

A Healing of Hearts

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Chapter 1

"You are my wife!" Blythe Garrison, fifth Earl to stand in the master bedroom of the family chateau, looking at his new wife of only five hours in disbelief, "How could you do this to me?" he screamed at her.

Blythe looked at his wife with as much hatred that one person could have toward another. He was a man not used to being betrayed as he was being right now. He was the one man the whole country of England's ladies wanted to get a hold of. He had a title, money and position. Not to mention that he was not too bad to look upon as well.

He stood at least six foot-two with soft, wavy brown hair that he kept cut slightly short. His eyes, he had been told, were the softest blue ever and one could get lost dreaming of the secrets hidden within them. Now they looked at a woman who tore his heart out.

"I didn't mean for this to happen!" Amy Garrison cried back.

"You didn't mean for this to happen?" he charged back, "Which part? Please, tell me which part did you not mean to happen. The part where I found you with him, or the part where he fucked you before I did?" he hissed.

"I tried to tell you and mamma, but neither of you would listen to me," she defended herself, "I tried to stop this wedding."

"You didn't try hard enough," he spat back, "To give yourself to that man on our wedding night is something I can never and *will* never forgive. You want your freedom back, my dear, you got it. I want you out of my house within the hour. Maxwell will

make sure all of your things are returned to your family's house and the papers to annul this joke of a marriage will be there waiting for you."

"Blythe, please," she begged, "We can still fix this!"

Blythe grabbed his jacket from the chair as he walked to the door, "I just did," he threw it over his shoulder as he slammed the door on her, closing her and all of the memories out of his mind.

* * * *

Six months later...

Lady Adela Delacroix sat next to her aunt, Ella Simon in the family carriage getting her first real look at where her mother's family came from. England, the land of freedom and new beginnings.

Adela was a lady in all the ways that one could be a lady, except she was not married. At a ripe age of twenty-one she needed to find a husband or be put on the shelf like so many others. The catch was, Adela didn't mind not being married. She loved the freedom she had and wanted desperately to keep it.

Adela stood at five six with a petite build. Her hair was a rich black, piled on the top of her head with large ringlets touching her shoulders. Back home in France she was told that her brown eyes were the eyes into one's soul, something she loved to hear. She was asked many times by many different men for her hand, but with each one something was lacking. None could grab her attention and the ones that did found her boldness somewhat distasteful.

Adela smiled at her lovely Aunt Ella. It was kind of her aunt to agree to take her into the home and show Adela the city where her mother grew up. It was a dream of hers for so long that Adela found she was having a hard time believing that it was finally happening.

“And what do you think of the city, my dear?” Ella asked with a kind smile on her face.

“Oh ma bonté!” she smiled back, “I have never seen anything quite like this before. It is so busy!”

Ella smiled brighter. She loved to hear her niece talk with the thick French accent. She loved it even more that she finally had the girl home with her for a spell. Now if she could find that perfect match for her and marry the girl to the right English Lord everything would be as it should be.

“Well just you wait, my dear. Once word gets out about your arrival things will become even more busy for you.”

Adela smiled as she looked back out of the window, “I am here for vacation, not to become a bride.”

“Yes, but you are what some call new blood. All the gentlemen will want to meet you. It is the way of the English.”

“When is the first party?”

Ella smiled and looked down at her gloved hands. It was apparent how her niece changed the subject, “There is one tonight, but we don’t have to go since you only just arrived. We can do the one tomorrow night.”

“Non! Let us go tonight. I want to see what the English parties are about.”

Chapter 2

Adela pulled out from her armoire one of the elegant gowns she had specially made in France before leaving. It was a simple black and white gown that had a slit down the middle showing off dainty white silk. White silk garter and stocking went over her slim legs as a corset was laced around her tiny waist, bringing her breasts up for a gentleman's view.

Thick straps went over her shoulders as she stepped into the gown. Tiny pearl buttons lined the front, closing it. Her hair was swept over to the side with two large curls touching her left shoulder and a simple black choker with a white pearl was tied around her throat. Matching black and white heeled slippers touched her silk covered feet as her handbag and shawl was handed to her by a maid as she walked out of her room.

"Oh my dear," Ella gasped, "You are a vision."

"Merci," Adela replied with a grin on her face.

"I feel that the other young ladies will be green with envy at this gown. It has yet to reach England."

"And I am not too sure it will," Adela told her, handing her wrap to the butler who helped to place it around her shoulders, "I had it specially made for myself. A one of a kind."

"Well, let us go. I am afraid we are already running late as it is."

