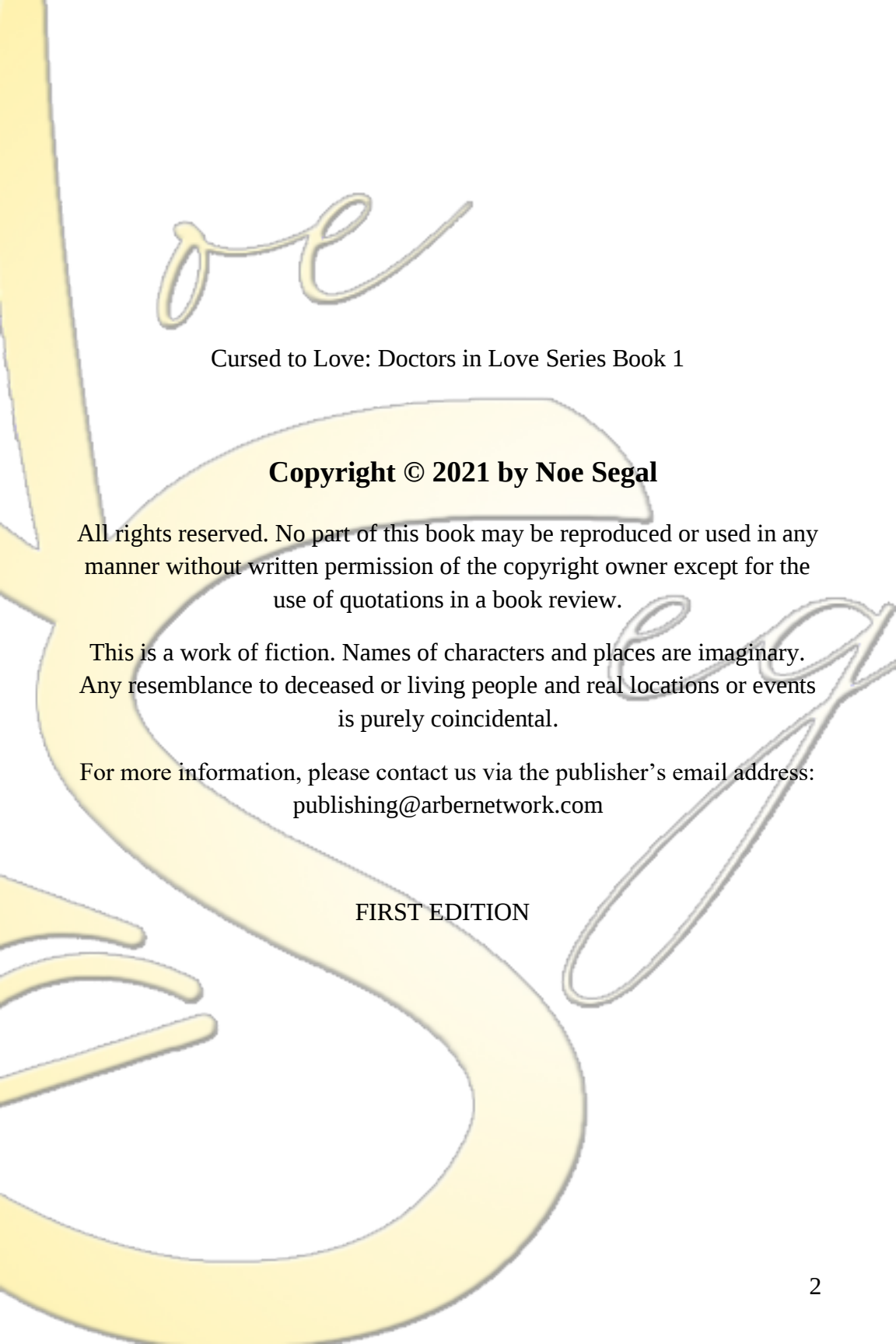


Love
Cursed To Love

DOCTORS IN LOVE SERIES BOOK 1

NOE SEGAL



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Cursed to Love: Doctors in Love Series Book 1

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FIRST EDITION

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CHAPTER 1

*My aunt cast a love spell on us... Sorry, guys. Expect to fall in love within the next 6 months. *Shrug**

Riel frowned as he read the first text message of the group chat affectionately named *Doctors in Arms* by the creator of the group and the sender of the message, Journey Fowell. Journey is an exotic, dark-skinned beauty who was a general practicing doctor in New Orleans. She owns her own office and lives with the aunt in question.

She sent the message 6 hours before. After about thirty minutes, the other group chat participants started to respond.

It was a running joke that Journey's aunt, who they all knew, loved, and affectionately called Auntie Sophie, was a practitioner of magical arts. Her antics had been fun, and it hit home with everyone in the 7-participant group chat. They had all attended the same medical school. Due to the bond they had developed through the 4 years during which they had studied together, Journey had formed this group chat so that they could stay in touch even after they had disbursed themselves to different parts of the United States after that time was over.

