

# THROUGH THE VENEER OF TIME

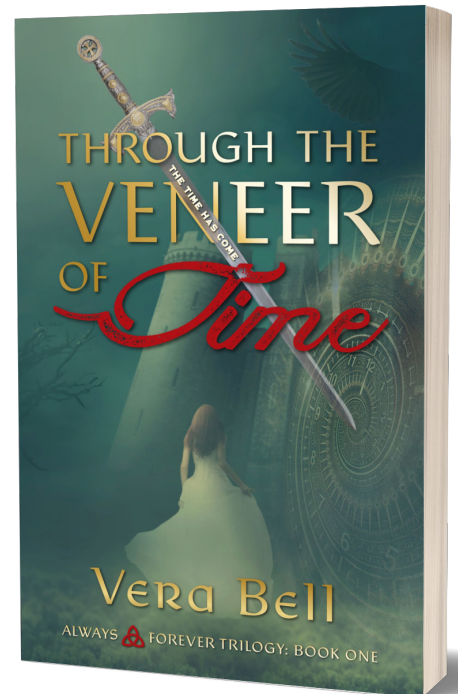
## Irish Time Travel Romantic Suspense

**A haunted painter's past life visions are not the creative inspiration they seemed. They're a harbinger of her ancient revenge vow, and her FBI husband won't find the serial killer until she fulfills it. But it may already be too late.**

**1559, ULSTER, IRELAND.** When a young noblewoman, Neave McConway, weds the newly elected King of Tyrone, Aedan O'Neal, the couple's rare union of love and passion becomes the talk of the region. But Aedan's bold rule and fierce defiance of the English crown threatens his powerful enemies, and they'll stop at nothing to crush his growing influence. After Aedan rides off to fight against the English occupiers, Neave suffers a shocking attack that will forever alter both their lives — as well as the lives they have not yet lived.

**2009, WASHINGTON, D.C.** While mural artist, Siena Forte, battles a creative block, her FBI husband, Ryan Casey, struggles with a serial killer case. When research leads Siena to the practice of Past Life Regression, she stumbles upon irresistible inspiration. But after her art exposes her to a vicious ancient adversary, she discovers the true reason for her past life visions. They're a harbinger of her centuries-old revenge vow, and the serial killer cannot be stopped until she fulfills it. But there is another person from the past with unfinished business — her husband.

**Will Siena and Ryan settle their long-overdue score, or will the past repeat itself in a chilling parallel?**



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Perfect for fans of Diana Gabaldon,  
Susanna Kearsley, and Kate Mosse



## About Vera Bell

Vera Bell is an award-winning author of the trilogy, *Always & Forever*, set in sixteenth-century Ireland and present-day United States. She wrote her award-winning debut after trying Past Life Regression and finding herself immersed in a world so captivating, she couldn't let it go. A former commercial artist, she lives in Georgia with her husband, two teenagers, and one fur baby. Her favorite place to write is on her porch, overlooking a pond lined with river birches and magnolias. The topics she never tires of are Ireland, past lives, and love that transcends time and space.

# THROUGH THE VENEER OF TIME

## by Vera Bell

### Excerpt

His words were a blast that made something inside me snap. Why couldn't I unlock my eyes from his? Unclench my knees despite an unbearable compulsion to run? I dug my fingernails into my sweaty palms to break the paralysis, drove the graphite shards into my flesh.

"Do you ever wonder what becomes of your characters?" His vacuous smile didn't reach his eyes. "What comes after your painstaking freeze-frame? Your warrior—" He pointed his chin at the mural. "He's cocky, but he doesn't know what he's riding into. Yet hours from now, he could be lying in some field, stripped of his weapons, bleeding out into the ground as the vultures peck at his baby blues." His eyes widened. "Leaving his beautiful young widow all alone."

His impossibly soft voice was a ringing blow in my ears. A tremor braced my throat. I drew a frantic breath against it.

"I'm sorry," I squeezed out, "I'm not sure I follow."

"I'm sure you do." He chuckled. "But don't look so stricken, Siena Forte. It's only a painting, a fantasy. Nothing more."

"Excuse me..." I edged past him, cold all over.

I rushed into the nearest restroom, tossed the broken graphite into the trash can, and locked myself in a stall. I hugged myself. Tight. Tighter. Gaspd for air, not drawing any. My vision swam at the edges. Flickering. Fading. My heart thudded, and breath came faster in my chest, choking me.

Fragments of his words whirled around me, and I grasped my head to stop the awful cacophony. But it wouldn't stop. The image he drew cut like a knife, piercing through something soft and vulnerable inside. Something I'd buried deep down and wished to keep that way. But he'd driven it to the surface and laid it out in the open, raw and exposed.

Someone entered the restroom, and I froze at the squeak of the adjoining stall door. But it was only a pair of black pumps through the divider gap. Heartbeat in my ears, I dropped the toilet lid and sat down.

*Breathe in. Breathe out. Repeat.*

Worgen was a narcissistic egomaniac, pissed off at not getting his way. Certainly, he could neither read my mind nor know anything about my visions. He was messing with me. Of course, he was! Pygmalion was a mythical sculptor, whose ivory creation came to life after he'd fallen in love with her. And here I was, a female artist, painting a man. As for the widow, it wasn't a big leap to imagine a handsome warrior leaving a young wife at home. Worgen didn't have to know about me to understand this mental image would upset me.