



*The
Baron's Bride*

A NOVEL OF EROTIC CONQUEST

Imelda Stark

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The Baron's Bride
A Novel of Erotic Conquest
by Imelda Stark

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Imelda Stark is the *nom de plume* of a teacher and practitioner of psychotherapy at a major East Coast medical school (hence the need for a pseudonym). She has been exploring the psychologically complex realm of BD/SM for thirty-one novels now. Imelda strives to combine the eroticism she feels around challenging things happening to willing bottoms with an exploration of how we aficionados of these painful pleasures got to be the way we are. She welcomes and will respond to email at imeldastark1@gmail.com. A complete listing of her works, all of which are available on electronic media, may be found in the Afterword.

Part One: Lady Blaise Fortescu

Chapter One

Let us journey to a place far away and a time long ago. This would be an era several centuries ago when the rule of men over the women of their households was never in question. The females of that world accepted that if they were to exercise power, it was to be covertly. Anything but the most servile of deference to the males that dominated their environment could quite legally be corporally punished. In fact, a man who exercised the 'rule of thumb' in his domain was considered to be more than usually enlightened. This dictum specified that women, animals, and other chattel should not be beaten with sticks of greater diameter than their Master's thumb. There was, of course, no penalty for a man who rejected this rule as over-lenient. In fact, he might be regarded approvingly by his neighbors as properly strict in his exercise of the discipline universally regarded as necessary to the maintenance of a well-regulated home and estate.

The locale in which our tale is set is also of particular importance. It was a region of southern England well off the beaten path, consisting of rich coastal farmlands that were well-watered and well-drained and had been producing bumper crops for millennia. Those fortunate enough to own land in this area hardly had to struggle with a Mother Nature who showed her kindest of faces the vast majority of the time. The local gentry lived well as long as they exercised good judgment and hewed to the conservative values that tended to dominate Great Britain of that era, especially outside of the more cosmopolitan environs of London and the university towns of Oxford and Cambridge. Inalienable human rights were a concept that most of the local inhabitants had not heard of. And even among the few educated denizens, deference was paid only to the true spirit of the Magna Carta, which was solely intended to protect the rights of the nobility against kingly overreach.

In this setting, an unusually bright female, especially if she were cursed with an unquenchable curiosity and a spirited temperament, would encounter all manner of difficulties. These would persist or worsen until she mastered the subtle arts of displaying her wit only to those who would not feel threatened by it. If such a person was born into the peasantry, a possible future could be found as a wise woman conversant in herb lore and midwifery. This pathway would involve being identified by and taken under the wing of a crone established in such arts. Of course, such women pursued their cryptic medical careers in constant danger of being denounced by the superstitious populace as witches. Only a fiery end was in store for anyone so unfortunate as to stumble onto that pathway. So the so-called wise women who survived to old age needed to be consummate politicians.

But if a girl with those same attributes were to be born into the gentry, then even this discreetly noble pursuit would not be available. Those high-born females who could bear the religious life might find a life in the religious orders if they were among the mistrusted Catholic minority. But if bright girls came from Church of England families, nunneries were not an option in this era. Nor were there established educational institutions beyond local finishing schools in which well-bred young ladies were taught the rather limited skills required of their future roles as ladies of the manor.

Our heroine, the Lady Blaise Fortescu, was just such an unfortunate. Even her unusual Christian name, taken from a fortress of the nearest large city to her father's estates (namely Bristol), seemed destined to cause her trouble. He had bestowed it on his youngest of five daughters in a fit of one of his usual enthusiasms, this time for local history. Lord Fortescu concluded from researches never to be confirmed that the castle bearing that name had been a central redoubt during a dark time in early English history. He rather presciently named his last daughter after his most recent

fascination because he detected in her even as a newborn an indomitable spirit. While this turned out to be true, who knows whether children repeatedly told they are a certain way actually become so because of tacit encouragement?

Well, in Blaise's case, the experiences she had as a consequence of her spirited nature could hardly be classified as encouraging, except in the sense that hardship might make a person stronger if it does not break them. Even though she was an unusually beautiful child (who would grow into a stunningly lovely young woman), the precocious girl spent much of her childhood in trouble. And in this era, that meant that she also would have been subjected to frequent disciplinary experiences. For a different sort of fiery ends awaited rebellious girls than the stake at which suspected witches were burned. For upper class girls, these consisted initially of trips over a nanny's ample lap (since such chores would have been far beneath the Lady of the manor).

