Jennifer Dale

HER LORD AND MASTER



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Part One

Molly gripped the silver tray tightly as she hurried down the hall. Though the food needed to arrive warm, it wouldn't do to spill the master's breakfast. She was newly come to Ashford Hall, and wanted to make a good impression. Fortunately, the door she sought was just ahead. Reaching her destination, she balanced the tray precariously with one hand and quietly rapped on the door.

Through the door she heard an indistinct bellow, then the door swung open. A handsome young man with blond hair and green eyes stood in the doorway. Surely this couldn't be the master. Though he was impeccably dressed, he lacked the arrogance she'd already come to associate with the aristocracy. Molly surmised that this was his lordship's valet. He put his finger to his lips and then stepped back to allow her to enter the room.

The suite was a disaster. She nearly tripped over a pair of shining Hessian boots as she walked across the room, looking for a place to set the tray. Every available surface was covered with trunks and bandboxes, all of them overflowing with cravats, hose and other items of masculine clothing. As she stood there, bewildered, the valet tiptoed over to the enormous four-poster bed in the middle of the room.

"Breakfast, my lord," he whispered.

"Don' wan' any!" came the reply from a covered lump on the bed.

Molly just stood there, holding her tray, unsure of what to do. Finally, the valet came over and scooped a pile of clothing off a cherrywood writing desk, accidentally knocking an inkwell to the floor. Another loud bellow, this time quite clear, came from the bed.

"Plunkett! Quit that infernal racket!"

On the heels of this exclamation, two pillows from the bed came sailing across the room. The valet, burdened only by his master's clothing, was quick enough, or experienced enough, to step out of the way. Molly, however, was not so lucky. Both of the pillows crashed into the tray she held, sending tea and scones flying to the floor. The crash of breaking china seemed to further enrage the figure on the bed.

"By all the saints and sinners! Get out!"

Apparently deciding that discretion was the better part of valor, the valet beat a hasty retreat, still clutching his master's clothes. Molly froze for a moment, then knelt quietly and began picking the remnants of the master's breakfast off the floor. If she left a puddle of tea and porcelain on the floor, there'd be hell to pay from Mrs. Hutchins.

"Are you deaf, gel?"

Molly tried to ignore the commanding voice and

continued using her apron to mop up the tea.

"You must be deaf."

Molly took a deep breath, stood up and turned to face her master, who was now sitting up in bed, and nearly stumbled as her knees went weak. He was as beautiful as an angel, well, a fallen angel maybe, with his long dark hair and fiercely slanted eyebrows. Even from across the room, his flashing blue eyes seemed to bore a hole straight through her.

She summoned up her courage enough to reply, "No, my lord."

"Well, then, since we've established that Mrs. Hutchins has not taken to employing deaf-mutes in my household, I must assume that you are just stupid!"

"I beg your pardon, my lord."

"I said, 'Get out!""

"Yes, my lord, but ... "

He arched one of his perfect eyebrows at her. Molly swallowed nervously and then blurted, "Begging your pardon, my lord, but Mrs. Hutchins would turn me off if I left a mess in your lordship's room."

"Aren't you afraid I'll turn you off myself, gel?"

"Yes, my lord." Molly bowed her head, staring at her shoes, waiting...hoping he wouldn't sack her.

"Fine, fine, you may clean it up," he said, waving a hand idly at the mess.

"It'll just take me a moment, my lord, and then I'll bring you another tray," she told him.

"S'truth, gel, I didn't even want the first one." He

sat back in the bed and promptly banged his head on the wooden headboard. "Bloody hell!"

Molly thought privately that her new master was altogether too fond of cursing. He swears like a tar, she thought, although truthfully, Molly had yet to meet a sailor, swearing or otherwise. Though there was a smithy in the village who was well-known for his colorful cursing. Still, the master hadn't sacked her, so who cared if he swore or not? She grabbed the pillows off the floor. Luckily, they had missed the strawberry jam, and there didn't seem to be any tea stains on them. She hurried over to the bed. "Here, my lord, please allow me."

He sat back up, and allowed her to tuck the pillows behind his head. The coverlet fell slightly as he moved, further exposing his broad shoulders and wellmuscled chest. Molly felt a tingle between her legs as she stared at his perfect physique. As she adjusted the pillows, her breast accidentally brushed against his upper arm. A spark seemed to leap between them, and she quickly pulled back. But before she could step away, he grabbed her wrist. "How is it that I've not seen you before?" he asked.

"I have only been at Ashford Hall for a fortnight," she replied.

"Ah, that it explains it then. I've been in Scotland for a month," he said. "Shooting pheasants."

"Yes, my lord."

"What's your name, gel?"

"Molly, my lord."

"Well, Molly, I suppose, as your new master, I should officially welcome you to Ashford Hall," he said. There was no time to protest as he pulled her down into his embrace and his mouth came down on hers. Molly had been kissed before by boys of the village, but the kisses of those callow youths could hardly compare to the kiss of an experienced rake like the master. He nearly took her breath away with the touch of his lips.

His arms tightened around her, and he pulled her more firmly onto his lap. He teased her bottom lip with his tongue, licking her and nipping her with his teeth, until she gasped. Then, quick as lightning, his tongue was in her mouth, twining hungrily with her own.

One of his hands slid down her back, to her hip, then continued along her leg, past her knee, down to rest lightly on her stocking-clad ankle. She felt the warmth of his hand burning through the cotton stocking and into her skin like a brand. No man had ever touched her like this...actually, no man had ever touched her at all. So she was unprepared for the molten heat she felt as his hand stroked her ankle.

Just then, there was a knock at the door. Molly struggled against the muscled arms that held her, but it was like fighting against bands of iron. The master ignored both the knock and her struggles, and went on plundering her mouth with his tongue. The knock came again; finally, he pulled his mouth away from hers.

"What is it?" he asked angrily.

"My lord," came the voice of his valet, "Mr. Lambert is downstairs. He has been cooling his heels in the drawing room for a quarter of an hour, my lord."

"Ballocks!"

This time Molly barely registered the cursing. The master looked down at her, his blue eyes sparkling like twin sapphires, and gave her a quick buss on the mouth. "We will have to continue this later, my dear. I have some urgent business with my solicitor to attend to."

Molly just stared up at the face of the dark angel, still too stunned to move, until the master set her on her feet again and gave her a quick pat on the ass. She jumped away and scurried toward the breakfast dishes still lying on the floor, but not before she got a full view of the master's splendid body as he rose, naked, from the bed. His shoulders were wider than even those of the swearing blacksmith from the village. Below them, his flat abdomen tapered to long, muscular legs, and nestled between them amongst dark curls was his thick cock. She blushed furiously at the sight of him. Nonchalantly, he strode over to a nearby chair, grabbed a silk dressing gown and donned it before saying, "Come in."

The door to the room swung open and the valet came in, a basin and towel in hand, as Molly was gathering the last of the mess from the floor. The master sat down in a chair while his man prepared to shave him. Molly quickly scampered to the door, but she couldn't help turning to ask, "Will there be anything else, my lord?"

"No, that will be all..." he replied, but then one eye dropped lazily in a wink, "for now."

Molly's cheeks were still hot and red as she rushed from the room and down the hall. She could scarcely believe what had just happened. She dreaded having to explain the broken china to Mrs. Hutchins. The cost would likely come out of her meager wages. But, even worse than the shattered dishes was her shattered piece of mind. The master had kissed her! What was she to do? Maybe she was making too much of the incident. Maybe it had been just a welcoming gesture. She decided that it would be best to pretend it had never happened.

She hurried to the kitchen and scraped the leftover scones into the slops pail. Then she set the tray on the counter. Fortunately, there was no sign of the cook or Mrs. Hutchins. Still, Molly knew she would never be able to conceal her mishap. She washed the dishes, including the broken bits of crockery, and then dried and put away the still intact pieces of china. The remains she wrapped up in a towel and set on the counter. She would explain the accident to Mrs. Hutchins, but the rest she would keep to herself. By the time she crawled into her garret bed that evening, Molly had almost forgotten the events of the day. But that night her dreams were plagued with memories of brilliant sapphire eyes and fierce kisses.

