
THE LAIRD'S CONTRACT

The Glen Torridon Series, Book Two

FINLEY BROWN



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vi

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This book contains fantasy themes appropriate for mature readers only. Nothing in this book should be interpreted as Blushing Books' or the author's advocating any non-consensual sexual activity.

Chapter 1

Ailsa McKenzie stared at the elegant cream envelope on the desk. The McLennan Clan crest with a bagpiper in ancient tartan and the clan motto, *Dum Spiro Spero, While I breathe, I hope*, was embossed in the upper left corner, her name written across the front in bold, neat letters. She knew it contained a pre-nuptial agreement and looked up at her fiancé, smiling wistfully. They had only been engaged for a week, and as the Scottish snows from the storm that had brought them together began to thaw, their relationship, in accordance, was just warming up. She understood the need for it, for the safeguard of a contract, she just didn't like it. The car crash, him rescuing and taking care of her, their instant attraction, the engagement had all happened so fast. He was Laird of Glen Torridon, which encompassed not only a vast area of land and, with it, the care of its people but also significant wealth. In the event their marriage didn't work, he had a lot to lose; she, on the other hand, had nothing. As she had come from a meager background, everything she acquired in life, she'd earned herself, which amounted to nothing more than a couple thousand dollars in her saving account. She picked up the envelope,

weighing its contents in her mind. It wasn't the money that bothered her but the idea of divorce. Their relationship was just beginning, and already they were setting up a clause for the end. It was the romantic side of herself, the perpetual dreamer, that had the problem. She wanted the happily ever after, not the happily ever after and in case it doesn't work out, here's plan two. Her father had abandoned her mother before she was ever born, and the thought of an end before the beginning ever happened was an exceptionally raw concept. It was painful to think about it not working out with Ian and scary to jump into a marriage so quickly, but at this point, she could not imagine life without him.

She watched as a drop of water snaked its way down the large window in Ian's office. Spring was coming, and as the last of the snow melted from the castle and the bright sun hung low in the late afternoon sky, she knew she needed to trust in their love. As she took the contents out of the envelope, she repeated in her mind, *while I breathe, I hope.*

As she began to read the paper in front of her, her brow scrunched up in confusion. "Ian, what is this?" she asked, holding the documents up in question. It was Saturday evening. The roads were finally clear, and she had thought he might take her into the village to get out, but instead, he'd called her into his office for a meeting.

"It's a contract, sweetheart." He sat forward in his chair, his arms resting on the large dark cherry wood desk.

"This isn't a pre-nuptial agreement." She continued reading, looking up, perplexed.

"Pre-nuptial?" Now, he looked confused. "I would never have you sign a pre-nuptial. I don't know what you're thinking of, Ailsa, but I plan to marry you for life. I would never go into it thinking we might divorce, and God forbid, if it did happen, lass, I would see you cared for."

"Then, what is this?" She set the papers down, her heart

soaring at what he'd just told her but still unsure of what lay before her.

His eyebrow rose in an arch, the edge of his mouth quirking up in the merest of smiles. "It's our marriage contract. We'll go over it together."

"It says it's our domestic discipline contract," Ailsa corrected him.

"Aye, it is. It helps to define the parameters of our marriage and what our expectations are."

"These aren't my expectations," Ailsa said, shaking her head. He had disciplined her before, spanked her with both his hand and his belt, and he had enjoyed it. She knew what his punishments consisted of and the feelings they brought about, both good and bad. They were powerful and evoked strong emotions. A slow ache began to build deep within her and her sex clenched, her body a traitor to her own self. "Where did you come up with this?"

"Sweetheart, let's read through it before getting upset." He pulled another copy of it out of his desk drawer, placing it in front of himself. "Trust me, I know what I want, and whether or not you realize it, what you need. Go ahead and begin."

"You want me to read it out loud?" she asked, questioning the ridiculousness of it all.

Ian nodded. "Go on, darling."

Ailsa rolled her eyes. "Domestic discipline marriage contract—"

He stopped her. "Ailsa, start again, and this time without the disrespect. This is serious. I want this to work for us."

She began again and slowly started to speak. "This is the domestic discipline marriage contract between Ian Robert McLennan, head of household, and Ailsa Rose McKenzie." She stopped, looking up at him. "If you're the head of the household, what am I?"

"You'll be my wife."

"I thought marriages were supposed to be fifty-fifty partnerships," she said.