* * * *

"I am so glad you decided to make it tonight," Lady Blaine, hostess of tonight's ball cornered Earl Garrison to show him how happy it made her that he showed. Ever since the nasty split with his wife the man almost stopped going to any kind of social functions.

"One can not hide in the corner all night, Lady Blaine," Blythe told her in a charming voice, "It isn't polite to the other guests."

"Oh, how thoughtless of me," she smiled back, "Of course. Visit with the other guests, I wouldn't want to hog you all to myself."

He took her hand, bringing it up to his lips, "Then I will leave you to mingle," he kissed the hand before he turned his back on her and walked away.

"Such a waste of a man."

Blythe smiled at the comment, looking down at the ground when he suddenly bumped into a lady he never saw before. Quickly his arms went around the tiny waist, steadying not only her but himself as well from taking a hard fall to the ground.

"Oh m'excuser! Epluché me! I did not see you!"

Blythe looked down at the dark beauty in his arms with a combination of wonder and something else he couldn't put his finger on, "Are you alright?"

"L'amende, mon Seigneur. I feel the room has been closing in on me," she laughed up at him as she stepped out of his embrace, "I saw an open door and made a run for it."

"Well how about I escort you so you don't hurt another gentleman. Another might not be so nice as to let you go without some kind of reward."

She giggled as she wrapped her hand around his arm, "I would be delighted."

Blythe maneuvered her around the room, noticing how the two of them seemed to catch a few eyes as they walked to an open balcony for some fresh air.

"Now where are my manners," he chuckled, "I am Blythe Garrison, at your services."

"Ah, the broken hearted Earl," she smiled brightly when he looked at her with shocked eyes, "I have heard some things about you since I have been here, seems that many of the girls here want to catch your eye."

Blythe found that he was blushing, "Is that so?"

"Oui. You are..." she looked around as she thought of the right word and at the same time pulled two things out of her purse, "A good catch?"

Blythe laughed at her bold statement and at the way she said he was a good catch, "Most I know of say that I am broken."

"Ah, well that could be true, but you don't look broken to me," she handed him a flask, "Drink?"

He took the flask and watched her in stunned silence as she lit a tiny cigarette, inhaling deeply. "Hum, I needed that," she smiled at him, watching the surprise in his eyes as he took a drink of her best brandy, "Good isn't it? Better than that wine they have in there," she laughed as she took her flask back, taking a deep drink before she put it back into her purse, "Now where are my manners? Adela Delacroix, visiting from France and here to get to know my aunt."

"Well I must say, you are the first lady I have ever seen who smokes and drinks brandy without hissing from the burn," he told her with a grin on his lips.

"And you, my Lord have the prettiest blue eyes I have ever seen," her bluntness seemed to catch him off guard, and he couldn't hide the shocked look on his face. It made her laugh and dig her flask back out, "Here. Have another drink. It will help."

"Are you always this bold?"

"Hardi, Mon Seigneur, no. This is not bold. I just say what is on my mind," she took another deep inhale, putting the cigarette out and taking her flask from his hands again, "This is being bold," she walked up to him, taking a quick drink. Blythe watched her with a flabbergasted expression on his face as she took hold of his arms, bringing him down to her eye level. Slowly as if in a dream her lips touched his in a brief, yet hot kiss. As quickly as she started it was over. "Bonne nuit, my Lord," she told him as she walked back to the party.

Chapter 3

Adela!" Ella called from the top of the stairs, "Where are you going so soon? You should still be abed."

"I have a few things I need to pick up, and wanted to get some of the fresh air," Adela answered back as she buttoned her jacket up to her chin, "I shouldn't be too long."

"It isn't proper for a lady to go about alone."

Adela smiled up at her aunt, "I will be fine and home before lunch. You go back and rest."

Ella didn't get a chance to say anything else. Adela was out the door, "That girl won't find a husband if she keeps acting like that."

Adela walked around the shops looking in each and every window. Many she stopped and went inside, ordering things and having them delivered to her aunt's home. One being a brand new shawl for her aunt; a lovely peach cream with fringe all around it and with a soft rose pattern.

On her way out of the shop she ran right into a gentleman, knocking her package from her hands, "Oh épluché me!"

Blythe found he was in the same situation as the other night. Bumping into a girl, arms around that girl to prevent her from falling, "Oh so sorry!" he started to laugh as she took a step back, "Again."

"Ah, hello again," she smiled at him, taking her package from his hands, "Nice to see you again."

"Lady Delacroix. What brings you out and about," he looked over her shoulder then around, "Alone."

Adela giggled, "I am shopping. What brings you out?"

