

The Discipline of Cressida  
*Unconventional Marriages, Book 4*

By

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# Chapter One

*England, 1877*

Lady Cressida, the daughter of Lord Albert Essex, the Duke of Ashton woke up on the morning of her eighteenth birthday with a warm bottom and a sense of excitement. This had to be the greatest day of her life! She had been waiting for this day for what seemed like forever. She was a young lady now, an adult by society's standards. The best part was that her father had long ago promised that she would be released from her strict nursery regime when she turned eighteen.

It wasn't fair; her older brothers, Garrett and Peter, had left the nursery and became young gentlemen when they turned eight. She, on the other hand, as the youngest and only girl had been kept as a child far longer. The boys had been allowed privacy and freedom years ago, while her every move continued to be monitored and subjected to constant scrutiny.

Cressida relaxed in bed for a few moments. She knew there was a nursemaid close by; there was always someone close by. However, she could see no one and was enjoying a rare moment of relative privacy. She looked around the room. The nursery was a very pretty and cheerful place. The morning sun streaming in through the sheer pink curtains gave the flowered lavender wallpaper a warm glow. The shelves lining one wall held an assortment of dolls, each fancier than the last, and in the corner sat an enormous doll house which, truth be told, she still played with when she thought no one was looking. She wouldn't miss it though. She was well aware that she was only able to appreciate the nursery because she was leaving it behind.

She closed her eyes and reminisced about the eighteen years she had slept in this room, been bathed and groomed and taken lessons here and been subjected to the joys and sorrows of her little life. She'd never been sent off to boarding school or even to finishing school. Her father said he didn't believe in it for girls. She was well educated though, her governess had seen to that. Her father liked to boast that she hadn't needed a governess, just Ashton Manor's large library as she'd made her way through so many of the books in it. She found the world of books to be a welcome distraction from her insular little life. Through the pages of her favorite books, she could leave her home and travel throughout the world. In reality, she rarely left

Ashton Manor. Even trips to the neighboring villages were infrequent and passed by quickly. What she saw of the world she had observed speeding by from her carriage window.

The problem with her current arrangement was that a stranger walking in to her nursery would have no doubt that a little girl resided there, certainly not a young woman on the verge of making her debut! She looked around the room as images of the past came to her, smiling as she recalled three little bare bottoms lined up in a row awaiting punishment for some bit of mischief. She recalled their original Nanny, Frau Heidrun, a small stout woman with a German accent, who carried a tappet and dispensed justice more often to those naughty little boys than to the tiny little girl.

After the boys were released from the nursery, Cressida had gotten both a new nanny and a governess. Miss Adele had been brought in to teach her French and to prepare her to be brought out to polite society. Cressy had very much enjoyed her lessons. Thanks to her caregivers, she spoke fluent French, knew her British history inside and out and had impeccable manners. She also knew everything from how to hostess a tea party to how to drop her handkerchief in a timely manner, thus giving a young suitor cause to approach.

While she had enjoyed the process of her education and refinement, she hadn't appreciated having to continue to reside in the nursery. Even though her Nanny Epiphany had arrived when Cressida was already six years old, she had treated her as an infant from the very start. Although Cressida was a woman now by anyone's standards, she continued to be babied at every turn.

The huge, intimidating Epiphany, standing six feet tall, was a terrifying vision in grey. She sported grey eyes, grey hair pulled back in a severe bun and a grey uniform. She could invoke terror in Cressida's heart with just a stern glance. Alternatively, the woman could provide the gentlest of loving care when Cressida was having one of her spells. Oh yes, her young life had changed drastically at the age of six when she became the sole recipient of Adele and Epiphany's complete focus. Suddenly she was being scrutinized and disciplined in ways she never had before. Oh well, she thought with forgiveness in her heart, the two women had worked hard to make her into a proper lady and if she did say so herself, they had done a very good job. Cressida hoped her father would let them go with good references and hefty stipends.

Cressida turned over and moaned as her battered cheeks made contact with the bed. She began to writhe in shame as she recalled her punishment of the night before. At dinner she had

made a remark that had been perceived as cheeky by her nanny, who had promptly taken Cressida over her lap, lifted her skirts and, shamefully, lowered her drawers in front of her father, Adele and the staff waiting table. Nanny had produced her wicked paddle from an apron pocket and applied it with great vigor to Cressida's churning bottom cheeks until she had been weeping hysterically. She'd had to spend the rest of the meal sitting on a very sore bottom, struggling to regain her composure. It has been so humiliating! She covered her face with her hands, reliving her shame.

