back windows and deck. Though being here was prohibited, she surveyed the lighthouse property and outbuildings, liking that the tower was attached to the keeper's house. Annoyed, she hurried past the new "No Trespassing"

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sign, not remembering she'd ever seen it before, and strode through the tall grasses toward the deserted main house.

One-hundred-fifty years ago, the large residence was home to its keeper and possibly his family. She wondered how many ship wrecks he'd witnessed and been unable to help. That must have been devastating to a keeper who prided himself on helping others.

* * * * *

Hearing the gravel crunch on the road outside, he stepped to the tower window as the car approached below. The modern conveniences still astounded him; they were a far cry from his time period of horses, carriages and wooden ships. How had he been thrust into this era so far ahead of his own time and held prisoner for years in this abandoned lighthouse tower? How long had he been imprisoned here?

Feelings of hatred and revenge had consumed him for as long as he could remember. Killing wasn't foreign to him, he did remember that much, but *who* had he killed...and why? He wanted answers! Watching the woman below, his gut still ached although he couldn't remember why; he did remember the pain came stronger when this woman would visit the lighthouse grounds. Distant memories of being at sea plagued him and he longed to be back aboard ship, but why? Had he captained his own rig? His days of late were long and boring; now a visitor had once again returned.

The woman stepped from her vehicle and walked toward the lighthouse; her beautiful mahogany hair flowed over her shoulders and away from her tanned features. He couldn't believe she had dared to come here again and that surprised him. From across the bay on most nights, he could see her as she watched from her windows, staring as though she could see him in the tower. Lighting the tower lamp took much of his strength and he couldn't keep it lit for long but he knew she'd seen it many times when he had.

Feelings of lust, as well as hatred and confusion, grew stronger when she showed up here. More memories came back to him with each of her visits. Perhaps if she were inside, he would remember more. Her interest in the old lighthouse and her visits here were increasing, just as he'd planned. The other night he'd connected with her new psychic friend who turned out to be the perfect tool to get to her. Now he had to work on getting her inside; he was tired of being alone! He believed in reincarnation and prayed perhaps this would be a new beginning for them.

Another memory drifted in.

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The woman below looked so much like someone he loved long ago; the two could be twins although they were centuries apart. If he could only hold her in his arms one more time, breathe in her scent of lavender from her silky hair, he would gladly stay in the tower forever. His heart ached and his hands clenched for wanting more of what *had* been.

He moved away from the window as she peered toward the top of the tower, then made his way down the iron steps so he could watch her from the main floor. Should he let her in today? Could he trust himself *not* to touch her just yet?

* * * * *

Dana stopped for a moment and surveyed the keeper's house attached to the lighthouse tower, imagining the fun of restoring the peeling paint, the crooked black shutters, the broken windows...if she could simply get that opportunity!

Then something caught her eye in a window on the second floor.

She watched carefully, inspecting the tattered curtains, but it must have been her imagination. She peered over at the tower windows half expecting to see someone looking back at her.

Nothing.

* * * * *

Dismissing the eerie sensations on the back of her neck, she proceeded to the house. Carefully attempting the worn and broken steps, she gripped the hand rail that wouldn't hold up if one were to fall. Once on the creaky old porch, she tried to open the door. She rattled the cold rusty knob, knowing she wouldn't be able to get in that way, yet hoping today it might allow her entrance. Dana moved toward a window near the front door in search of an overlooked entrance. The dirty windows hindered her view so she wiped a small pane clean with the side of her fist. The wood smelled old and musty. Cupping her hands around her eyes and peering inside, tattered yellow sheets of wallpaper curled and peeled from the upper portions of the wall, cobwebs draped from the corners over lamps and old furniture like fine gauze. An interior breeze moved the cobwebs and she wondered where it came from.

Her heart raced.

If she could just get old man Wyndham to let her in, to convince him to restore this place, then the townspeople could enjoy the beauty of a new

historical site. Several restoration ideas filled her head. Maybe she could ask him to sell it to her?