Several days passed before she again encountered the master face-to-face. She was polishing the banister

in the front hallway when he came in from riding. Holding her breath, she dipped him a curtsey as he approached, sure he wouldn't recognize her. Or that if he did, he wouldn't bother with her. She held the curtsey as he strode on past her, but then she felt his hand graze her hip. Still, he didn't stop. She sighed, her relief tinged with disappointment, as she heard him continue on up the stairs, and she resumed her polishing.

An hour or so later, she entered the library to continue her dusting and polishing. Of all the rooms in the house, she liked this one the most. Though she could barely read the stories contained in them, she loved the books and the rich leathery smell of their bindings; she didn't even mind climbing the tall ladders to reach the highest shelves. She was perched atop one of these ladders, dusting, when she heard someone enter the room. She turned slightly, and nearly fell off the ladder when she saw the master's brilliant blue eyes looking up at her. Thinking he wouldn't care to be disturbed, she started down the ladder.

"I beg your pardon, my lord. I'll come back later."

"No."

"My lord?"

"I shan't be disturbed in the least. Go ahead and do your chores."

"Yes, my lord."

Molly took a deep breath to steady herself and set back to work. She ran her feather duster along the top shelf, and tried not to stare at the master as he browsed the shelves. It was hard not to look. He hadn't yet bothered to change his clothes from his ride. His dark hair was tousled and windblown, his Hessian boots were dusty, and his normally perfect and starched cravat was wilted. Strangely enough, she preferred this disheveled look to his normal sartorial splendor. It made him seem more human, more approachable. Not that she would ever dream of approaching him unless summoned.

It seemed, however, that the master had different ideas. While she worked, he came closer and closer to the base of the ladder. Before she knew it, he had mounted the first rung of the ladder, his weight making it shift beneath her. She hoped he was only looking for a book. He took another step up the ladder. Her hopes were dashed when she felt his hand close on her ankle. Another step, and his hand crept higher beneath her skirts.

"I never got to finish welcoming you to Ashford Hall," he told her. "I think it is time that we remedy that situation."

She knew she should flee, but he had her cornered, and he was the master. Truthfully, her desire to escape was weak. Secretly, she longed for the strange tingling sensations she felt whenever she saw him, or whenever she was near him. She wanted the warmth of his hands on her naked skin. So she stood there, staring at the books, and let him touch her.

She could feel his hard, lean body press against her

as he climbed up the ladder. It inflamed her almost as much as the pressure of his hand on her leg. His fingers wandered up, stroking the curve of her calf and the sensitive spot behind her knee, before toying with the knot of her garter. When his hand moved higher across the bare skin of her inner thigh, brushing against the muslin of her undergarments, she thought she would swoon. Then, without so much as a word, his fingers sought the slit in her drawers.

Her whole body shivered as the master's deft fingers parted her damp curls and found her clitoris. She nearly fell off the ladder when he stroked her there, but she soon relaxed under the gentle yet insistent pressure of his fingers. Before long, her sex grew hot and wet as he rubbed his fingers in slow circles against her flesh. He touched and teased her until her body was at a fever pitch. Then, he slowly slid one long finger into her snug sheath, eliciting a gasp from Molly.

He slid his finger from her tight passage, stroked her clit once again, then gradually slipped his finger back in. Over and over he probed the depths of her warmth. As she grew wetter, his pace increased until he was thrusting his finger in and out of her cunny rapidly, while she struggled to keep her balance and her sanity. Soon, she could feel an unfamiliar need building within her body. She writhed against his hand as he continued to plunge his finger deep inside her. All her fears of toppling from the ladder were forgotten as she concentrated on the novel sensations he was causing.

Soon, her breath grew ragged and her heart raced as her body climbed toward fulfillment. Then, like the sun bursting through the clouds, something burst deep within her, and wave after wave of warm, golden pleasure swept over her. She grabbed at the top shelf to keep from falling from the ladder, but there was no need. His arm was around her, steadying her, as he buried his face in her skirts, while his other hand continued to stroke her, sending tremors through her body.

Finally, just when she thought she could stand it no longer, the stroking stopped. His hand slowly withdrew and she felt a trickle of moisture run down her thigh. Molly felt the ladder creak under his weight. Then, without saying another word to her, he was gone. She barely heard the click of the door latch as it closed behind him. Still she stood there, too shaken to move.

Nothing she'd ever experienced could compare to the pleasure she'd just been shown. Now she understood why some of the other serving girls stole away to meet their lovers behind the stables. Still, Molly knew that all pleasure has its price, and she was afraid what that price might be. Her job perhaps, or worse, her virtue. What could she do? She needed this job, yet if she ever wanted to marry well, she needed her virtue too. Losing either was not a happy proposition. She could only hope that the master would lose interest in her. In the meantime, she had work to do.

After finishing in the library, she went into the morning room to dust and polish. It was there that Mrs. Hutchins found her a quarter of an hour later.

"Molly?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"You are required in his lordship's room," the housekeeper informed her.

Molly's stomach fluttered at the mention of the master. "Is something amiss then, ma'am?"

"Not precisely."

"May I ask what I'm to do then, ma'am?"

The housekeeper looked at her sadly, and clucked her tongue. "Come sit down for a moment, Molly."

Molly was confused. Though Mrs. Hutchins was no termagant, she was strict. It wasn't like her to coddle her girls, and so such kindness made Molly wary. Still, she sat obediently, perched on the edge of a delicate chaise across from Mrs. Hutchins who was seated on a nearby sofa.

"I came to this house when I was younger than you," the housekeeper began. "I was the tweenie. Then his lordship took note of me, that is the seventh viscount, not the current one. Soon, I was promoted to an upstairs maid, and after that I became the housekeeper."

Molly nodded, not sure what to say.

"Do you understand what I'm getting at, my girl?"

"Not really, ma'am."

Mrs. Hutchins sighed, "Ah, you are such an

innocent." She leaned closer. "I was one of the viscount's light o' loves. At least until he was forced by his family to marry."

Molly gasped. "What about Mr. Hutchins?"

"There was no Mr. Hutchins until after the viscount was wed."

"But, why are you telling me all of this?"

"I thought that'd be clear to you, my girl. The master has decided he wants you to be his personal maid."

"What does that mean?"

"Don't be daft. It means he wants to bed you."

"He told you that?" Molly was shocked. It seemed that the master hadn't lost interest in her at all.

"Of course he didn't tell me right out," Mrs. Hutchins continued, "but I've been around the nobility long enough to know what he wants. If you have no interest in being his dollymop, just say so, and I'll make sure of it."

"Would you send me away?"

"I'd help you find another position."

"Do I have to decide right now?"

"The sooner the better. The choice won't change no matter how long you wait, and the master said he wanted to see you in his chambers right away."

"I can't decide, not like this."

"He'll be calling for you..."

Molly's heart beat wildly in her chest. This was exactly the choice she'd been dreading. On the one hand, she could spurn her master, saving her virginity for the man she would marry, whoever that might be, and lose her position in this house. On the other hand, she could succumb to the burning caresses of a man who stirred her blood, and in doing so, lose her last shreds of honor and dignity.

Again she wished that there was someone she could talk to, someone she could confide in. Mrs. Hutchins was being kind, but she'd made it plain what she thought Molly should do. And why not? It had worked out for her. Or had it? "Mrs. Hutchins, may I ask you something?" she queried.

"Of course, dear."

"The seventh viscount? Did you love him?" Mrs. Hutchins looked as though she was about to cry. "With every fiber of my being, until the day he died." She turned away.

"And what about Mr. Hutchins?"

"Aye, I loved him too. He was very good to me."

Molly knew she had her answer. She left the chaise and walked toward the door. "I'll be in the master's chamber." With that, she left the room and began the long climb up the staircase. She walked down the hall, then stood in front of the familiar door. With shaking hands and trembling knees, she knocked on the door.

"Come in," said a deep, male voice. The master's voice.

Molly swung open the door and stepped inside. Her heart leapt at the sight of him, and she knew she'd made the right decision. How could she possible deny the desire that she'd felt for this man since she'd first seen him? To think that he wanted her in return, when he could have any number of fashionable ladies, was overwhelming.