But Cressida's blush abated and she broke out in a smile as she realized that those days were over. Her nurse and governess had undoubtedly already been sent packing. She was certain that any moment now the servants would come and move her from this babyish nursery into a proper set of rooms in the family quarters. There would be no more childish clothing or public chastisements; she would now have privacy and freedom. She hugged herself with excitement. Not only that but with her mother deceased, it would naturally fall to Cressida to take her place as the lady of Ashton Manor. She would soon be at her father's side helping to oversee their large estate.

She heard the nursery door open and closed her eyes, pretending to still be asleep, expecting that it would be the servants come to quietly and respectfully move her to her new quarters. Instead her eyes flew open when she heard Nurse Epiphany's clipped voice say, "Time to rise, little miss. It is Monday morning and you know what that means. You must prepare for your weekly enema."

Cressida bolted upright, pulling the covers up to her chest and stammered, "B-but Nanny, it ... it's my eighteenth birthday. I'm an adult now. Hasn't father informed you that your services are no longer required?"

Epiphany threw back the coverlet and held out a hand to aid Cressida from her bed. "Is that what you think, little one? That you are all grown up now and no longer need supervision? Would your father think that you deserve to be treated as an adult after the way you have been behaving of late? Why, just last night you needed your little bottom bared and reddened right at the dinner table – for shame! And all because of your inability to control your tongue; is that how an adult young lady behaves?"

Cressida was speechless. In the blink of an eye, she was stripped of her nightclothes and led to the chamber pot.

“Do your business quickly child, or are we going to have to redden that bottom again before the day even gets under way?” Epiphany ordered, her hand pressing down on Cressida’s head as she squatted over the pot. Cressida obediently released her bladder as tears filled her eyes. Her nanny produced a tissue and bent to wipe between her legs. Cressida balked and squeezed her knees together, she would bear this indignity no longer – she was a woman now!

“Being difficult are we? Well all right then, in honor of your eighteenth birthday, I suppose you should at least be allowed to wipe your own bottom. Here you go then, Mademoiselle,” Epiphany said, bowing elaborately and handing her the tissue. This great honor was effectively diffused by her nanny insisting on standing there supervising. Cressida quickly did the deed while scowling at the indignity of it all.

“Quickly child, come along, breakfast is just a short hour away. Your father will not appreciate it if you are late to table. You have guests, you know.”

She quickly pulled Cressida over to a chair that had been set beside the tub. Cressida tried to get a glimpse of what lay on the table next to the chair. Whatever was going to happen to her over the next several minutes would be determined by what implements were laying on the tabletop, but there was a towel covering several bulging items so she could not see. Nanny covered her lap with another clean white towel and patted it, directing Cressida to climb right over.

The naked Cressida reluctantly laid herself bottom upwards, over her nanny’s lap. She began to shiver, whether from cold or fear, she could not have said. Her nanny was busy opening a jar; Cressida had no doubt what the jar held - cold, slippery lubricant. Sure enough, she heard nanny snap a cot over her finger and then felt her nanny’s fingers spreading her cheeks open. Cressida grimaced as she felt the cotted finger applying the lubricant to her clenched bottom hole. Finally, Nanny removed her finger while continuing to hold Cressida’s cheeks open with her other hand. Then Cressida felt a cool glass tube being inserted inside of her and her nanny’s hand resting on her cheeks, holding the thermometer in. Finally, five minutes later the tube was slowly removed. Nanny must have liked what she read because she gave a satisfactory grunt.

Now Cressida heard Nanny moving items around on the table next to her. She tried to peek back over her shoulder to see what was happening. Then she saw it - saw the clyster that her nanny planned to use on her. It was a large glass tube set into a metal holder. The holder

had a long narrow nose that she knew would be uncomfortably inserted inside of her but then she saw the size of the tube and the plunger sticking out of the other end. Nanny held it as she lubricated the nozzle.