The need to get inside ate at her. The ghost stories that were bantered about would not stop her from entering either – as long as she didn't visit at night she would be fine, though she knew spirits didn't come to her only after dark.

Then curiosity threw another idea her way. She couldn't use the ghost stories unless she had first-hand knowledge, then she could retell the stories of what she saw.

Dana hurried from the large porch and ran to the tower to look through another window set into a dark corner and cleaned off the glass as the sound of her heart thundered in her ears. What if she actually saw something? She'd be scared silly, but she continued searching.

The shaded corner at the edge of the rounding tower wall allowed her to see the inside better and the rusted spiral wrought-iron staircase that led up to the tower fascinated her.

Suddenly she saw pieces of dirt fall from one of the upper iron steps.

Was it just a coincidence that settling might take place while she trespassed or would a ghost disturb rust on a stair?

She waited and watched for something, though she had no idea what. A spirit, perhaps, that would float down the stairs? Not hardly, although she could sense *something* there. Her intuition was in rare form today, keeping her mind open to whatever might happen.

A vision of a kidnapping drifted through her mind, dark, mysterious and faceless. Why would she even think of this unless she worried about that? Dana shook off the worry and concentrated on the lighthouse.

What would explain the occasional flickering lights she saw at night? The Fresnel light no longer worked so that wasn't it. Her gaze eagerly searched the interior for any signs of movement as she looked from one room to another through a doorway. She listened for banging shutters or possibly hysterical laughter from the ghosts as they saw her peering inside, but only the sound of rustling sea oats along the coastline, mixed with crashing waves, surrounded her. Dana clenched her fists...*if she could just get inside.*

Another piece of rusted iron dropped again from the staircase. Sensing danger, sudden panic shot through her body like an electrical current and knotted her stomach.

Something had to be inside and standing on her toes, she tried to see more.

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As he stood in the doorway of the next room, he could see her shaded face pressed against the outside window trying to see inside. He knew she'd seen the rust fall from the stairway; he'd heard it hit the floor, and knew he'd have to be more careful in the future. Her nearness once again created a feeling of lust that swirled through his entire form as he stood watching her. What was it about this woman that also made the hatred he felt heat to an amazing boil with her very presence?

Then a stranger approached the corner where she stood outside. Recognition hit like a cannon ball against the wooden sides of a ship. Hatred erupted from deep in his gut as the man got closer to her and again his fingers clenched into fists of anger, wishing he had his sword at his side; then he could run his blade through the stranger's midsection!

* * * * *

Dana's breath caught in her throat when she heard a twig snap behind her and she spun around. Covering her mouth, she stared into the eyes of a stranger and couldn't speak a sound. She thought she'd been careful but now was discovered as a trespasser.

"I can only assume you didn't learn to read in school." His calm voice sounded just above a whisper.

Her throat tightened as she tried to talk - frightened to be caught out here. He kept his distance but blocked the way to her car. She saw his car parked near hers and wondered how he could have walked up on her without her hearing the approach of his car or his car door as it shut.

Dana gazed back at him, frightened, but hoped it didn't show on her face.

The handsome man with the five o'clock shadow along his chiseled jaw line stood too close for her comfort. He wore a long sleeved white shirt with the cuffs rolled back up onto his forearms and his spicy scent drifted her way. His medium length dark hair had been wind-blown and hung over his forehead; his dark brown eyes narrowed as he met her gaze. Was that anger in his eyes because she'd trespassed?

Her chest rose with every breath she struggled for. Dana could barely breathe; she couldn't speak or even scream. *She had to leave here before something happened.*

He stared for what seemed several minutes, searching her eyes as though he would find answers. Finally he took a step back. "Like I said, obviously you don't read well."

Thankful that he took a step away from her, she could relax a bit. Still frozen in place, all she could do was shake her head.

He smiled and almost appeared to be laughing at her. "No? You don't read? I gathered that or you wouldn't be here. The signs are posted for *your* protection."