"Coffee," he smiled, "The best in town is in a shop down the street. Would you care to join me?"

Adela smiled back, taking his arm, "Love to."

Ten minutes later both were sitting back in their chairs enjoying the hot coffee and for some reason Blythe found that he really enjoyed her company.

"So are you here then for the season?" Blythe asked her, filling her cup again.

"No," she shook her head, taking a gentle sip, "I wanted to come and see the birth place of my mother."

"Your mother?"

"Yes. Elizabeth Simon. Her father, as a present, gave her a trip to Paris, France. She wanted to see some of the world before she started the season to look for a husband. She ended up meeting and falling passionately in love with my father. They married and soon had my brother. I came many years later."

"And your parents now?"

"They died doing what both loved, seeing the world together. My brother raised me. With what both of our parents left us, neither needed to marry. However he found Sophie, and now they have three children and I am off to see some of the world."

"Sounds like you have your life figured out."

"Do you?" she sat up in her chair, placing both elbows on the table and leaning into him as far as she could go, "Do you have your future figured out? Have you fixed within you what might be broken?"

"A broken heart is hard to fix," he told her looking down at the ground.

"Nothing is impossible to fix, My Lord," she sat back in her chair, hands on her lap, "Do you have a lover?"

Blythe's head snapped up in shock, "Beg your pardon?"

"A lover. Someone to help to heal this broken heart of yours," she smiled when his jaw opened, "Am I being too bold again?"

"Yes and no," he cleared his throat before he looked her back in the eye, "I do not have a lover. And yes, you are bold. I find I like that."

"This, um, person who hurt you, was she your wife?" she went on, "I can tell by the lack of speech I am right. She was a fool to let you go," she told him softly, meeting him in the eye, "If I had you, I would never let you go."

Blythe could only sit there and look at this beautiful woman sitting across from him in wonder. In his whole life he looked to the proper order of things and that included the proper lady. Now looking and talking with Adela he knew that all he needed was not what he was brought up to believe.

"I am only going to be in town for a few more days. Then I leave for new sights," she leaned forward again, capturing his eyes with her own, "I find that I like you more than I should, for some unknown reason, so I am going to offer you something that by rights is mine to give. I am close to twenty-two, a spinster to all I know. I want to know what it is like to be with a man, monsieur. Being as bold as I am, I will not beat around the bush. I want you to be the man that shows me the pleasure between two people. If for only once, I want to know what a lover is like," she stood up, smiling at his speechless form, "Let me know soon."

Chapter 4

Adela sat at the table with her aunt eating supper when a letter came for her. She smiled at her aunt as she walked out of the room with the letter, opening it as she went.

Take the coach that I send for you to the docks. I own it and the rooms in the building. Eight tonight, I will be waiting.

Blythe.

Adela smiled shyly as she tossed the letter into the fire. Tonight, she thought, she was going to get to know what pleasure felt like at the hands of a man.

"Is everything alright?" Ella asked, walking into the library with concern on her face.

"Everything is perfectionner aunt," she smiled at the fire burning.

* * * *

At eight sharp, the carriage Adela was riding in pulled up to the dark hotel on the deserted docks. She was covered from head to foot in her cloak, making it hard for anyone to notice her at all. When she stepped out she looked up and saw one room only with a single candle in the window.

Butterflies started in her belly as she walked up to the hotel. Over and over in her mind she kept thinking that come morning she was going to be a completed woman. She was going to know what pleasure was all about from the hands of a man, a man that she picked and not one that her family chose for her to marry. Tonight she was taking matters into her own hands.

On feather light feet she walked up the stairs, following the candles that were lit on the floor to guide her way. Adela's hand shook as she touched the door handle, opening a silent door.

The room was clean, a bed freshly made with crisp, white sheets. Rose petals were flung everywhere on the floor and some on the bed. A table stood in the far, dark corner of the room. Two glasses sat on a tray with some fruit, cheese, bread, and bourbon. Lounging in one of the chairs in with legs stretched out and shirt off was Blythe.

Adela felt her heart pound as she watched him slowly stand up and walk to her. She said nothing to him as he pushed the hood of her cloak down and pulled the knot at her throat. He sucked his breath in when the cloak fell to the floor and Adela stood before him in a completely see through gown that barely reached her knees.

"Magnifique," he told her in her own language.

Adela blushed, and then closed her eyes when the back of his hand skimmed down her breast, cupping it gently. Blythe watched his thumb brush over the nipple causing it to harden. She was so perfect and he felt so honored to be the one to receive this gift that he was almost afraid to touch her.