"In some households, that's true, and while I will always listen to you and value your opinion, I think this will create a happier, less stressful home for us. Let's finish reading through it, and then you can ask me questions."

Ailsa continued. "On this date, to be determined, Ian and Ailsa agree that we are both ready to begin incorporating domestic discipline as the basis for our marriage." She paused, pursing her lips together, taking a deep breath in through her nose. "As head of household, Ian is the final authority on all matters of the household. Ailsa agrees to support Ian by actively supporting this contract, and in return, Ian agrees to actively enforce this contract in a loving, caring, respectful manner."

"I'll take the next part," Ian said, picking up on her aggravation. "Section one, Rules. One, no disrespect. Two, no dishonesty or deceit. Three, no dangerous behavior." He looked up at her, his pewter eyes intense, his meaning not lost. They had met by her putting herself in a dangerous situation when she crashed her car on his property driving in a storm, and her same behavior caused her to find herself at the end of his belt when she disobeyed him by crossing a river on a rickety bridge after he'd told her to stay put. She looked down, not able to hold his gaze. He read on, "Four, no disobedience. Five, be polite at all times and have a good attitude about yourself and others. Six, no cursing. Seven, no going to bed angry. Eight, all major decisions must be made together with the head of household having the final say. And lastly, nine, never interfere with, negotiate, or obstruct the disciplinary process in any way."

"That's a lot of rules," Ailsa commented. Sense told her to stop this now, but the ache within her continued to grow, settling between her legs.

"Nothing I wouldn't expect in any relationship, and from myself to you." He reached across the desk, touching her hand.

His eyes held a childlike excitement; he wanted this. "Your turn, darling."

She cleared her throat. "I, Ailsa, understand that failure to follow the above rules may result in the consequences of Ian's choosing. I, Ailsa, also understand that these rules have been put in place by Ian because they are in the best interest of our relationship." She stopped then added softly under her breath, "Maybe your relationship."

"I'll ignore that," Ian said, picking up where she left off. "Section two, Consequences. I, Ian, understand that I must hold Ailsa accountable if the above rules are broken. I, Ian, agree always to maintain a calm and controlled environment and personal presence before carrying out any of the below consequences, and I agree never to make Ailsa feel degraded or humiliated. I, Ian, further agree only to impose the following consequences fairly and responsibly.

"The consequences that both Ian and Ailsa have agreed upon are as follows: One, bedroom time: time spent in the bedroom will be used for reflection, the specifics, and length of bedroom time, are solely up to Ian, and failure to follow instructions given by Ian could result in an additional consequence of Ian's choosing. Two, regular spanking punishment: spankings will be carried out with the head of household's hand. The length and severity will remain solely up to Ian. Three, serious spanking punishment: all serious spankings will be carried out using the head of household's belt. Ian agrees that the severity of the spanking will always fit the offense committed. Ailsa understands that the length and severity of the spanking will remain solely up to Ian." He put his papers down for a moment and got up and walked around his desk, placing his hands on both of her shoulders. "I know this is a lot to take in at one time, my sweet girl. Please stay with me. I don't want you getting too caught up on the consequences." He pulled her long chestnut hair from her neck, kissing her on her cheek before sitting back down at his desk.

"I'll read the next part. I need you to trust me on this one and keep an open mind. Can you do that, darling?"

Ailsa didn't know what to think. The pre-nuptial would have been easier to agree to than this, but she nodded anyway.

"Section three," he began, "Maintenance spanking. This spanking will be used to ensure the continuation of appropriate behavior and to keep Ailsa stress-free and respectful. This spanking is not done for punishment and will be carried out once a week on Sunday afternoons and is meant to promote well-being and closeness between Ian and Ailsa." He waited for her to say something, but she remained silent. "Will you read the last part?"

Ailsa spoke, hearing the slight quiver in her voice. "Both Ian and Ailsa agree to follow the rules and consequences stated above as part of the domestic discipline marriage." There was a place for them both to sign their names.

"Thoughts?" Ian asked. "I know you must have questions, darling."

