

CHAPTER 1



My heart hammers so hard in my chest, it feels fit to burst. I try to run, but the man, he's on horseback, and he chases me on a fine horse, glossy and chestnut colored. I see an oak tree up ahead, and think perhaps I can climb it and scramble over the nearby hedge, but he jumps down off his horse and tackles me before I can reach it. We fall together hard, and he turns me over to face him.

"What are you doing on my land?" he demands.

"Nothing, sir. We're camped out."

"Not anymore. Look."

My eyes dart to where our camp used to be, and I gasp. Everyone is gone, and my wagon is on fire.

"They've left you behind," he says in a gloating voice. "Now, you have two choices. One, come with me and I'll take good care of you, or two, I take you to the magistrate and let him throw you in jail to rot for God knows how long before you are either hanged or transported."

When I do not answer, he shakes me.

"Did you hear me, girl?"

"Yes, sir."

"Which is it to be?"

Our glances meet. He's handsome enough, although his features are harsh at the moment.

"What means 'take good care' of me?"

"You'll be my special little project. I'll teach you how to become a decent human being, starting with a good scrubbing."

"Perhaps I'd better go to the magistrate," I tell him.

"Are you sure? Do you know what they'll do to a comely wench like you?"

Tears start to my eyes. It seems I'm to be used by men, one way or another. I picture the magistrate, and all I see is a fat old man. Maybe he'll invite other fat old men to come and sample my charms. Foul, disgusting men. There's a good chance this man is right, and I'll be hanged for a thief.

"Of course I know," I tell him. "My mother taught me well."

"How old are you?"

"I've just turned eighteen, sir. Last month. You burned my wagon."

"Have you a name, gypsy?"

"Lala."

"Hmmm. Pretty, but I think I shall just call you Gypsy."

"I'm to go with you, then? And be what? Your slave?"

"No. My little girl. My ward."

I recoil. "I do not understand, sir."

"It pleases me that you'll pretend to be a child. In return, I'll take you under my protection, Gypsy. I'll make sure you are safe, and I'll raise you and teach you."

Our gazes meet. His hand around my arm is like an iron shackle, and I know I have no choice. "Teach me what?" I ask.

"Oh, all manner of things."

"But your wife, she will object, no?"

"My wife is deceased."

I glance around quickly, still hoping I can slip away, but I see no escape route. I glance at the man again and decide I'm better off

with him than in a jail cell somewhere, being done down by a group of strangers before being hanged.

"If you please, sir, I shall go with you."

"A wise choice," he tells me, and grabs me around the waist, turning me around and putting me on his horse before jumping up to ride behind.

We ride for many minutes before the manor house comes into view. It is at that moment that he relaxes his grip on me. I feel my heart start to pound again, and I make bold my escape. I don't get very far before he's on me again, this time dragging me over to the nearest tree to pluck a thin branch from it. He strips the leaves and pulls me over to the horse.

"Bend over," he tells me. "Bend over and grab that stirrup, and don't you even think of letting go."

I do as ordered, and I feel him pull up my skirt and open my drawers in the back, sliding the thin fabric aside. I brace myself for the first cut of the switch. It falls right across my bottom with a burning intensity. He switches me again, crisscrossing the first cut. I grip the stirrup tighter. I want to cry out, but not in front of this man, this dirty pig who has bared my bottom and is whipping me outside for God and everyone to see.

"All you had to do is behave yourself," he tells me. "I wasn't going to whip you until you ran."

I hear the switch cut through the air with a whoosh, and then the burning pain as he continues the whipping. It goes on and on forever, it seems, but may have only been a minute or two. Whichever, eternity or a single moment, he's covered my bottom with welts, the tops of my thighs, too.

At last, he stops.

"No more escapes, do you understand me?"

"Yes, sir."

"And let's get one thing straight. From now on, you're to call me 'Daddy.'"

"Yes, Daddy."

“Now stand up straight and fix your skirt.”

He pulls the reins over the horse’s head and takes my hand to lead both horse and me toward the house. When we get there, a groom takes the horse away to some unknown stable, and I am led to the front door and into the house.

The house is magnificent, with a huge, winding staircase stretching from the left side of the main hall to the right. Fine oil paintings decorate the walls, and the ceiling soars three stories high. I feel insignificant in such grand surroundings, and I glance at him.