Adela touched for the first time, a man's bare chest. She ran her hand up to his neck, twinning her fingers into the thick locks of his hair. Slowly, as if in a dream, she brought his face down to hers.

"Tonight," she said against his lips, "Show me what it is like to feel like a woman."

Blythe kissed her hard, thrusting his tongue deep inside her mouth as his arms went around her tiny body. He crushed her to him as he kissed her deeply. Her nails dug into his scalp as he cupped her rear, grinding her on his sudden hardness. For the first time in months he wanted a woman again, and tonight he was going to get the woman he wanted.

Not breaking the kiss, Blythe picked her up. He wrapped her legs around his waist, walking over to the bed. Locked in a heated kiss, and wrapped together, he took them both down to the bed. The feel of her body under his was so pleasurable it was almost painful.

His hand roamed over every inch of her body. With her help the sheer gown she wore was now on the floor, along with the rest of his clothing. Skin against skin, legs intertwined with each other and still they kissed. It was like two lost lovers coming together again after centuries of being apart.

When the kiss did finally break it was so Blythe could trail his lips down her throat to her awaiting breasts. Each one got his special attention and in no time both stood at hard peeks before his mouth trailed down even farther.

“Please,” she begged him suddenly.

Blythe looked up and knew by the stressed look upon her face that she was close. He felt some disappointment at not being able to feast upon her like he so wanted, but the need to be complete with her over took him.

He slid his body back up hers, kissing her deeply when their lips found each other's. One free hand of his moved down her body again to the junction between her legs. He parted and wrapped her legs around his waist as he kissed her jaw, neck, throat, then back up to her waiting mouth. The whole time he did this, his free hand rubbed at the heated core of her womanhood. He felt the silky heat that awaited him and ever so gently pushed one finger inside to test her readiness.

She cried out suddenly, but not from pain, pleasure unlike anything in her whole life washed over her. She held onto him as his finger inside her body forced her to ride out the waves that crashed into her.

“Oh Mon Dieu. Qu'est arrive?” she moaned, “Oh my god. What happened?”

Blythe chuckled as he removed his finger and took hold of his hard flesh, “That was a woman's pleasure,” he told her before he began to rub the head of his hardness against her wet flesh, “Ready for more?”

He positioned the head at her core, parted his legs more and moved her to wrap tighter around his hips. He went up on his arms, looking down at her body as he slowly began to enter her tight heat.

Blythe had to fight within himself to keep his eyes open and watch the beautiful sight of entering her body. It seemed that when he was watching it increased the pleasure in his body by ten.

“You feel like heaven,” he told her on a rasp.

Adela snaked her tongue out and licked from his nipple up to his neck. Her arms went up around his neck as she hugged him closer, “Then let us die together.”

Chapter 5

Blythe closed his eyes and forced his way into her body. He hissed when nails dug deep into his back and sides as he pushed his way past the proof of her innocence. Her whimpering was not to tell him no or to stop, but to go on. To show her what making love was about. Only when he was completely inside her tight body did he open his eyes and look down at her.

Joined as one they were. Two people coming together as lovers could only do. Words from his wife came back suddenly to haunt him. Words of her telling him that when true love hit you a person would do anything and everything they could to hold on to that love. To keep it for themselves. As Blythe looked down at Adela and her lovely body he knew then what she was talking about. Amy was right to give herself to the one man that made her feel complete, just as he knew Adela was giving herself to him.

Slowly he pulled out and gently he pushed back in. Her sharp intake of breath told him all that he needed to know and soon they were both in the wake of heated passion.

He watched himself leave and enter her body as she kissed at his chest and neck. She held onto him tightly as he wound her up tighter and tighter. Within moments both were breathing hard as the peak of fulfillment was at hand.

Adela's sudden cry of release had Blythe shattering above her. He cried out as he erupted with her, emptying not only his seed but also his heart. At last he found the one woman that would complete him and bring him the peace and home he always wanted.

Still hard and still in much need, Blythe lowered his body back down to hers. He kept most of his weight on his arms as she wrapped around him, holding him tightly.

"I know what I want now," he told her against her neck, "I know what I need."

Adela was breathing hard, with a smile on her face. She pulled his head up so he would look at her, "What might that be, mon amour?"

Blythe smiled at her words, "You. I want, need and love you, mon animal favori. And I won't let you out of this room until you agree to be my wife."

Adela laughed, kissing him, "I will only agree to be your wife if you promise to make me scream like that every night."

Blythe grinned brighter, "And every day."

"Then we will seal the deal with me on top. I have always heard it was very enjoyable."

He flipped them over, "Oh darling, you will soon find out how enjoyable it really is."