He crossed the room, but made no further approach toward her. "I presume you've spoken with Mrs. Hutchins?" he asked.

She nodded, not trusting her tongue at that moment.

"And she explained things to you?"

Again she nodded.

"Well, then, you will attend me."

Molly felt a surge of panic. "Right here? Right now?" she blurted out.

"Yes, I require a bath after my ride. Please see to it that the tub is brought up and the water heated. Plunkett and the footmen will assist you."

Molly stood there dumbly, her face flushed with embarrassment. Obviously she'd mistaken his intentions. He only required a bath. Maybe Mrs. Hutchins was mistaken about his intentions as well. She curtseyed and hurried away to begin the preparations for his bath. Half an hour later, Molly was the pouring the last steaming kettle of water into the tub, when the master walked in, clothed once again in his silken robe.

"Your bath is ready, my lord."

She waited to be dismissed, but he said nothing, just moved to the side of the tub, and dropped his robe to the floor. Molly ducked her head, but it was too late. The vision of his perfect body was seared upon her mind. Before arriving at Ashford Hall she'd only seen one other man nude, but she was sure her young cousin was not so well-built, or so well-endowed as the master. She heard the water lap against the sides of the tub as he settled into it. He did not dismiss her, so she remained frozen in place, head bowed. She heard him splashing about, but still he did not acknowledge her.

Finally, he spoke. "Come here."

Quietly, she stepped forward, head still downcast. "Yes, my lord."

"You will wash my back."

"Yes, my lord."

Nervously, she took the soap from his hand and knelt behind him. The soap smelled of sandalwood, she noted as she lathered it between her hands. His skin would smell of it, spicy and alluring. She tried to think of other things as she tentatively reached out to touch him, but it was impossible. His silken skin was slick and warm beneath her fingers. Sweeping her hands over the broad planes of his back, she could feel his muscles bunch and tense beneath his skin. She lathered his shoulders and upper back, then lower as he leaned forward allowing her further access. She ran her fingers along the knobs of his spine, just brushing the shallow cleft at the base, above his buttocks.

When his entire back was covered with foamy lather, she put the soap down on a nearby stool and reached for the dipper. Scooping up water, she rinsed his back, watching as the soapy rivulets cascaded across his sleek skin. Her muslin shift was soaked with water by the time she finished. She replaced the dipper on the stool, and stood. "Will that be all, my lord?"

"The soap if you please" he said, leaning back in the tub. Trying not to look at his naked body, barely concealed by the sudsy bath water, she once again took up the soap and started to hand it to the master. He grabbed her hand and pulled her down toward him. "The rest of me requires attention as well," he said huskily.

Her startled eyes met his, and she felt a delicious shiver run through her body. Though she would never admit it, she longed to touch him again and feel the powerful muscles beneath his warm skin. She knelt. He placed her hand still holding the soap upon his chest, then released it. Then he tilted his head back and closed his eyes. With his gaze no longer upon her, Molly relaxed. She began to run the soap over his body, sliding it across his muscular chest, and down along his rib cage.

As she explored his torso, she grew bolder, forsaking the soap and instead stroking her hand across the hard planes of his upper body, running her fingers through the dark springy hair that curled upon his chest. She slid her soap-slickened fingers over his flat nipples and felt them grow hard beneath her touch. Tentatively, her hand slid lower, feeling the rippling muscles of his abdomen, following the trail of dark hair that arrowed down beneath the water.

Abruptly, she stopped. She was feeling bold, but not that bold. As if aware of her hesitation, he sat up

and looked at her, his eyes dark with desire. She had to look away. He took her hand in one of his own slender, yet strong hands and slid it down beneath the water.

"Touch me," he said.

Molly felt his cock spring to life as her fingers brushed against the length of him, and he drew in a sharp breath. Instinctively, her fingers closed around him. She marveled at the feel of him, wondered how he could be so hard, yet his skin feel so soft. His hand, still wrapped around her own, began to move. He guided her as she stroked his cock, sliding her hand along his hard length. Her own body began to tingle as she slid her hand over his swollen flesh.

She rubbed him gently beneath the water, until he squeezed her hand tighter around his cock. Her dress soon was soaked to the elbows as she continued to slide her hand over his hard, slippery shaft. His head tilted back against the tub, and his breathing came more rapidly. Before long, he groaned and thrust into her hand. She felt his cock jerk within her grip, and then he shuddered, cried out, and was still. After a few frozen moments, his hand fell away from hers, and his cock grew limp.

With her body still tingling, Molly pulled away, but he didn't seem to notice. She knew her face was flushed, but whether it was shame or desire, not even she could tell. Still, she knew her duty. She got up from aching knees, fetched a length of huckaback from the wardrobe and brought it over to the bathtub. The master lay slumped in the water, eyes still closed.

"My lord, the water grows cold."

"Mmm, yes," he replied, opening glazed eyes.

She held out the towel when he stood and stepped from the tub. As he toweled the water from his skin, she turned away to pick up the robe that he had so carelessly discarded.

"Leave it," he commanded.

"My lord?" She turned to look at him, then looked away again as he dropped the towel to the floor as well. He moved closer, and she could feel the heat radiating from his naked body. His hand came up underneath her chin, tipping her face upward.

"Look at me!" She stared into pools of blue so deep she thought she might drown in them. "You always look away from me. Are you frightened, pretty Molly?"

"Yes, my lord," but that wasn't entirely the truth. She wasn't frightened of him, but of the feelings he awoke in her. She was frightened by her own desire.

He chuckled as though pleased. "You have nothing to be frightened of."

With light fingers, he tugged off her mobcap, loosening her hairpins and sending her tawny hair tumbling to her shoulders in riotous curls. Slowly, he lowered his lips to hers, while his fingers deftly unlaced her bodice. Mrs. Hutchins was right after all, Molly thought to herself. The master meant to seduce her, and bed her. Within mere moments, her virtue would be gone, cast aside with her clothing. She hovered once more on the brink of indecision. Then, his tongue delved into the warm depths of her mouth, and all caution was forgotten. *In for a penny, in for a pound,* she thought.

Giving in to desire, her hands came up to clasp his shoulders, his bare skin warm to her touch. Without breaking their kiss, he slipped her dress from her shoulders to puddle at her feet. His fingers then plucked the drawstring of her shift, loosening it until he could draw the filmy muslin down and away. Then he bent and removed her shoes, leaving her clad in only her drawers and stockings.

Grasping her shoulders, he walked her backward toward the bed, then pushed her down upon the coverlet. She sank into the bed from his weight, as he stretched out his naked body atop hers. She could feel his burgeoning erection nudge against her thigh and the scratchy sensation of his hair against her skin. His mouth brushed softly against hers once more, before trailing along her neck, feathering her sensitive skin with kisses. Molly moaned with pleasure, arching her body and baring her throat to his caress. Lower and lower his lips wandered, until his mouth greedily fastened on her breast, suckling her nipple until it was a hardened peak.

His hands were gentle as he drew her drawers down along her legs and tossed them to the floor, yet still she shivered beneath his touch. His hands stroked across her feverish skin, down across the swell of her belly, along the curve of her inner thigh, leaving desire in their wake, and his lips followed the trail that his hands blazed. His body shifted lower on the bed, his breath blew warm against her thigh. Molly nearly cried out as he threaded his fingers through her silken curls, arousing her passions to even greater heights.

With one hand, he spread her nether lips open wide. Before she realized what he was about, his dark head bent and his tongue flicked across her clit, nearly bringing her off the bed. He continued to flick his tongue lightly against her, sending pleasure streaking through her with every touch. Her hands clenched the bedspread beneath her. Just when she thought she could take no more, he moved his mouth lower, thrusting his tongue into her, probing her inner depths. She moaned at this new sensation, and twined her hands in his thick hair. Then his tongue was replaced by one long finger, slowly easing into her. Another digit joined the first, a welcome invasion. As his fingers delved deep into her cunny, he dragged his tongue up from her entrance to lap once again at her clit. He nibbled lightly on the fleshy nubbin, eliciting soft cries from her.

Gradually, his strokes increased until she was once more on the cusp of that pleasure she'd experienced so recently at his hands. So it was with some disappointment that she felt him pull away from her. However, his absence was brief. He rose up above her, his hands braced on either side of her shoulders, and looked down at her, his eyes blazing with lust.