"I don't know where to begin," she said, overwhelmed. He was asking her to sign over her full rights to make her own choices—in essence, her freedom—and put him in charge of everything. She knew she wouldn't be able to obey all those rules. It was almost comical, and she was hit with a fit of hysterical laughter. Doubled over, she laughed with such intensity her stomach hurt. Ian stood, coming around the desk. He looked down at her, his sharp eyes sobering her instantly. With her nervous energy gone, he took her hand. "Come, let's move to the couch. I know this is a considerable amount of information to take in." As he led her to the sofa, he set the contract down on the table before them. Night was coming on, and Ailsa suddenly felt very tired. She had given up everything to come here, her career, her apartment, her life in America, and she was placing all her trust in a man she had only known for a short time. He

was serious, he wanted this, expected it even, and a man like Ian McLennan usually got what he wanted.

"Talk to me, baby."

"Ian, this is a lot." She shook her head. "I mean, I know you like to be in control, but this is extreme. This doesn't seem like a marriage to me."

"Ailsa, this is the kind of marriage I want. I need to be the head of the household, to be able to keep us safe and give us a calm, loving home and to take care of us."

"We can have that without all these rules and consequences. This contract isn't necessary."

"Trust me on this, baby, the contract matters. We both have to agree to this, or it won't work." He rubbed her hand softly. "Tell me what bothers you the most," he said, turning so he could look her in the eyes.

"I can't stop thinking that all you want to do is punish me and see me hurt." She looked down, trying to find the right words to express herself. "These maintenance punishments, I don't even have to do anything wrong and I get hit."

Ian took her chin in his hand, raising it up, so she had to look at him. "First of all, I hope that I never have to punish you. This is not about me seeing you hurt. I want to create a household that is safe and loving, and, darling, that requires discipline on both our parts. Second, and I've said this before, I do not hit. Spanking your bottom is not hitting, and I would never take it to a level I knew you couldn't handle. And third," he paused, the corner of his mouth turning up, "it is not a maintenance punishment." He ran his finger down the side of her cheek. "It is a maintenance spanking, and it is meant to be a very intimate and vulnerable time between us."

She pulled back. "And what about you? What happens if you break a rule? You said you expect the same thing from yourself in a relationship."

"That's a good point. If I were to break a rule, then I will seek outside counsel from someone."

"Who?"

"I don't know, our parish priest, Father Carlin." Ian picked up the contract, writing the clause on the back. "I will have it added in." He stopped for a moment, rubbing his chin and the new growth of his beard. "I want more than your average marriage. This is based on extreme trust, Ailsa; it will bring us very close. Our marriage will be grounded on profound devotion and faith in each other. Its roots will run deep and strong." He took both her hands in his. "You trusted me before to care for you, when we first met, and you discovered things about yourself you never knew existed. Trust me now." He picked up the pen, signing the document, then he handed it to her.

Ailsa clutched it, uncertain of how to proceed. "I need time to think, Ian. I can't sign this right now."

He nodded his head, taking a deep breath. "I understand, lass. You can have time." He smiled at her, his eyebrow arching. "In the meantime, would you be willing to try it out? A trial run between the two of us over the next few weeks. We can make adjustments as we need to if we find something just doesn't work."

As she put her hands to her forehead, she rubbed the place between her eyes, hoping for some miraculous guidance. Ian made it all sound so easy—give up control, no worries, he would take care of her, but she knew it wouldn't be so simple. He had promised her that she could continue to work, to build her career as a wedding planner here in Scotland. She needed to keep her independence, and he'd said he understood that when he proposed. This contract contradicted all of that. "And I can still work and have my career?"

"Of course, I promised you. I understand how important it is to you," he said.

The Laird's Contract

"Fine, I'll agree to a trial run, but only so I can get some clarity."

"Very well," he said, kissing her. "It begins now. And, Ailsa, I expect the contract to be signed before we are wed."

It had grown dark, the only light coming from the fireplace, casting the room in orange and red shadows. Ailsa wondered if she had just made a deal with the devil. She looked over at Ian as he stood up, turning on a lamp on a nearby table. No, he was a good man. He might have the perfidious good looks of a villain, with his dark brown hair and coal gray eyes that often held a chilly intensity, but she knew how gentle and tender he could be. She was in love with him. *While I breathe, I hope.*

She looked down at the contract she still held tightly in her hand with all its rules and consequences and Ian's strong, bold signature at the bottom—Ian Robert McLennan, Duke of Torridon. Her eyes widened, and she could feel the heat of her temper suffuse the pale skin on her face.

"Duke of Torridon?" she said, standing up. "When were you going to fucking tell me you were a duke?"