Once that undignified position had been achieved, there a rebellious daughter would be subjected to having her skirts raised and smallclothes lowered. Once her buttocks (universally deemed to be the place the Good Lord had optimally designed for such purposes) were properly bared, the chiding older woman's hard right hand would have descended many times to soundly spank the miscreant's bottom. This belaboring would persist until the desired effect was achieved, after which the sinner would do a long period of time standing in the corner of the nursery holding up her clothes to display her glowing nates as a lesson to her siblings.

Our heroine was different from her older sisters (the Master not having been blessed with male heirs) in her stubbornness even as a very small child. Her spankings were always more severe than those of her more biddable siblings, in that Nanny tended to regard the breaking of a rebellious child's spirit as a goal of such proceedings. A

blubbering penitent girl was her aim, and the painful collisions of her hard right hand with soft clenching and quivering buttocks were generally continued until that outcome had been achieved. Of course, Blaise's canny older sisters soon learned to express such overt contrition immediately, hoping to shorten their anguish.

Not so their spirited youngest sibling. She hated the humiliation of having her private parts bared and put on display just as much as her sisters, and certainly had no love (at least to begin with) for hind end pain. But far worse would be the indignity of surrender, just as her father imagined was the case for the builder of Blaise Castle and the painfully martyred Saint that was its namesake. And his beautiful blonde youngest offspring lived up to her name, never once releasing more than silent tears no matter how long and hard she was spanked. So Nanny's arm or patience (or willingness to leave her beloved charge bruised for days) would wear out before Blaise's spirit was broken. Though our heroine's bottom would glow far more redly than those of her sisters after their own much less enthusiastic disciplinary sessions (a state which she would later ruefully reflect to be the apparent lot in life for that part of her regardless of age or circumstance).

She did wonder if her looks were at least part of the reason she seemed to elicit such fervent attempts to break her spirit via punishment of her bottom by all of the women who inherited the right to discipline her. Her older sisters were all brown eyed and haired, but it seemed the local infiltration of the gene pool by the Vikings who had raided these parts for many centuries had manifested itself in Lord Fortescu's youngest offspring. Blaise sported white blonde hair which descended in riotous curls, huge cornflower blue eyes, a button nose, and rosebud lips, all consistent with the current cultural ideal of feminine beauty. And by the time she reached her womanhood, her ceaseless activity had given her long clean limbs and a flat stomach. Today, she

probably would have been diagnosed with some form of hyperactivity and given medications. In her era, the medicine deemed proper to treat such symptoms consisted of forceful application of painful stimuli to the afflicted individual's unhappy hind-quarters.

Her Scandinavian forbears also endowed our heroine with larger than average firm, uplifted breasts and a robustly feminine pair of hips. The term the Vikings had used to describe such sturdily constructed women roughly translated as 'shield-maiden'. Lady Blaise was strong enough from her culturally disapproved rambles around her father's estate to have conducted herself honorably in battle once trained (as she did many times in her romantic fantasies). Her muscular buttocks were also well-toned by her tomboyish penchant for climbing anything she could get away with ascending on the many occasions when she escaped the supervision of her Nanny or Governess. Like her other unfeminine activities, her jaunts up inviting trees and ruins were conducted regardless of the inevitable consequences for that part of her when she was almost inevitably caught in such culturally proscribed adventures.

Once they turned five and were graduated from the nursery, the education of the Fortescu girls was taken over by their Governess. This formidable woman was a convent-educated refugee from France, where her Huguenot ancestors had been persecuted for generations by the Catholic majority. She instructed her charges in French and Latin and a wide variety of academic disciplines that were unusually sophisticated fare for a country manor house. Of the five girls, only Blaise was an avid customer for all that Mademoiselle had to teach. The only blonde daughter had an insatiable appetite for history and geography, loving to daydream for hours imagining faraway places as she pored over the maps in the study to which she was frequently exiled after being punished for one of her routine rebellions. Her sisters detested mathematics and science, which also

fascinated our heroine and endeared her to her otherwise frustrated Governess.