"Are you virgin?" he asked her.

"Aye, my lord," she replied, surprised.

"Then I am sorry for this." With that, he claimed her mouth in a tender kiss, and she tasted the flavor of her own musk upon his lips. Distracted, she felt him reach down with one hand, and take his cock in hand, setting it at the entrance to her pussy. His manhood pushed bluntly against her, but still her body resisted him. He shifted his hips, and she felt the tip of his rod enter her waiting cunt. He paused, and then with a great thrust, his cock slid into her. She cried out and tried to move beneath him, to escape the burning pain that swept through her, but he had her pinned to the bed with his piercing cock.

"Shh, shh," he whispered in her ear. "Be still, and it will pass." He held himself motionless above her. Molly closed her eyes and tried not to whimper. Finally, she felt her body began to relax. He must have felt it too, because he drew one of her stocking-clad legs up, draping it over his hip which helped ease the pressure. Then he began to move within her body, his hips rocking against hers. He withdrew his rod until just the mere tip remained, rubbing against her tender flesh, then plunged it once more into her dripping cunny. Over and over, he drove his cock deeply into her, until she was in a frenzy of longing. She felt her body ascending to the heights of pleasure, felt the need for completion sweep over her.

She clutched desperately at his sweat-slick body, her nails digging into his flesh. Balancing his weight on one muscular arm, he slid his other hand down between their bodies and flicked a finger against her clit. His hand moved in a steady rhythm with his thrusting prick, sending her senses spiraling, until suddenly the moment of climax was upon her, turning her world upside down and leaving her breathless. She felt her inner muscles ripple as her release shuddered through her. With a moan, he thrust once, twice more, then withdrew his cock and spent his seed in a warm, sticky torrent upon her stomach. The resulting mess was unpleasant, but Molly was still quivering from her own explosion and so she barely noticed as he rolled off her and used a corner of the sheet to wipe the mess away from both his cock and her abdomen.

He left her alone on the bed, while he picked up his discarded robe and walked into the dressing room without a single tender word. She heard the bell ring, summoning Plunkett to his side. Tears blossomed behind her eyes, but she blinked them away. She should know better. While he would return her lust, he was unlikely ever to return her love. Even if he did come to hold her in some affection, he would never marry the likes of her. Her tender heart might long for romance, but her pragmatic head knew better. Resignedly, she climbed out of the bed and rescued her clothing from the floor. Quickly, she dressed and made herself presentable. When she was suitably attired, she began to clear the bathing paraphernalia from the room.

And thus began her affair with her lord and master.

Part Two

After becoming the viscount's *cherie amie*, Molly's duties remained much the same, but her attentions were focused solely on the master. Her first duty in the morning was to creep quietly into his room and tend the fire. Most mornings he awoke sporting a cockstand and so usually her next chore was to relieve his needs. After that she brought hot water for his morning ablutions. If this included a bath, she would often assist him, instead of his valet. Then, she helped serve him breakfast.

During the day, she made his bed, cleaned and dusted his chambers, as well as the library where he conducted much of his business, and generally waited on him hand and foot. She brought him his tea and even did his mending. But her chief duty was pleasing him in bed or wherever else he might fancy...the drawing room, the music room, once even the kitchen, after the rest of the household was asleep.

But most often, the library was the location of their trysts, out of convenience, since that is where he spent most of his time while indoors. And Molly knew it was convenience, rather than affection that drew him to her, just as she knew he had a mistress in London. There were no whispered words of love when he took her, but she soon came to enjoy the pleasure his body provided. Too, she enjoyed the cachet that her favored status gave her with the other servants. Some of the other maids whispered and called her a bawd behind her back, but Molly knew they were just jealous. They'd have done the same thing in her place and been grateful for it. And though he never said so, Molly knew the master was fond of her. Why, once, after a trip to the village, he'd given her a length of ribbon for her hair. "Green," he'd said, "to match your eyes."

Time of day didn't seem to matter to the master, either. He was in the habit of taking her whenever the desire struck him. It was a wonder she ever got any work done at all. One time, he came upon her unexpectedly while she was in the upstairs hall sorting linens. He pushed her roughly into the linen cupboard, pinning her body against the wall. Fondling her bubbies with one hand, he used the other to unbutton the fall of his trousers revealing his well-primed cock. He then rucked her skirt above her knees, and found the opening of her drawers. With little warning he hoisted her high, wrapping her legs around his waist, and impaled her on his engorged prick. She was tossed about like a rag doll as he slammed into her, driving her back against the wall with each thrust of his powerful body before exploding into her, with a cry.

It was one of the few times he spent himself within her body. Usually he was careful to withdraw before spewing his seed, or to use a French letter. Molly was thankful that he showed her that courtesy at least. She knew if she caught his by-blow, she'd be turned off for sure.

He also showed her ways of fornication that wouldn't result in offspring at all, such as when he taught her to "play the bagpipe."

They were sitting in the library, in his favorite chair, while he dandled her upon his knee. His face was buried in her bared bosom, nibbling at her breasts, while his hand stole up her skirts to stroke her inner thigh.

"I think it's time I introduce you to fellatio," he said offhandedly.

"Who, my lord?" she asked naively.

He chuckled. "Fellatio is not a *who*, but a *what*. You know when I kiss you here?" He brushed his hand across her mons, causing her to shiver. "Well, you shall learn to do the same for me. Come, I'll show you." He set her on her feet, then stood up and rearranged himself in the chair, leaning back.

"Kneel," he commanded her.

She knelt at his feet and watched as he unbuttoned the fall of his trousers. Already erect, his thick, stiff cock stood out quite impressively from a thatch of dark curls. She reached out to touch him, wrapping her hands around him, drawing the skin down, knowing what he liked. His shaft was hard and velvety smooth beneath her hand.

"Yes, that's it, my dear. Now, kiss my cock," he demanded in a husky voice.

Molly slid forward and lowered her head to his body. She inhaled the familiar scent of sandalwood

and musk that rose from his skin, and felt her pulse accelerate. Cautiously, Molly stuck out her tongue and touched it to the head of his cock. He tasted slightly, but pleasantly of salt.

"You call that a kiss, my girl?"

Molly licked her lips, wetting them nervously, before placing her mouth once more on the engorged, purplish head of his cock.

"That's much better. Now, have you ever had a stick of penny candy?" he asked. Molly nodded. "Well, then, pretend my prick is a confection. You must suck it and lick it like a sweet."

Obediently, Molly tried to do as she was told, only to wring a gasp from him.

"Gently, gently," he told her.

Molly slid her mouth down on him again, and was rewarded this time with a moan, before sliding back up along the hard length of him. Encouraged, she continued, gliding her warm, wet mouth down around his shaft, trying to take as much of his cock as possible. He moaned again, and thrust his fingers into her hair, drawing her down on him. She gagged, unaccustomed to the feel of his cock pressing at the back of her throat. Thankfully, he quickly released her, and she was able to breathe once more.

At his urging, she continued licking and sucking his cock, gaining confidence and experience as she went. Her untutored mouth explored his shaft guided by his gasps and moans, while her hands stroked and caressed his ballocks. Her tongue twirled around his shaft tasting the salty-sweetness of his skin, until once again, he thrust his hands deeply into her hair. She raised her eyes to look at him, only to find his head thrown back in ecstasy, his eyes closed tight. With a hoarse cry, he spurted into her mouth, filling her throat with his warm, salty seed. Instinctively, she swallowed, and swallowed, until he at last shuddered and was still.

She pulled away, resting her cheek upon his leg while he idly stroked her hair. She basked in the unusual show of emotion, knowing she had greatly pleased him despite her ignorance. In this, as in all other aspects of carnal knowledge, she was an apt pupil. After all, her only security lay in continuing to please her master. If he ever tired of their dalliance, then where would she be?

Though she would scarcely admit it, even to herself, Molly knew that she would never refuse a request of this man. Not because he controlled her employment, but because he controlled her heart and soul. Whatever he asked, it would be his. Secretly, Molly had come to love not only her master, but every torment he visited upon her, and there were many.