“Please not that one Nanny, please!” she begged. “Where’s the black bulb? Can’t we use the squirting bulb?” Cressida knew that the bulb was time consuming; it had to be refilled and emptied into her half a dozen times before the procedure would be completed to her nanny’s exacting standards. But it was far less uncomfortable than the large clyster her nanny was now wielding. She knew how miserable it would be to have that long, cold, metal nozzle inserted inside of her, not to mention the feeling of having all that water pumped forcefully into her at once.

“Stop complaining, child. We need to proceed quickly and that takes too long.”

“But Nannnyyyy,” Cressida whined, as she felt the horrid nozzle nudging at her bottom hole. She whimpered as the cold metal tube was pushed deeply inside her. She swore she felt the tip tapping at her belly button. “Oh Nanny, please, please, please,” she entreated, “Please stop before I v-v-vomit.”

“Stop making such a fuss, Cressy” her nanny replied, calling her by her childhood nickname. She spanked one cheek sharply. Tears sprang to Cressida’s eyes. What a horrible start to her birthday, lying naked over an adult’s lap waiting to be given a humiliating enema. She squealed as Nanny pushed the plunger without warning and a liter of fluid was forcibly injected into her.

“It’s too hot!” she cried.

“Nonsense, it’s the same exact temperature that it always is and besides there’s nothing to be done about it now. You’ve taken your bottom medicine, now get up,” she said, helping Cressida to stand. Nanny rose from the seat, and then laid the towel down and Cressida gingerly sat on it. “No more out of you now young lady, I’ll be back in ten minutes. You’d best not make a mess. Do you hear me?”

“Not too long, nanny. I feel so full!”

“You will hold it for ten minutes, young lady, to the second.”

Cressida moaned as she doubled over, her tummy cramping more than usual. She felt uncomfortably hot and clammy. To distract herself, she tried to recall exactly whom her father had prattled on at dinner about having invited to her birthday celebration. Her Aunt Vivienne



was coming in from Westchester and, oh yes, her father's friend Lord Kenwood had probably already arrived, undoubtedly with his daughter Regina in tow. She wondered if he'd also bring his son Montgomery, but then she recalled that they last time they'd visited Darmley Palace, Montgomery had shared his plans with her - to join the Foreign Legion and serve abroad.

Cressida sighed. Such a shame. She'd always had a bit of a crush on tall, dark, handsome Montgomery. She fantasized about Lord Kenwood meeting with her father and requesting a marriage contract between their son and daughter. She came back down to earth abruptly when her nanny reappeared and once again showed her to the pot. Afterwards she was taken to the inner room, which held the tub that the servants had prepared. She endured having her hair pinned up and being washed like a three-year-old, scrubbed from head to toe by her efficient nanny. Afterwards she was wrapped in a warm towel and led to a chair in front of the fireplace and had the tangles in her hair laboriously combed out by one of the nursery maids.

Cressida chafed at the dress that Epiphany brought out for her to wear.

"Oh no, Nanny, please not that one!" She felt like crying when she looked at the little lace confection hanging from the armoire. It was more suitable for an eight-year-old than an eighteen-year-old. She began to snifle, "Please let me dress like an adult for once."

"And how do you suppose an eighteen-year-old lady should dress, Cressy?" Epiphany asked, clearly losing patience with the entire affair.

"With my skirts down to the floor and my hair up, of course," Cressida replied hopefully, wiping her eyes.

Epiphany seemed to consider the idea. She headed towards the armoire and threw open the doors. Cressida's heart fell as she looked at the colorful selection of little girl dresses hanging within. There was not a single thing in her closet that was suitable for a grown woman.

"So which of your gowns would you prefer, milady?" Epiphany asked, waving her arm over the selection. Cressida set her chin on her hand and closed her eyes.

"I guess the lace will do," she replied, defeated.

Epiphany's heart softened. The child had been kept small and sheltered for a very long time. Her desire to look like other young women her age was understandable.

"The lace does have the longest skirt of all your dresses," she gently pointed out, "and perhaps a more mature hairstyle as well?" This suggestion seemed to do the trick, Cressida's smile returned and she positively beamed.

“Do you really think we could, Nanny?”

“I do. Now calm down Cressida and hold still. Not too mature now, not without your father’s permission but perhaps if we bring up the sides with a pompadour in front.” She finished buttoning Cressida into the lace, which came down to her calves. Then she sat her at her dressing table. She brushed out Cressida’s soft light brown curls and lifted the sides.