“Welcome to Wellesley Park,” he tells me. “Your new home.”

Daddy leads me up the stairs to a room on the third floor of the house. It’s an old nursery, filled with toys. There’s a wooden rocking horse in one corner, and a doll’s house on the opposite side of the room, with lots of toys in between, more than I’ve ever seen in my life, even in a toy shop. He takes me to the room next door, which is obviously a schoolroom, complete with a globe on a stand and a large book, larger than any I’ve ever seen before. Daddy lets go of my hand and invites me to look around.

“It’s usual to have a governess in a case like yours,” he tells me, “but I will see to your education myself.”

“Yes, Daddy.”

“Come along. I’ll show you where you’ll sleep.”

The bedroom, on the other side of the nursery, is covered in Holland covers. He pulls one off the bed, and dust flies everywhere.

“I’ll have it cleaned and ready for you tonight, but now we must give you a bath.”

“And then do what? Fuck?”

He stares at me hard. I’m afraid he’s going to slap me, but instead he says, “Say that again and you’ll earn yourself a mouth full of soap.”

“Soap? What for is soap?”

“To wash your dirty little mouth out.”

“I want no soap,” I tell him.

"Then no more of that sort of language."

"Yes, Daddy."

He takes me to another room, one with a tub standing before a fireplace with a large wooden mantle, with fanciful creatures carved into it. Daddy goes to the bell pull hanging near the door and rings for a servant.

"Here's our butler, Foster," he tells me, when the servant arrives. "Foster, this young lady desires a bath. Oh, and Foster? See that the nursery room is cleaned. The young lady will be staying with us for an extended period."

Foster looks at me. I must look a mess. My apron is wet and dirty and my hair disheveled, but he doesn't betray his probable disgust by so much as a flicker of an eyelash. He gets to work immediately, he and some other servants. While they're busy filling the tub, Daddy takes me down the hall to his room.

"If you're a good girl and study hard and do as I tell you, one day I may give you the room next door instead of the nursery."

"Yes, Daddy."

Daddy's room, at any rate, is clean. His bed is a four-poster with a canopy over top and curtains he can pull to block the cold night air.

"You must, of course, have a nursery maid. I'll see to it tomorrow."

"Yes, Daddy."

"I see I'll have to teach you the art of conversation."

I take the hint and say nothing. He shows me around some of the other bedrooms, but they're all in Holland covers, too.

"We haven't had a visitor here for quite some time," he tells me. "I do hope you'll enjoy your stay. And now I have a question for you. Are you pure?"

"Pure?"

"Have you ever been with a man before?"

"No, si--Daddy."

"Good. I expect your bath ought to be ready about now. We'll

get you all cleaned up and presentable, and then we'll go down for dinner."

He leads me back to the room where I'm to take my bath, and I stand there as the servants are dismissed. Once they're gone, he turns to me.

"Come on. Take your clothes off."

I gasp. "Not in front of you."

"Don't be silly. Daddies always give their little girls a bath."

I stand there, frozen, but I know he's serious and is likely to punish me if I refuse, so I unfreeze myself and start taking my clothes off. I do it as quickly as I can, blushing furiously the whole time, and I climb into the tub just as quickly to hide myself under the water.

"Let's do your hair first," he tells me, but I know that to get my hair under the water, I'll be exposed.

"Please, Daddy."

"Gypsy, would you like a dose of the belt?"

"No, Daddy."

"Then dunk your head and let's get it over with."

The warm water has inflamed the welts, and I gingerly slide down to do my hair. I know he can see my breasts and my cunny, and most likely he will want to wash them next. I die a little inside just thinking about it, but he washes my hair and then he lets me sit up to wash the rest of me. He washes my back, and then he washes my breasts. They're small, but he washes them lovingly.

"Why are you trembling, little Gypsy?"

"I don't like this. No man has ever seen me thus."

"Well, I told you I'd take care of you, and that's exactly what I'm going to do. Open your legs, please."

I do as he says, afraid not to, and he reaches down with the soft cloth and washes my private parts. Something within me stirs when he does, and I let out a little coo.

He hears it and turns to me with a smile. "You like that, don't you, Gypsy?"

To my utter shame, I nod.

“There’s more than that to come,” he says, “but that’s for another day.”

“Is that...will that be part of my lessons?”