London life had left the master with a taste for debauchery. One of his favorite activities was to tie her arms and legs to the posters of his enormous bed using his cravats, a practice that drove Plunkett, his exacting valet, to distraction. Once he'd secured her, the master took great pleasure in bedeviling her, stroking and suckling her breasts until she writhed beneath his touch. Over and over, he would bring her to the brink of climax with his hands and mouth, only to back away, leaving her unfulfilled, until she cried and begged for release. Only then would he consent to fuck her, usually hard and fast, bringing them both to screaming relief.

Though he was often aloof and always demanding, Molly had to admit her master was rarely cruel. She could only recall one time he'd truly hurt her. He'd come home from a neighbor's, three sheets to the wind and furious about his losses at the whist table. Though it was late, he summoned her and more brandy to his chamber. When she tried to gently dissuade him from drinking more, he threw her forcefully onto the bed. Pinning her down with his strong body, he pushed her nightrail up to her waist, baring her arse.

Taking his riding crop in hand, he slashed it across her buttocks, causing her to cry out. Although his position atop her, not to mention his inebriation, caused most of his strokes to land wide of the mark, it still hurt. Matters improved only a little when, tossing the crop to the floor, he began to use his bare hand on her. Mashing her face into the coverlet where she could barely breathe, much less cry out, he spanked her arse until it was red and throbbing, leaving welts all over her buttocks.

Then, gradually, his touch on her buttocks changed in nature. Instead of smacking her arse, he was now stroking it. His hands slid soothingly over her tingling flesh, and his weight shifted off her body. He slid his hand down the cleft of her buttocks to where her nether lips glistened, and dipped his fingers in the moisture he found there. Then, he stroked upward, rubbing her juices across her bunghole. After repeating this action several times, her arse was slick with her own honey. Still, she was caught off guard when he slipped a finger into her arse, probing her body. She felt a strange stirring deep within as he wiggled his finger into her channel, and a sudden relief when he withdrew his hand. The relief was only momentary.

He spread her still-tingling cheeks with both hands, and then she felt the blunt tip of his cock positioned at the entrance to her arse. With a grunt, he shoved his way into her. Molly felt a sharp stinging pain as the head of his thick cock slid into her. He paused only a moment, barely allowing her to adjust to his presence, before easing his way inch by inch into her channel. She moaned as he sunk himself to the hilt in her arse, strangely aroused. Still, she wasn't nearly ready when he began to thrust into her.

Seemingly oblivious to her discomfiture, he buggered her soundly. At first it was painful, his thick cock stretching her with every stroke, but as he continued rocking his hips against her, she found herself thrusting back against him. But before she attain any sense of satisfaction, he began to make a harsh, grunting noise. He thrust hard, and Molly felt his warm seed shoot into her arse. After spending himself, he withdrew with a sigh. Then, he rolled off her, wiped his cock off on her nightrail, and passed out facedown on the bed, drunk as, well, a lord. All in all, it was not his finest moment.

Thankfully, when he woke the next morning, his lordship had no memory of the previous night, so Molly was able to pretend it had never happened, except for the slight welts she carried for a few days.

Most of the time, though, Lord Ashford was an agreeable master. He asked only for her obedience and her passion, and she was happy to give him both. Until a stranger arrived at Ashford Hall. And changed her life forever.

Part Three

Molly was in the servant's hall when there came a ringing from the library. She eagerly answered the summons of the bell, expecting a midday tryst, only to find the master in conversation with his steward and an attractive stranger.

"My lord, the new game laws..." the steward was saying. He broke off, as she entered the room and dipped the men a brief curtsey.

"A tea tray, Molly," requested Lord Ashford.

"Yes, my lord."

On the way to the kitchen she wondered about the visitor. Who was he? Why was he here? True, her master had many interests, and there were many visitors to Ashford Hall, but usually they were familiar faces.

A mere quarter of an hour later, she carried the tea tray into the library and set it down on the master's desk. As she fixed his lordship a plate of his favorite tidbits, she covertly gazed at the stranger. Where the master's looks were all dark and flashing, this stranger's appearance could only be described as brown. He had short, wavy brown hair, long, brown sideburns, velvety brown eyes, and his skin was a golden bronze. His clothes appeared well-made, though not of the finest quality. His linen was plain, yet clean. Clearly he was not of the gentry, but his manner marked him as well-bred. Molly's curiosity was aroused, and so she found to her surprise, was her body.

When she handed the visitor his cup of tea, her fingers brushed against his, sending an unexpected frisson of desire through her. Then he smiled at her, and her heart leapt in her chest. He might not be as sinfully beautiful as her master, but there was something about this stranger that stirred her senses.

By dinnertime her curiosity, if not her body's hunger, had been satisfied. The servant's grapevine had told her all she needed to know about the newcomer, including his name, Will Adams. Apparently the master had met him while in Scotland, on the estate where he was an assistant gamekeeper. According to Mrs. Hutchins, he came highly recommended and was to replace Old Jarvis, the gamekeeper, who was being pensioned off due to age. He would occupy a room in the servants' quarters, until the repairs to the gamekeeper's cottage were complete.

Since he was occupied most of the day with his new duties, Molly rarely encountered Mr. Adams before the evening meal. At supper, however, he was always there, smiling at her from across the table. His ready smile was enough to send her stomach somersaulting, but she was careful not to do more than smile back politely. After only a few days it seemed, she began to look forward to dinner. When they met on the stairs or in the hall, he was unfailingly polite, but it seemed as though there was something beyond mere courtesy in his behavior toward her. In fact, it wasn't long before the other servants began to comment on his marked attention to her.

Molly knew that soon one of them would reveal her secret, and then Mr. Adams would want no more to do with her. The thought depressed her more than she would have thought possible.

Late one evening, as she mounted the stairs to retire, Molly was shocked to find Mr. Adams watching her from the shadows at the top of the stairs. In the glow of her lantern, his face was dark and sensual.

She nodded to him, and went to brush past, but he stepped in front of her.

"Molly, have I given you cause to dislike me?" he asked.

"No, Mr. Adams," she replied.

He loomed over her, backing her up against the wall with his sheer presence. "Good, I was afraid I had offended you in some way." He braced his hand on the wall next to her head, his body uncomfortably close to hers. She could smell the scent of earth and forest that clung to his skin.

He bent his head to hers. "You're very bonny," he whispered in her ear, his thick Scottish burr sending shivers up her spine. His soft, warm lips brushed her throat in the sensitive spot just below her ear, and she felt her knees go weak.

"I belong to my master!" she blurted out.

He pulled back, startled by her outburst.

"You cannot mean..." His voice trailed off sadly. "Well, then I can only say that his lordship's taste in women is as fine as his taste in everything else. Leave it to him to find a diamond amongst the coal."

Molly blushed at the compliment. She knew she was pretty—after all, hadn't the master chosen her for her looks—but Mr. Adams made her feel beautiful.

"I am heartily sorry to have bothered you," he said, stepping back to let her pass.

Molly felt like crying. She finished climbing the steps to her garret room. How could she feel so keenly the loss of something she'd never had?

Following their encounter in the hallway, Mr. Adams avoided Molly for a few days. However, on Sunday, she was surprised to find him at her elbow, ready to assist her into the wagon bound for church. She couldn't help but admire his long, lean form as he mounted his horse for the ride into the village.

All throughout the sermon, Molly couldn't help but steal glances at Mr. Adams, seated in the pew opposite her. He really was very handsome. She saw that she was not the only young lady in the congregation who cast longing looks in his direction. However, Mr. Adams seemed to take no notice. After the service, many of the same young women thronged around him, but Mr. Adams excused himself and caught up to her.

"Molly, would you do me the honor of walking home with me? I wish to speak with you."

"That would be most improper, Mr. Adams." In

public, Molly always tried to protect the little reputation she had left.

"Jane and Ralph shall walk with us." He indicated the couple that stood under a nearby tree. She didn't know them well. Jane was the daughter of a tenant farmer on the estate; Ralph one of Lord Ashford's grooms. She could tell from the looks that passed between them, that they would be poor chaperones, oblivious to anything but each other.

"I've already asked Mrs. Hutchins," he told her, whisking away her next objection.