The man continued to search her eyes and she still stood frozen in place. He appeared to be about thirty; too damn handsome, six foot, neat appearance and broad shouldered...his eyes entranced her. She wanted to know more, and at the same time, knew she shouldn't even be here.

"Do you always roam dangerous places alone? Your mother didn't teach you better judgment than that?" Again, he smiled as he stood still, not attempting to get closer.

Dana dropped her hand from her mouth yet she could only shake her head, then changed her mind and nodded a different answer.

He raised a brow and gave her a one-sided grin. "You don't know what your mother taught you or is it you like living dangerously with disregard for rules? For that much is quite obvious."

Sensing he was now making fun of her, she took a deep ragged breath, feeling her courage return as she stared into his eyes. He remained as calm as he had since he first appeared; hardly the type to accost a woman, yet that thought still crossed her mind. His sculpted jaw line complemented his cheekbones and aquiline nose. Firm lips caught her attention as they parted and she couldn't look away.

Then her lips parted and her mind wandered to things she shouldn't think about. He had a familiar air about him, but she knew she'd never met him before. The electrical current flowing between them became almost unbearable as she stared into each of his dark eyes, yet without saying a word they spoke volumes. Visions of his likeness floated through her mind, aboard a ship in a rain storm at sea and she wondered why. Others seemed to be with him and she saw a woman that could have been her.

She blinked away the vision.

Would he step close enough to accost her? That thought put her into escape mode; it took another moment or two before she darted well away from him.

Now out of his reach and out of the corner, Dana turned and covered her mouth again. As she looked at him in shock of what could have happened

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here, she could not believe what she'd just experienced...danger, yet he had a sensual air about him.

He tipped his head to the side. "I'm sorry. I had no right to scare you like that," he said, taking a step forward. "Please forgive me, but...have we met before?"

Dana took another step away from him, goose bumps chilling her skin and knowing she should get to her car. Touching her chest, she hoped he didn't hear her heart racing out of control. She'd felt a sensuous pull toward men before, but never had she felt it sear through her body clear to her toes, and to feel that toward a total stranger just wasn't right. Why did she feel attracted to him when she didn't know him nor want a man in her life right now? She hated the confusion. She could be raped or worse; she should have known better than to come out here alone. "No, I've never seen you before. *That* I would have remembered. You must be the owner here?"

"No, but one could say I work for the owner; I help keep an eye on the place."

Her eyes darted around for an escape route as she took a few steps away from him. "I have to go. I'm the one who should apologize. I trespassed and know better."

"Perhaps you'll have learned to read before your next visit."

Quickly turning, she ran across the yard, past his car, to her car, and got in. Locking the doors, she saw the handsome stranger still standing near the tower. How dare he insult her intelligence? Why hadn't she heard him drive in and park? As she turned her car away, she heard him call to her but when she looked into her rearview mirror, he'd disappeared as quickly as he'd come. His appearance there today affected her more than any she'd ever experienced and reminded her of being wrapped in a comforting embrace, but he could easily have killed her. *Was she nuts or what? To feel a sexual pull side by side with danger?* Next time she came out here, she'd use more caution and not come out alone.

As she drove away, she took in slow, deep breaths to calm herself, though she doubted that possibility. The stranger had definitely shaken her senses. Who was he? Then she remembered one of her dreams of a long ago lighthouse and a winter storm on the ocean. She'd caught a glimpse or two of a man struggling to help someone aboard an English ship but at the time, she downplayed the vision to other research she'd been doing at the time. Now the familiarity flooded her senses. She knew him but didn't. It made no sense and now she *had* to find out what all this meant.

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Mitch watched as the woman drove away. The magnetic pull toward her confused him. What was it about her that stirred memories of dreams he'd had? The dreams weren't part of *his* life because they were of being aboard a ship and not his yacht.

A past life perhaps?

Would he see her again? Where was she from that he'd never seen her out here before?



Join Dana as she learns about her past while working toward her future. The dangers that lurk at an abandoned lighthouse pull her into a past she was unaware of but also involve a man she's never met...in this lifetime! Can a ghost from her past destroy her future? Read on and find out...

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