A strangely ambivalent relationship developed between the Lady Blaise and Mademoiselle. On the one hand, the precocious blonde daughter was by far the most apt pupil for the dedicated teacher's passionate service to the Goddess Athena whom she regarded to be the patron deity of her love of learning. The rather homely Frenchwoman took great delight in the responsive girl's endless curiosity and agile mind. On the other hand, the youngest daughter's rebellious streak caused her Governess no end of frustration, every iota of which would be taken out routinely on her charge's bared buttocks.

Discipline from Mademoiselle was quite different than it had been from Nanny. The warmth of being held over a loving lap and spanked with a bare hand was out of the question. Spankings in the schoolroom were delivered with the miscreant bent over the teacher's desk, the front of which had been equipped with a leather padding so that the front of the students' hips would not be bruised by the sharp edge of the furniture. By the time the fifth and final daughter entered the classroom, this leather was well-polished in its center, since all of Blaise's older siblings were indifferent students whose minds tended to wander in class.

Their instructor always rewarded such perambulations with an edifying trip over her desktop for the daydreamer. Her hands would be secured by soft but sturdy cords to the teacher's chair on the far side of the desk so that they would not be tempted to interfere with the unpleasantness happening at their owner's opposite end. Then skirts would be raised and pinned up, and smallclothes lowered (since the Governess was of the opinion that the embarrassment of having ones bottom bared for it added piquancy to well-deserved punishment). Pantalets around knees also prevented legs from kicking too wildly, as they were wont to do when their owner's buttocks were having the fires of Hell

lit in them. Once these preparations were complete, a leather house slipper would be used to paddle the squirming moons until their color was darkened to a brilliant cerise. Then their owner would stand in the front corner of the classroom for the remainder of the lesson, her hands atop her head to prevent her from rubbing away any of the pain. Of course, her skirts remained pinned up so that her glowing nether moons would provide an ongoing reminder to her sisters of the price of inattention.

In her entire decade plus in the Manor's classroom, our heroine never once had to be spanked for inattention. She drank up all learning like a thirsty young plant in the desert, her mind never wandering from the topic at hand. However, that same avid intellect quite frequently took issue with Mademoiselle's opinions about the various topics under discussion. The older sisters would never have been engaged enough in the lesson to even think to argue with any of the strong personal points of view the frustrated Frenchwoman included in her lessons. But their blonde junior was only too willing to disagree with their teacher. At times, this led to lively discussions between the two as the four older girls rolled their eyes at the interruption. But at least once a day, a line would be crossed and Blaise would find herself bent over the desk and undergoing the same procedure as her inattentive siblings, only for the opposite reason. But she took pride in never once deciding not to pursue an argument for fear of a painful outcome for her posterior, which was quite used to such treatment in any case.

Of course, many of our heroine's misbehaviors occurred outside the classroom. She would finish her homework far sooner than her sisters, and receive permission to leave the study hall to read in the library. At least half the time, some interesting item glimpsed from the windows would draw her attention, and Blaise would be off and running on some adventurous exploration of the estate. This would inevitably

end in an angry Governess tracking down her mischievous charge in some corner of the grounds, often after some frighteningly high tree or wall or rooftop had been climbed. Justice was dispensed on the spot for such crimes, using the hairbrush Mademoiselle carried in her purse. The squirming blonde would be bent over a handy branch or bench or even her kneeling teacher's left leg. Then skirts would be hauled up and held in place by a strong left hand pinioning the miscreant's right wrist against the small of her back while pantalets were dragged down to restrain kicking legs. And then the back of the walnut hairbrush would be fiercely applied to the naughty bottom now exposed. But as in the classroom, our heroine stubbornly avoided any cries of pain during her rear end's travails. Her tears would fall silently as she took her bitter medicine, the only sounds being the crack of hard wood against soft buttock flesh and the ongoing diatribe of the frustrated Frenchwoman chiding her hopelessly rebellious student.