Tina Riley, a cosmetic surgeon, and self-proclaimed drama queen was the first to respond. Tell Auntie Sophie to undo that right now. I don't want to fall in love. Being single is way too much fun to mess it up with icky feelings.

Journey was quick to respond. Don't you think I tried?!? She put her foot down on this one. No budging this time. Says we work too hard. Wants to see us all happy, married, and with kids before she hits the bucket.

Tina answered with a facepalm emoji. Auntie Sophie's only 45. Why's she talking about hitting the bucket like she has one foot in the grave?

Journey: Can anyone really guess at what goes on in that lady's head? I gave up trying a long time ago.

Tina: This is your fault. If you would just give the lady some babies to dote on, the rest of us wouldn't get dragged into this.

Journey answered with a crudely positioned finger emoji.

Lincoln: Aww, man, no! I can't get married this year. This is finally my time to be a man whore. I agree with Crazy Tina for once. This is your fault, Journey. Fix it! I am not going to be an old man regretting not sowing my wild oats while I could.

Lincoln James was an Obstetrician/Gynecologist (OB/GYN) and had vowed as a New Year's Resolution to finally shed his shell of shyness and become a ladies man. Riel could imagine the man's genuine dismay and almost smiled as he shook his head.

Zane: Agreed. This is totally Journey's fault. I am with Lincoln on this one. My wild oats still need sowing.

The pediatrician's words caused Tina to send a string of laughing emojis while Lincoln added some agreement.

Nash: Zane, I think you have sown enough wild oats. Your face is right there in the dictionary next to the definition of man whore. But seriously, Journey, WTH??? Give the lady some nieces and nephews already so she can get off our cases. I don't have time for a wife and kids.

Nash was assigned to the Emergency Room like Riley. Instead of being situated in Miami like Riley was, he worked in New York City.

Journey: Why are you guys picking on me? I am as much a victim here as anyone else!

She punctuated her words with crying and eye-rolling emojis.

The chat continued with more jokes and complaints.

Riel heard his name being called over the intercom and knew that his break was over. Being assigned to the ER, Riel was used to the fast pace and high-stress levels, but this was ridiculous. Normally, he thrived under pressure, but he was feeling off today. It was a bother that he could not identify the cause. He was in the middle of his third straight shift because the hospital was short-staffed. He had only come into the locker room to have a bite of his favorite candy. He was stressed, and so his sweet tooth was acting up. The ER was littered with more people than usual today. He was only still running because of the coffee machine in the common area the hospital staff shared.

He glanced at the messages one last time as he put the remainder of the candy bar back into his backpack. The only person whose input was missing was Danrick, but that was not unusual. The man had decided to drop off the grid for a few weeks. He did so every year. Even though they had all been friends for more than 8 years, the man was still mysterious and brooding.

Riel's name was called again, and his fingers flew across the screen of the smartphone.

It's a good thing that I don't believe in that mess, or I would be worried, he typed and hit send.

Since the last message was sent more than 2 hours ago, he did not expect a response. So, he was surprised when the phone vibrated in his hand. He raised an eyebrow when he read the last message.

Journey: Auntie Sophie says you are up first... Love's going to get you, Mr. I-am-never-falling-in-love.

He felt an odd pang in his chest but dismissed it as he sent a digital eye roll at this friend before dashing out of the room a few seconds later.





CHAPTER 2

What's a girl to do after she gets fired, has her boyfriend cancel their long-planned date, has her car break down, *and* gets drenched on the walk to her apartment all in the span of a few hours?

She needed to smile and look on the bright side. She was excited to enjoy the delicious Chinese food that she had picked up from her favorite location.

Donna Myers was a woman who always looked on the bright side of things. The glass was always half full. The day had been disastrous for sure. And yet, the brunette was sure that she could come up with a memory of a day that had been worse if she thought hard enough. And she had survived that day, so she would survive this one as well. She had faith that tomorrow would be better.

She was humming a tune as she pushed the key into the lock of the door that opened into the apartment building where she stayed. The building housed three apartments. Two of them sat side by side on the ground floor, while the second floor of the building contained the largest apartment. Donna was staying on the ground floor and was told that the apartment next to her was being renovated so that it could be rented out to another tenant.

She had only been living here for about a month, and the entire process of becoming a tenant had been facilitated through a real estate office. She had been told that her landlord stayed in the apartment on the second floor but she had yet to meet the man. The little information she had gotten about him said that he was an ER doctor and pictured a kindly older gentleman. She

occasionally heard movement upstairs to confirm that the man indeed occupied the space, but otherwise, it was quiet. She enjoyed the peace and solitude that this apartment offered. It was too bad that losing her job meant that she had to reconsider staying here.