As she worked on Cressida’s hair, she watched her in the looking glass. The child’s blue eyes were sparkling. Her excitement was understandable. It was her birthday, but Cressida’s emotions took on a manic edge at times. Keeping her on an even keel was Epiphany’s job, but occasionally, despite her best efforts, the balance tipped and the fallout could be disastrous. Epiphany did not want the child’s birthday to be spoiled by a childish display of temperament.

“I said, calm down, Cressida! Let’s try to get through this day without my paddle making an appearance.”

Cressida cowered at the threat. She closed her eyes and shuddered, imagining being bared and spanked in front of their guests, which she knew her diligent nanny would not hesitate to do. She opened one eye to peek at how her hair was coming along and then both eyes opened wide as she watched her new mature hair style come into focus. Occasionally in the past her nanny had put up the sides but they’d always been affixed with a large bow. Cressida prayed that there would be no bow this time. Instead Epiphany reached into the jewelry box and brought out a jeweled brooch that she affixed to the combs in Cressida’s hair.

She held up a hand mirror and turned Cressida around so she could see the back of her hair. “Oh, Nanny,” Cressida breathed ecstatically. “It’s beautiful! It looks like jeweled combs. I’m not wearing it up but it’s definitely a more mature style. I don’t think father will object.”

“We will soon find out. Come along little one, it is time for breakfast,” Nanny said, taking Cressida by the hand.

In spite of being dressed like an eight-year-old and having her hand held by her nanny, Cressida tried very hard to make a dignified entrance into the parlor. Her father and Lord Kenwood were already there. Cressida hid her disappointment that her aunt had not yet arrived. Her father was smiling at her with pride. She curtseyed and greeted him with a kiss on the cheek, and then she turned to Lord Kenwood who was very tall and most handsome – an older version of Montgomery. He had dark straight hair brushed back with touches of silver at the

temple. She curtsied deeply to his distinguished lordship. When she rose, Lord Kenwood took her hand. She giggled as he bowed to kiss it.

“And here is the birthday girl, looking very grown up indeed,” her father said.

“It’s not too much is it, father?” she asked, turning to him and patting the back of her hair anxiously. “Epiphany gave me a more grown up hairstyle.”

“It’s very becoming and most appropriate for a young noblewoman,” her father assured her.

“I understand that I have come at a most fortuitous time, my dear.” Lord Kenwood said. “It will be a great honor to help you to celebrate coming of age.” As Cressida smiled at him, the dimples in her cheeks flashed. She basked in the warm smile he honored her with in return.

“Thank you, my lord. It is most kind of you to come. Your presence here will make my birthday all the more special. Have you brought Montgomery and Regina?” she asked.

“Unfortunately no, little one,” he replied. “Montgomery is serving in France and Regina is away at university.” Cressida was surprised, a woman at a university. Was that even feasible?

“Why I’ve never heard of such a thing,” Cressida replied. Truth be told, she was a bit relieved that Regina hadn’t come. She had a way about her that made Cressida feel young and insubstantial.

Just then the butler entered the parlor and announced the arrival of Lady Sterling. Cressida flew into her aunt’s arms; she had often been told that her aunt closely resembled her sister, the mother that had perished the day she was born.

“Welcome, my dear. I’m so glad you arrived in time to join us for this wonderful birthday brunch.” Lord Ashton greeted his sister-in-law warmly kissing her upon both cheeks.

“Of course, of course. I wouldn’t miss one minute of this exquisite girl’s special day,” Vivienne replied, hugging Cressida tightly. Cressida took her hand and led the way to the dining room, where they found her governess Adele waiting for them.

Cressida gasped upon entering the room. There was a dazzling display of crystal, china and fresh cut flowers decorating both the table and the sideboard. She was thrilled to see all of her favorite dishes being brought out; stir-fried fluffy goose eggs, back bacon, and sausages with fried bread. She clapped her hands when a silver lid was lifted to reveal her special favorite, stewed figs served with freshly baked scones. Cressida was introduced to tea and found she very

much liked the taste of Earl Grey, liberally mixed with Devonshire cream and sugar. As they served, each of the smiling servants wished their young lady a very happy natal day.

Lord Ashton watched his lovely daughter with pride as she exclaimed over the wonderful cooking and chatted with their guests as an equal, charming the assemblage with her beauty and delightful personality. For this glorious morning at least, he could set aside his concerns about his delicate daughter's future.