"What about your horse?"

"Romulus? I will hitch him to the wagon. He'll be happy to walk home without me."

He'd obviously planned this ahead of time, and Molly was flattered. "Well, then Mr. Adams, since you seem to have thought of everything, I will walk with you."

Eagerly, he took her arm and escorted her over to greet the other couple. Leaving her to exchange pleasantries, he tended to his horse, and then the foursome set off toward Ashford Park. The walk was not a long one, and the day was glorious, and Molly soon found herself enjoying the outing. Jane and Ralph were obviously in love, and they spent most of the journey mooning over each other. Mr. Adams kept up a steady stream of conversation, skillfully eliciting opinions from Molly that she didn't even know she had. Whatever it was he wished to say to her, it must have been of little importance, for he never mentioned it. Instead, he spoke wistfully of his home in Scotland, speaking so eloquently that she could almost see the heather-covered hills. For a man of his station, Molly thought he was extremely well-read.

Molly soon discovered that Mr. Adams was, like Jane, the child of a tenant farmer, and was the youngest of five siblings.

"How came you to be educated then?"

"The countess was a great disciple of Mrs. Shelley's. She set up a school for the tenants' children. Then throughout my apprenticeship, I begged and borrowed what books I could from a generous curate. Now, that I am earning my own wages, I vow I shall spend a pound a year on books alone."

"I would love to be able to read," Molly admitted. "I know most of my letters, but..."

"I could teach you."

"Mr. Adams..."

"Will. My friends call me Will."

She smiled shyly at him. "Will, then. I would like it very much if you would teach me to read." They agreed to meet the following Sunday to begin her lessons.

Before long, they had reached the turnoff to Ashford Hall. Here, Jane and Ralph begged to take their leave. Ralph would escort Jane home along the lane, while Molly and Will would cut across the park. Molly knew it was improper, but she couldn't begrudge the young lovers a few moments alone. It was unlikely that anyone would see her with Will, and it wasn't as though she had any virtue left to guard.

They set off through the light woods that bordered the estate. Will, of course, was quite familiar with the terrain, and guided her expertly through the trees. They came to a clearing, and on the other side Molly could see Ashford Hall, rising majestically to the sky, its gray stone facade tinted pink by the fading light.

"I hadn't realized it was so late. I must get back."

"Molly, I must speak to you. I understand that you are not at liberty to entertain me as a suitor, but perhaps that will change. I am quite attracted to you. Please give me some hope that you feel the same."

"Will, it is as you say. I am not in a position to feel anything toward you. Now, I really must go."

"Say that you'll still meet me on Sunday."

"I'll still meet you on Sunday," she called over her shoulder as ran for home, leaving him standing there in the twilight.

All week long, Molly couldn't wait for Sunday, though she wasn't sure if that was because she was going to see Will, or because she was going to learn how to read. Finally, the Sabbath came.

Once more, the oblivious Jane and Ralph were enlisted as chaperones. Will had secured a picnic lunch, and led them to a small meadow on the edge of the Park's woodland. After finishing a hearty meal of ham, bread and cheese, washed down with a fine cider, Jane and Ralph decided to go for a stroll through the woods. Molly had no doubts what their "stroll" would entail. She was content to sit on the blanket Will had provided and look out over the golden meadow while he reclined on the blanket next to her, his hand propped beneath his head, and finished his cider.

"Are you ready?" he asked her finally.

"Oh, yes."

Will rolled over and got a book out the basket. Then he flopped over on his back and patted the blanket next to him. Molly scooted over next to him.

"Lie down here with me," he said.

"I don't think that's a very good idea."

"I can hardly teach you to read, when you're up there, and I'm down here," he told her with a grin. Reluctantly, Molly laid down on the blanket next to him, her head resting in the crook of his arm.

"Open the book."

At first Molly found it hard to concentrate on the letters with his body lying so close to hers, but soon she was absorbed in trying to make out the unfamiliar words. Will was patient and encouraging, and with his help she was finally able to finish a passage. She laid down the book with a great sense of satisfaction.

"Good girl."

"I couldn't have done it without your help."

"I guess I deserve a reward then," he told her with a gleam in his eye.

Molly could read his intentions, but she couldn't summon up the strength to object as he rolled over, taking her in his arms, and pressed his lips to hers. Her arms came up around him, pulling him close. She could feel warmth of his sun-kissed skin beneath the linen of his shirt.

For once in her life, Molly longed to be free. Free from guilt, free from care, free from obedience and duty. For just a moment, in Will's arms, she could taste that freedom. Throwing caution to the winds, she slid her hand down to cup his burgeoning erection. He nudged against her hand. His mouth left hers to nibble down her neck, inflaming her further.

He pulled away, bracing himself on one arm, and looked down at her, his eyes glazed with lust before once again crushing his mouth to hers. His hand slid up underneath her skirts to languidly stroke her sex. His fingers flicked over her clit before dipping down to slip gently into her cunny, causing her to moan. She was already hot and wet and panting with need. He withdrew his hand, and slowly licked his fingers as she watched, appalled and yet fascinated.

"I need to be inside you."

Molly agreed. Her hands went to the waistband of his breeches, unbuttoning the fall, and pushing them low on his hips. His rigid cock sprang into her hand, the tip already wet with his juices. She couldn't help but make a comparison. Will's cock was much longer than Lord Ashford's, though not as thick. She had no doubt it would fill her nicely. As he pushed her skirts up, she spread her legs wider, welcoming the invasion of his cock. She felt its head brush against her clit, then he slid into her smoothly, until he was seated to his ballocks.

Slowly, he drew back, and then sheathed himself once more in her heat. With his hands braced on either side of her head, he held his weight from her, their bodies joined only at the hips. Over and over he stroked into her, until her body grew taut as a bow, aching for release from the glorious torment he was inflicting upon her. Then, her muscles tightened and a wave of pleasure flowed over her, dragging Will in its wake, until he too climaxed, calling her out name. She held him tight and wished the moment would never end, but all too soon, the heat of the afternoon sun and the scratchiness of the blanket beneath her reminded Molly of the world around her. Reluctantly, she and Will parted with a kiss, and straightened their clothes. By the time Jane and Ralph returned from their stroll, everything was packed and ready to go.

In the days that followed, she and Will stole every moment they could in shadowed hallways and empty rooms to exchange kisses and furtive embraces, but she knew it couldn't last. Luckily for her, the master was away on business in London.

She was both regretful and relieved, when she found he hadn't stayed away long.

The master walked into the library, surprising Molly while she stood at the desk, feather duster in hand and an open book in front of her. She had chosen a slim volume with plenty of pictures, but still she was struggling to decipher the letters on the page.

"What are you doing?" he asked, as she turned to face him.

"Sorry, my lord, I was just looking at the book. I..."

He moved over to the desk, and picked up the book. "*The Tale of Robin Hood.*" He tossed it back onto the desk. "I would have thought it better suited to the nursery."

She moved to put the book back in its rightful place, when he stopped her with a hand on her wrist. "You may have the book, Molly."

"My lord?"

"You may have the book. It obviously pleases you, and is of little consequence to me."

"Oh, thank you, my lord." Molly was so excited, that she threw her arms around his neck. Then, realizing what she'd done, she blushed and jerked back. He caught her around the waist before she could pull away, and kissed her soundly. "If I'd known you'd show such enthusiasm, I would given you a book long ago," he told her with unusual good humor. Then he kissed her again more forcefully, backing her against the sofa.

Her legs hit the back of the sofa, and she sank to the damask-covered cushion, while his mouth continued to devour hers. His kisses were different from Will's: hungrier, more rapacious. Will's kisses made her feel loved and cherished; the master's kisses made her feel wanton and wicked. How could two men have such different approaches to the same act? She resolved not to think about Will; it felt too much like betrayal. Truth be told, after a few minutes of heady kisses, she could barely think of anything at all.