“Yes, my little one. We will go slowly and softly, and I’ll teach you what it is to make love to a man.”

I’ve seen, by accident, members of my clan making love, and I’ve been told the first time is painful. I don’t know that I want to make love, so much as let him continue washing me. To my dismay, he stops. He reaches beside the tub and gets a towel.

“Stand up, and let me wrap this towel around you.”

I obey him, trying to ignore the driving need he’s awakened. He leads me out of the room where the bath is and back down to the nursery. Once there, he strips me of the towel and tells me to bend over the bed.

“Have I displeased you, Daddy?”

“No, my little Gypsy. I have some ointment here to rub on your bottom and make it feel better.”

I bend over as he asks, and he pulls up a chair and comes to rub me. He tries to be gentle, but the weals itch and throb. I wriggle around a little to try to avoid, or at least lessen, the pain. He bids me to lie still and tells me I may wriggle all I want to when he’s done. The ointment starts to cool the pain, but I know I will lie on my stomach to sleep.

When he’s done, he sets the ointment aside, and then he tells me to spread my legs. Embarrassing as it is, I obey, and he reaches between them and strokes my privates. It feels wildly, insanelly good, and I lift up to give him access to it all.

“That’s right,” he says in a hushed voice. “Arch your back.”

He slips a finger inside me and makes me gasp again.

“Do you like that, Gypsy?”

“Yes, Daddy.”

“Never will you do this with anyone but me. Not even yourself.”

“Yes, Daddy.”

He starts pumping his finger in and out of me, and I feel close to something, close to some pleasure I know I cannot live without. He removes his finger and plunges his thumb into me instead, using all four fingers to rub the outside of my cunny. I buck and moan and forget all about the switch cuts, and soon I feel this delicious burst of passion, feel myself throb around his thumb. I sigh and lay my head down on the bed.

“Was that a pleasurable experience, little one? See how nice Daddy can make you feel when you’re a good girl?”

“Yes, Daddy.”

He gets up and returns the chair to its former position over near the wardrobe. It’s vast and wooden, but he doesn’t open it. Instead, he instructs me to sit down and wait while he gets me something to wear. When he returns, he has a lovely blue dress for me to put on, and some clean drawers.

“It’ll be a little big on you, but I’ll have a seamstress in tomorrow.”

“Thank you, Daddy. I’ve never had such a beautiful dress in all my life.”

“It’s a bit old for you, I’ll admit, and I think, henceforth, we’ll dress you in more youthful garb.”

He takes me down to dinner, to a room with a large table, set to perfection, with china and silver and a bowl on a stand filled with beautiful fruit. There is plenty of food, and dishes on the table I’ve never seen before. I recognize the pheasant and leg of lamb, but I have to ask what the jellies are.

“My dear girl, soon you shall know all the pleasures of a well-kept table.”

“I’m sure I will, Daddy.”

“Now be a very good girl and eat up.”

Dinner is filling and delicious. It’s been a long time since I was so full, for in general, we eat whatever we can catch or steal, and throw it all into the stew pot. It’s a nice change having a piece of real meat all to myself.

After dinner, Daddy takes me to sit in the drawing room, explaining that we must part ways after dinner so he can go smoke a cigar and have a bit of brandy. I sit down on a sofa, wondering how long he will be, wishing for something to help me pass the time. I see a sewing table in a corner, and when I go open it up, I find a piece of half-finished needlework. I take it out and examine the stitches to see if it's something I can copy, and then I set to work on it. When Daddy comes back, he is pleased.

"Aren't you industrious, sitting there just like a little lady, at work on your embroidery?"

I smile at him, perhaps for the first time, but then I remember he had my wagon burnt to the ground, with everything I owned in it.

"My wagon," I say.

"Never mind about that," he tells me, sitting down beside me. "You're under my protection now, and I will provide for your every need. All you need to worry about is being a good girl and studying hard. Tomorrow we shall start your lessons."

"Will they be like tonight's lesson?" I ask eagerly.

"No," he tells me, brushing back a lock of my hair. "These will be real lessons. Do you know your letters? Can you read?"

"Yes, but I don't know what all the big words mean."

"That's what that big book in the schoolroom is for. It's called a dictionary."

"A dictionary," I repeat, hoping to store it in my memory. "And I can look in it whenever I want to?"

"By all means."

"Will I learn arithmetic?"