When she pushed the front door open, she suddenly felt a presence behind her. She acted reflexively and screamed before turning around to try to push the door against the intruder. As a woman who grew up in a dark part of town and had been robbed more than once and assaulted on one such occasion, she immediately went on the defensive.

The person was an immovable wall, and a vague image of the bulky figure told her that it was a man. Donna swung her purse when it became clear that she would not get the person out of the way. He was also blocking her only exit from this situation. If he thought she would be a docile victim, he had thought wrong.

The man cursed and tried to dodge the attack. She kept on swinging, and he grunted a few times before grabbing the makeshift weapon. She kept her grip tight around the strap, and when he pulled forward, she fell onto the hardness of his chest. Her dinner became mashed between their bodies. The muscles that she felt told her that she would not be getting away from this person easily, so she increased the volume of her screams. Maybe a passerby would hear and come to her rescue.

"Would you please stop that god awful noise! I already have a headache from hell. What are you trying to do? Cause my eardrums to burst?" The words were not yelled but rather delivered from behind gritted teeth.

It was not the words nor the tone that caused Donna to snap her lips together. Rather, it was the zap of electricity that shot through her at contact with the person's skin. Her hand rested on his huge underarm. It was like she had touched a live wire, yet the sensation, though intense, was almost pleasurable. It caused a breathy sound to escape her lips. She looked up and was instantly ensnared in the bluest eyes that she had ever seen.

Those eyes were framed by thick eyelashes and by eyebrows that seemed far too perfectly matched in symmetry to be real. The man's skin was

slightly tanned and he had a mole just above his lip on the right side. That distinct mark drew her attention to the area but his lips were the thing that kept her attention. They were decadent-looking. The bottom one was plumper than the other and she had the urge to bite into it to see if it was as soft as it looked. The urge was so strong that she hyper-focused on the body part and moved closer to it as if mesmerized.

"Are you on something? Why are you in this building?"

The arrogant lift of his eyebrow and tilt of his head, combined with his words, were enough to release her from the spell that she was under. She shook her head as she pushed against his chest to break free of his hold. He let go and she stumbled back. He reached out to steady her with a rude sound that raised her hackles even more.

"Don't touch me," she ordered.

"Then stop being such a clutz." He let his hand drop then dragged his fingers through his blond hair. The strands were sticking straight up like he had repeated the same action several times recently.

"I would not be so clumsy if I was not trying to get away from your grabby hands," she retorted with a tilt of her chin. "If you think I am going to just let you rob me, think again mister!"

He stepped back like she hit him. "Why would I be trying to rob the place when I own it?"

"You're Mr. Jones?" She was incredulous. This man with his chiseled jaw, hypnotic eyes, and tall hard body was not what she had envisioned her landlord to be.

He nodded like it should have been obvious then said, "Let me guess? You're the new tenant."

She bristled under his tone and the way he looked her up and down with disdain. His man was gorgeous beyond belief, but his attitude left something to be desired.

Still, ingrained with good manners, she extended her free hand to the man. "Yes, I am Donna Myers. Nice to finally meet you."

He looked at her hand like she had offered him a basket full of snakes instead. She let her hand fall awkwardly to her side when it became apparent that he was not going to take it and cleared her throat as his frown became more severe.

"Are you always so grumpy?" she could not help but ask.

"No," he answered without hesitation. "You seem to bring on the emotion in me."

She did not like that answer and replied, "Lucky me."

How can someone frown so attractively, she wondered when his brow pulled even lower. *And why am I oddly enchanted by the look?*

"Let's just agree to pass with a kind greeting the next time we happen to meet each other," he growled.

The man walked away after closing the building entrance, going up the stairs without a backward glance. She watched him until he disappeared.

What a nice tush! a naughty voice exclaimed inside her. She hushed the voice with a blush but could not help but smile at herself as she agreed.

The smile fell as the events of the day came crashing back into her head. The interlude with the disgruntled man had distracted her but now that he was gone, she could not help but be thrown back into the well of gloomy emotions she had been trying to avoid.

She forced a smile back on her face. She had read somewhere that smiling, even when forced, caused endorphins to flood the brain and make a person feel good. She walked to the door that led into her apartment and went inside. It was easier to smile when she saw the inside of the place she called home. It was the nicest place that she had been able to afford thus far. She had decorated it with warm colors and furniture to suit her likes.

The bottom of the plastic bag that contained her Chinese food suddenly opened and the cartons spilled onto the floor making a terrible mess at her feet. She looked down at the ruined food. And then stared. Finally, she cleaned up the mess and threw the food away before heading to the bathroom where she stood underneath the hottest stream of water her body could stand.

She leaned against the tiles, drained in all ways. It was harder to hold onto the smile now. She closed her eyes against the tears that threatened to fall.