The master pulled down the neckline of her dress, exposing her breasts. Her arms came up to twine around his neck, and she nearly hit him with the forgotten duster. He reached up to take the feather duster from her grip, and gave it a curious look. Molly thought he might toss it across the room, but instead he drew the feather duster lightly along her throat, tickling her with its silky strands. The duster was made of ostrich feathers mounted on an ivory handle worn smooth with age, and the feathers were as soft as a kitten's fur. The master ran the duster over the delicate skin of one exposed breast, then the other, tickling her and leaving a tingling sensation in its wake. He ran it across her nipples, a barely there caress, before lowering his mouth to suckle her. His mouth closed around one nipple, licking and sucking at it until it hardened into a rosy peak, before moving on to the other. All the while, the wispy touch of the duster danced along her neck and shoulders, tickling her skin and causing her to shiver. Just when she thought she could stand no more, the master's mouth and hands stilled.

He scooted lower on the couch and suddenly threw her skirts over her head, baring her lower body to his gaze. Slowly, he drew her thin muslin drawers down, his fingers stroking along her legs as he went. After discarding her drawers and dropping a kiss on her belly, he nudged one knee between her thighs, then the other, spreading her legs wide. He draped one stocking-clad leg over the back of the sofa exposing her pussy, which ached to be filled. But he was intent on teasing her further. Taking the feather duster once more in hand, he played the feathers along the top of one thigh, the soft wisps dancing across her skin. Over and over, he teased her with the feathery touch, until every inch of exposed skin was prickling and tingling. She stifled a giggle when he brushed the feathers across the tender skin of her stomach, but when he brushed the feather duster across her clit Molly thought she would swoon.

However, that gentle touch was not repeated, instead Molly felt something smooth and slightly cool rub against her. She shivered, and looked down to find that the master had reversed his grip on the duster, and was rolling the handle against her clit. It was an unusual, but not unpleasant sensation. It grew more pleasant as he drew the smooth, bulbous tip of the handle down along the folds of her pussy, then back up, causing a rush of moisture between her legs. Molly sensed what was coming, and so she was not overly surprised, when the master slowly began to work the tip of the ivory handle into her pussy.

The feeling was unfamiliar. The ivory was slightly cooler than the warmth of a human body, and unlike a cock, there was no flexibility or give to the hard handle. Still, the sensation she was feeling was pleasurable. Because the handle was thinner than anything she'd felt before, it slid into her waiting cunny easily. It was also longer, she found when the master began to slowly thrust it in and out of her body. She felt it against the back of her womb as he drove it deep into her pussy. The strokes gradually grew harder and faster, the handle pistoning between her legs, leaving her gasping, until finally she reached the apogee of her pleasure. She cried out as the master thrust the makeshift cock into her one last time, her body convulsing around it.

Slowly, he withdrew it from her body, took a handkerchief from his pocket, and wiped the handle clean. Then he straightened her clothes and brushed her lips lightly with a kiss.

"Enjoy the book," he told her as he strode out of the library, leaving her more confused than ever.

All that week, Molly practiced reading from her new book as much as possible, but it wasn't until Sunday that she got to share it with Will. When she told him it was a gift from the master, although she left out most of the details, Will still grew very upset.

"It's not fair," he said jealously. "He gives you a book, and you are in awe. If I could, I would give you everything...books, pretty dresses, a house, children, *my name*."

"Surely you don't mean that, Will."

"I don't care if you are ruined, I want to marry you."

"You do?"

"I love you," he told her.

"I love you too." Molly was surprised to hear the words on her lips, but she knew as soon as she said it that it was true. Will was good, and kind, and true, and she loved him. But she also loved her master...how could this be? Still, there was no future with the master. She knew her place in his world and it was not at his side as a wife. Will was her future.

Will grabbed her hand, saying, "Come with me. The cottage is mine now. Old Jarvis is pensioned off and gone to live in the village with his daughter."

The tidy gamekeeper's cottage lay just off the main drive, with the bulk of Ashford Park beyond it to the north. A small stone wall enclosed a garden desperately in need of tending, and behind the house, Molly could see a henhouse also in need of repairs. Will caught her hand in his, excited as a small child on Christmas morning, and led her through the house, extolling its virtues. The holland covers had already been removed, and Molly could see the worn, yet still sturdy furniture. The house was small, but cozy. There were just four rooms, a parlor and the kitchen downstairs, and two bedrooms upstairs. It was to the larger of these two bedrooms that Will eventually led her.

"This is where we will lie together as man and wife, someday," he told her, gesturing at the huge featherbed.

"You are already the husband of my heart," she replied.

"Then lie with me here," he whispered. He shrugged out of his long, brown greatcoat, before removing her bonnet and her dew-damp redingote, laying them carefully over a chair. He removed his tall, scuffed brown boots, while she slipped off her shoes and stockings. Next, he removed his jacket, waistcoat and shirt and placed them upon the chair. Clad in only his trousers, he advanced on her, and drawing his hand along her cheek, kissed her softly on the lips. She responded to his kiss with a gentle kiss of her own.

He drew his hands slowly along her shoulders, then spun her about, facing the bed. His hands went to the laces of her bodice, unfastening her dress, while his lips returned to nuzzle her neck. He slid her dress from off her shoulders, then loosened the drawstring of her muslin shift. Meanwhile, his lips never left her neck, licking and nibbling at the sensitive skin there. With a flick of his wrist, her shift billowed to the floor, followed by her undergarments.

She stood naked before him, and she could feel his erection nudging her buttocks as she pressed back against him. His hands came up to fondle her breasts, his fingers plucking at her nipples until they were drawn into hard peaks. One hand slid to her waist, the other to the nape of her neck, where he toyed with her tawny curls, before sending his fingers skittering along her spine.

Gently, but firmly, he bent her at the waist, and pushed her lightly onto the waist-high bed. Molly was surprised, but unalarmed. Her master's tutelage had taught her to be unafraid of new and undiscovered pleasures. Her cheek against the counterpane, Molly looked over her shoulder to see her lover unbutton and then discard his trousers and drawers.

In all their hurried and stolen moments, she'd never seen Will fully unclothed before. Gads, but he was beautiful. He was not as broad-shouldered as the master, but was every bit as chiseled. Skin bronzed by the sun lay over the whipcord muscles of his arms and chest. His stomach was flat and chiseled, his hips narrow, tapering down to long, lean limbs. Even his bare feet were beautiful.

He stepped behind her, and once more ran a finger along her spine, along the seam of her buttocks, and then across her waiting cleft. Molly wiggled against his hand, letting him feel her warmth and wetness. She watched over her shoulder as he reared back, and grabbing his engorged cock, guided it into her slick passage.

His hands went to her hips, pulling her back as he thrust himself deep inside her. Molly sighed with pleasure, as Will slid slowly out of her, then thrust back in hard, driving into her cunny. He soon set up a slow, steady rhythm of thrusts that had her moaning and pushing back against his hips, unable to get enough of his long, hard cock.

Her hands clenched the counterpane as she felt her climax drawing close. She could feel the sheen of sweat on Will's body each time his skin slapped against hers. As he plunged into her warm depths, again and again, she felt herself hovering on the brink, then with a warm rush, her muscles clenched tight around his cock, sending Will into an orgasm of his own. He stiffened, cried out and managed to thrust deeply into her one last time, before collapsing against her.

Molly couldn't move. Will's cheek was damp against her back, and his weight pressed her into the bed, but she didn't seem to mind. Finally, Will rolled to the side, dragging her with him, burying his face in her neck as they both flopped onto the mattress.

He stroked her damp skin as he snuggled up to her and spoke to her of the future. He spoke of the repairs he would make to the cottage, creating a snug home for her, and the laughing children they would raise there...a half-dozen at least. Molly knew it was wishful thinking. The future would bring what it would, and in the meantime, they should grab at all the present had to offer.

With that in mind, Molly began to return Will's caress. She ran her hand across the wide, muscled planes of his chest, making lazy circles around his flat nipples, before dancing her fingers down along his flat stomach to his re-surging manhood. She stroked his cock, rubbing her thumb against the sensitive tip until he grew hard in her hand.

He pulled her down to him for a kiss, her naked body slanted across his. His hands caressed her backside as he dragged her leg over his, aligning their bodies. "Ride me," he told her in a husky voice. Molly quickly grasped his meaning and sat up to straddle his body. His hands came up to fondle her breasts, rubbing the pads of his thumbs against the sensitive nipples until they were ruched. She reached down, taking his hard cock in hand, and guided it within her aching passage.