"Yes. And history and French and geography. Perhaps even music and dancing lessons."

"I know how to dance," I tell him, setting the embroidery aside.

"Not like ladies and gentlemen do, I'm afraid."

"No. Perhaps not like that."

"I am glad you're eager to learn new things," he tells me. "Then I shan't have to whip you very often."

A shiver runs down my spine, causing me to shudder over the memory of this afternoon's punishment.

"You won't whip me if I'm not clever, will you?"

"No," he says, "but I shall whip you for laziness."

"I won't be lazy. I promise."

"How will you fill your free time?" he asks.

"Well," I tell him, glancing about. "May I direct the servants?"

"Direct them to do what?"

I say, "Polish the staircase. It looks a bit dusty."

"You're very observant, aren't you?"

"I hope I may be useful, too." I look up at him timidly and ask a burning question that's been on my mind all evening. "When will you teach me my next lesson?"

"As soon as the staircase is polished, but only if you behave yourself in the meantime. As a matter of fact, when your bottom is healed, I shall give you a good spanking to remind you to behave."

"Not with a switch," I say, squirming a little.

"No. By hand, maybe with a paddle. It depends on how you act for the next few days."

I don't relish being spanked with a paddle, although I've never had it. When my father beat me, it was with a belt. The thought of the paddle makes my cunny come alive again.

"Daddy, please will you give me a practice lesson?"

"Already?"

"Yes. Please?"

"No."

I remember Daddy ordering me not to touch myself, but I know that if he won't do it, I'll disobey him as soon as I'm in my room alone.

"Please?"

"Stop pestering me, or I won't wait a few days."

"You're mean," I tell him, sitting back with a huff.

"Would you like to see mean? Come pull your skirt up and put yourself over my lap."

I stare at him. I know he's serious, and I slide off the sofa and stand up.

"Come on. Skirt up. And pull down your drawers."

I step closer to him, but I can't bring myself to pull up my skirt.

"Come here," he tells me, out of patience. He pulls me closer and drags me down over his lap. I feel him raise my skirt and yank my drawers down, and he starts slapping my thighs, awakening the welts once more. After my thighs feel like they're sunburned, he starts on my bottom, spanking me hard. "When I tell you to bare yourself, I expect to be obeyed, do you understand me?"

"Yes, Daddy."

"Tell me, Gypsy, do you deserve the pleasure I could give you?"

"No, Daddy."

"Good. At least you know it. Now know this: I will not tolerate disrespect. Have you got that?"

I don't say anything, so he smacks my bottom hard. "Ow!" I say, kicking my legs in a vain attempt to ease the pain and heat. "Yes, Daddy."

He begins again, this time slower, and his blows fall softer, too, but it's too late for that. The damage is done and my bottom is inflamed once more. Oddly enough, my cunny is moist and I crave pleasure more than ever.

"Put your right hand behind your back," he tells me, and when I do, he takes hold of my wrist and pins it in the small of my back. I don't know what he means to do, but I know I must take it. My drawers have fallen down around my ankles, and he tells me to spread my legs as far as I can.

Suddenly, I feel his touch, light and tentative.

"Oh, Daddy," I murmur.

"Yes, my insatiable one?"

"What means 'insatiable?'" I ask.

"It means you can't get enough."

I feel myself blush, for I must own the truth. He slips a finger inside me as he did earlier and pumps it in and out. It feels good, but I must have stimulation to my outside parts. He seems to know it, because he removes his finger and rubs my most sensitive spot.

"Yes," I whisper.

"My hot-blooded little gypsy girl. How did you remain pure for so long?"

"We marry young," I tell him. "I was engaged to a man from another clan, but I suppose that's all over now."

"Yes. I will never let you escape me, my sweet little Gypsy."

He begins to rub me in earnest, and I strain toward his hand. Before too long, I am rewarded with a rush of pleasure. Afterwards, he lets go of me and lets me stand so I may pull up my drawers and smooth down my skirt.

He says, "It seems to me I'll have to start your lessons sooner than expected."

"Oh, yes? What will you teach me next?"

"You'll learn to pleasure me with your mouth, just as I will pleasure you."

I don't know what to think about that, but I find myself blushing again.

"Are you willing to learn such lessons?" he asks.

"Yes, Daddy."

"Good. Now go on up to bed like a good girl, and we will get up early for your regular lessons."