Luckily, a distracting thought came to her rescue, and her landlord's face popped into her mind.

It had been quite a while since she gave into her naughty thoughts. Even though she had a boyfriend, he had recently gotten a promotion in work. It had him putting in long hours that prevented them from seeing each other often. As a result, not only were they not spending much time together, they were also not being intimate often either. It had been months since they last coordinated their schedules to meet up and even longer since they had sex.

Sex had been stored away on the back burner of her mind. But suddenly, it was in the forefront, but it was not the thought of her longtime boyfriend that was causing feelings to stir in her nether regions. It was an ornery man with blond hair and green eyes.

She closed her eyes and let the thoughts turn erotic as warm water massaged her skin. In her mind, her eyes remained closed as the shower curtain was pushed to the side. Then she was not alone. Hot male skin brushed against hers and made her shiver with the delicious sensations.

"You're so sexy," that gruff voice that she had heard moments earlier said close to her ear. This time though, the tone did not make it seem like the man wanted to be miles away from her. Instead, this time, he sounded like he could not get close enough.

His hands were on her, and she leaned into the touch eagerly. In reality, her hands and fingers imitated the touch. It had been so long since she felt this way – all hot and bothered. So, the scene in her mind escalated quickly. The

man turned her around and lifted her easily so that she was cradled in his strong arms. His manhood, thick and pulsing, knocked for entrance at her dripping womanhood. She looked into the need reflected in his eyes as she helped guide him into her welcoming heat. She did not feel empty for the first time in a long time, even though, in reality, her sex was grasping for something solid to hold onto.

Her fingers worked against her wet folds frantically as the imaginings of her mind and feelings built low in her abdomen. The digits moved in time with the doctor's movements. He loved her with vigor and passion so strong that the feelings transcended into reality.

The pleasure crashed over her unexpectedly and far stronger than she thought it would. Her cries echoed in the bathroom, and she bit her lip in an effort to contain them. It was futile. The force of the self-inflicted orgasm left her knees feeling weak and her breath puffing out of her chest.

She rode the waves of gratification for as long as she could before sagging weakly against the wall.

When she could get herself together enough to finish her shower, she tried not to let the guilt of what she had just done get to her. She had never imagined another man while pleasuring herself while in a relationship. She did not know how to feel about what just happened, especially given the strength of her body's reaction.

Later, snugly dressed in a fluffy onesie with yellow ducks printed all over, she sat in the semi-dark of the apartment on the nook that gave her a view of the street. She was sipping on a cup of chamomile tea and snacking on a few biscuits.

It was still raining outside and the weather set just the right mood now that she was warm and cozy inside. A nearby light was on low and she started sketching. The man that she had just met was the subject, her muse, and she captured the strongness of his jaw with her pencil. Art was something she had been doing since childhood and always fell back to when she felt stress. A few people had told her that she should take it up as a career, but she always laughed away their words. Pursuing art would be too risky of an

endeavor. She knew because she had had to endure that instability as a child. After all, her mother pursued her passion to dance instead of ensuring that there was food on the table. She also did not ensure that her only child went to school nor spent time with Donna. That meant that Donna had to become self-reliant at an early age. Not only did she care for herself, but she started to care for her mother as well. Doing tasks like making sure the woman ate and running the home when the woman fell into depression because her passion did not give her the life she had sought for herself.

Donna pursued schooling and worked in accounting, vowing to never be like the woman. It was boring, but it made sure that she was clothed, sheltered, and fed.

She heard a scratching sound at the door and went to investigate. When she opened the door, she found a brown puppy, whining and looking up at her big, innocent eyes. She gasped in delight and instantly bent to pick up the animal.

He was wet and felt undernourished in her grasp. She cooed at him, and he licked her face.

"Where did you come from?" she asked him.

He licked her chin in reply.

He must have come while she had, and the landlord had their scuffle, she concluded.

Pets were against the regulations stated on her lease. She really should leave the animal out here and go back inside. The puppy whined and licked her face again.

She giggled and did the right thing.

A few minutes later, the puppy was fed and hydrated. She was sitting on the floor of her bathroom and the animal was chasing bubbles in the bathtub. As she bathed the animal, she felt her good mood was fully restored. Baba, she named him.

"How about we get into bed now? Our worries can wait until tomorrow," she said to him after he was dry and smelled like her soap.

Snuggled up against each other, the two fell asleep.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



In his home in Oklahoma, **Noe Segal** has always had his fill of romance reads. And as a biology major, he has always had an interest in the scientific mysteries and theories of the world. Taking the pen into their own hands, Noe Segal brings new books with heart-throbbing romance or science-fiction for you to enjoy. Enjoy *Cursed to Love*, the first installment of his *Doctors in Love Series*.

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