This set of scenarios went on for the better part of a decade, as Blaise's sisters aged out of the manor's classroom to attend the local finishing school, Mistress Farquhar's Academy for Young Ladies, when they came of age. The physical venue for the youngest daughter's ceaseless testing of her boundaries also changed, as her capricious Father decided to give in to his lively girl's agitation to take up riding. All of a sudden, climbing and other perilous activities afoot were replaced by similar outrageous behaviors on horseback. Given her history, readers will hardly be surprised that our heroine stubbornly challenged every limit set by her Father's Stablemaster, Soames. He was a taciturn man in his mid forties, totally unused to the vagaries of young Ladies. How was he to handle a strapping young woman who insisted on jumping the highest fences regardless of her teacher's commands?

But what he did know is that those who disobeyed his instructions would be made to pay in the usual manner for

that era and locale. Within a week of the onset of her lessons, Blaise had committed her first major sin and when they returned to the stables, the taciturn Horse Master sent her to fetch her Governess. Soames was an exceedingly careful man regarding certain proprieties, and would not have considered undertaking the proper discipline of a young female charge without the presence of a chaperon. Thus, Mademoiselle was not surprised when her blushing pupil appeared in her riding dress and declared, "Horsemaster asked me to fetch you to observe while he disciplines me for my usual headstrong nature."

Chapter Two

What her preoccupied pupil failed to note was the immediate flush that suffused the pale Frenchwoman's homely face. For the older woman knew that she was headed to a very familiar venue from her own clandestine nightly visits to the stables, well out of earshot of the main manor house. There dwelt Soames in spartan rooms above the stalls, but these were not the locale to which Mademoiselle headed every night. There she correctly suspected she was escorting her rebellious charge.

For the petite Frenchwoman may have had a beakish nose, snagged teeth, and small rodent-like brown eyes, but other aspects of her body were far less homely. The Horse Master had noticed this early on, and over the years had exchanged subtle flirtations with the Governess until one night they had burst into flames as the long-deprived middle aged woman snuck out to the stables and knocked on his door. She explained with considerable shame that she was in the grips of a terrible demon of attraction, and needed his help in mastering it. The ruggedly handsome bachelor readily concurred, and suggested, "If Mademoiselle will join me in the tack room down below, I believe I can help her both with her guilt and her...longing."

Soon, the lamp was lit, the stable doors barred, and the windows shuttered so that no one in the sleepy manor would disturb the excited couple. Then the powerfully muscled older man instructed, "You are to bend over the saddle horse, Mademoiselle, much as you have had your charges position themselves for exactly the same purpose for many years. As you are a grown woman, I will be tying your hands and eventually your feet so you will not be tempted to interfere with all that is to transpire between us. This will absolve you of any guilt or responsibility for any of what I will be doing to you as well, so your soul will not only be cleansed of sin by your spankings, but will not accumulate further penance for what will transpire after

you've been properly punished. After all, what God would hold a woman responsible for things that happened to her when she was bound and helpless in the hands of a wild brute like myself?"

The Governess, her sallow complexion now wildly flushing in her excitement over the prospect of getting exactly what she had hoped for, exchanged a naughty grin with her ironically smiling companion. She had long suspected he knew exactly what to do with a wicked woman like she knew herself to be. At last her furtive self-pleasurings in the night seemed likely to be supplemented by just the sorts of activities she fantasized while touching herself between her legs every evening after her prayers.

Soames took each of Mademoiselles wrists in hand and guided her gently but firmly to stand with the front of her dress pressed against the well-polished wooden crosspiece of the saddle horse. He noticed with some ill-concealed delight that his subject was trembling slightly, and murmured, "There, there, naughty young woman, I know the prospect of receiving a long-overdue spanking can be a bit frightening. Do not despair; I've watched you delivering the very same treatment to that rebellious blonde imp on many occasions, and it will be no worse for you than it is for her. And unlike your student, you can comfort yourself in your momentary emergency that a pleasurable reward lies ahead once you've taken your dose of bitter medicine!"

This thought indeed was quite inspiring to the frustrated old maid teacher, who had lusted after the craggy Horse Master for many years. So she voiced nothing but gratitude as he helped her to bend forward and crouched to gently but firmly tie each of her wrists to the bottom of the corresponding leg of the horse. Then the time came for him to bid her goodbye with a comforting pat on her coarse black hair and step around behind her to confront the object of his focus for the next very long and challenging while.