Both of them gasped with pleasure as Molly sank down onto the instrument of his desire, seating him deep within her womb. Then she began to ride him, arching her back and grinding her pelvis against his hips. At first her movements were slow and easy, as she reveled in the new sensation; she had never been with the master in this manner. He always dominated her instead. Now, she was in control and enjoying every minute of it.

The best part was the look on Will's face as she rocked against him. Knowing that he was at her mercy, enjoying himself at her whim filled her with a sense of power. Will was able to relinquish control to her, and control was something she'd rarely had before. He thought of her as a partner, an equal, and she knew that this was one of the many reasons why she loved him.

She couldn't deny that another one of the reasons was the pleasure she took in his body, a pleasure that was rising even now. She leaned forward to capture his mouth, bracing her arms on either side of his head, and thrust her hips forward. Will moaned against her mouth. She began to rock her hips quickly against his, her sweat-slick skin gliding across his. He grabbed her hips and thrust upwards, and was soon matching her stroke for stroke. Molly felt the approaching flutters of an orgasm and felt Will's body tense beneath hers. With a grimace he came, his seed shooting into her in a warm explosion. At that, Molly was undone. Her body convulsed in a spasm of pleasure that left her collapsed, limp and panting against Will's hard chest.

As they lay there entwined, with Will stroking her hair and murmuring sweet words of love in her ear, Molly was paralyzed with bliss. *If only this moment could never end*, she thought, but of course all moments must, and all too soon.

The afternoon was drawing to a close by the time they'd gotten properly dressed, and Molly made her way back to the house with a heavy heart. Now that Will was moved into the gamekeeper's cottage, she knew she would see less of him. But perhaps that would be a good thing. Perhaps then, she wouldn't feel so guilty about betraying her master with Will, and vice versa. Molly sighed. She knew she was walking a dangerous tightrope, and she could only hope that somehow, someway, she would find a way across. Little did she know that her prayers would soon be answered.

A few days after her last encounter with Will, Molly was in the parlor when she heard a loud commotion from the front hall. Along with several of the other servants, she rushed in to see Will and three of the grooms carrying the master into the house. Lord Ashford was white as a sheet and apparently unconscious.

"What's going on?" demanded the butler, Mr. Cutter.

"I found him along the stream," Will said. "I fear

he's badly hurt."

The butler immediately sent one of the footmen to fetch Dr. Miles, while Will and the other servants, including Plunkett, carried Lord Ashford up the stairs to his bedchamber, with Mrs. Hutchins and Molly close on their heels.

A torturous half hour later, the doctor arrived, only to find that his patient had yet to regain consciousness. Immediately, he asked Will for his particulars of the accident.

"I was walking Remus, my mastiff, alongside the stream as I often do, when I noticed a bay horse limping along. Sure that it belonged to Lord Ashford, I looked for him nearby. Then, my dog caught scent of something. Upon following him, I came to the berm, where I found Lord Ashford lying upon the ground barely conscious. I'd wager that his horse threw him. I did not stop to check his injuries, just brought him here as quickly as I could."

After hearing this explanation, the doctor began his examination of the patient. Thankfully, his lordship remained unconscious. Finally, the doctor rose and declared, "His lordship has broken his leg and has a severe concussion. We must address the first injury immediately, as for the second, we can only hope for the best." He issued instructions to Mrs. Hutchins and Molly to bring hot water and bandages, and he sent one of the footmen to find something to use as splints.

Returning to the room, Molly found it hard to watch as the doctor cut away the master's boot,

revealing swollen, mottled flesh. Then, the doctor washed his hands and examined the leg further.

"Good news, there appears to be no breakage of the skin." The doctor then instructed Will, Plunkett and the footman to hold down his lordship's body while he set the broken limb. As the doctor tugged on his lordship's leg, he came awake, screaming with pain. Molly heard the grinding noise of bone on bone, and then thankfully, the master once again passed out. He remained blissfully unaware as the physician finished setting and binding the leg.

"Who will be responsible for his care?" the doctor asked, as he prepared to leave. Molly and Plunkett both stepped forward.

"You must wake him every hour," the doctor said. "You must not give him anything for the pain, until we have determined that the blow to his head has not damaged his faculties. Once he is able to stay awake for several hours at a time, you may give some of this." He handed a small vial to Molly. "A drop, as needed, will suffice. I will return tomorrow to check on his lordship."

Molly spent a harrowing night tending to the master. However, it was well worth it: by the next morning he was seemingly out of danger and quite lucid. When the doctor arrived to examine him, Lord Ashford was able to relate the details of the accident more fully.

"I was riding my horse down by the stream. When Jupiter went to jump the berm, he landed awkwardly and fell, crushing my leg beneath him. I must have hit my head on a rock and passed out then, because I don't remember anything else until Adams came to rescue me. I remember him hoisting me up, then blackness, until I woke up this morning."

"It's a good sign that you remember the accident," the doctor said. "A clear memory is one indicator that there should be no lasting effect from your blow to the head. However, should you have any trouble with your memory or vision, or any dizzy spells, you must send for me immediately. As for your leg, you must let it heal for at least a month. I will come once a week to look in on you."

After the doctor departed, Lord Ashford called for Adams. At his behest, Molly escorted Will into the master's room, where Lord Ashford lay recuperating.

"Adams," his lordship said. "It seems I owe you my life."

"Nay," said Will, "nothing so serious as that. Someone else would have found you, had I not."

"Still, I am in your debt. How can I ever repay you?"

"Molly," Will blurted out, surprising her and from the look on his face, the master as well. "I would have Molly to be my wife."

The master looked over at her where she sat next to his bed, her head bowed, so as not to reveal her turmoil at this unexpected development.

"May I speak freely, my lord?" Will asked.

His lordship nodded.

Will continued, "I know that she is your paramour, and I do not care. The fact is, my lord, that even if you love her, you can never marry her. I do love her, and can marry her. I can give her a respectable home and children, and will do so gladly if you will give me your blessing."

"You speak the truth," said his lordship, quietly. "What say you, Molly?"

"You are my lord and master," she replied, "and I shall defer to your wishes, but I must confess that I am not opposed to Mr. Adams suit." Thankfully, the master did not appear to be too distressed by her confession, or too curious about the sudden romance between her and Will. Instead he looked thoughtful. Finally, he spoke. "I do give my consent, but on two conditions. First, you may not marry until I am able to attend the wedding, and second, you must swear to take good care of her. "

"I swear," Will promised. "Thank you, my lord. You have made me the happiest of men. I shall go immediately to the vicar and ask him to post the banns." Nodding to his lordship, Will strode from the room, leaving Molly alone with her master.

After a long silence, Lord Ashford spoke. "You care for him," he said.

She nodded. "I have not known him long, but he is a good man."

The master was silent a moment longer, then he said, quietly, "In all this time, I have never asked if you care for me."

For the first time in her experience, the master sounded uncertain, and vulnerable.

"My lord..." she began.

"Anthony."

"What?"

"My given name is Anthony. I have never heard it from your lips. I would do so, before I lose you forever."

Molly's heart thudded in her chest. If she had ever doubted that he cared for her, her doubts were now erased. Tears burned her eyes.

"Anthony," she said softly, her voice thick with unshed tears. "I think that I have loved you from the moment I saw you." Only now did Molly truly understand what Mrs. Hutchins had told her those many months ago. The love she felt for Will was not the love she felt for Lord Ashford, but both were real and true.

This seemed to satisfy the master, since he gave her a sad smile and nodded, before dismissing her. As she left the room, Molly looked back with love on the lips that had so often kissed hers, the arms that had held her, the body that she'd so often felt pressed against hers. She would never forget his lordship—or the passion he'd taught her. She would take that gift, along with her precious book, into her marriage.

Four weeks later, on the day of her wedding, his lordship gave her another gift, a purse containing five hundred pounds. Then he watched, along with all the servants and half of the village, as Molly stood before the vicar and pledged her vows to Will, promising to love, cherish and obey him for all time, as her husband, her lord and the master of her heart. Hungry for more? Spice Briefs to suit every taste are available now at www.spicebriefs.com.

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Her Lord and Master

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