
NATHANIEL'S
TREASURE

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Published by Blushing Books
An Imprint of
ABCD Graphics and Design, Inc.
A Virginia Corporation
977 Seminole Trail #233
Charlottesville, VA 22901

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EBook ISBN: 978-1-64563-525-3

Print ISBN: 978-1-64563-526-0

Audio ISBN: 978-1-64563-527-7

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Cover Art by ABCD Graphics & Design

This book contains fantasy themes appropriate for mature readers only.

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Chapter 1

Thousands of pirates were active between 1650 and 1720, and these years are sometimes known as the 'Golden Age' of piracy.

Standing on land again felt incredible. Though Priscilla had no regrets regarding her decision to sneak onto the ship captained by her father, she missed the ground beneath her feet every day. They had been sailing almost two weeks, and even though they stopped in Nassau, she couldn't persuade him to let her leave the ship. Finally, today, he agreed. Though after many tears and pleas.

A small twinge of remorse entered her thoughts. She knew he had to deal with her mother eventually. No one wanted that. The tongue lashing surely waiting for him when he returned home sent shivers down her spine. Her mother would berate and blame him for Priscilla's defiance to her every move. She couldn't remember a time her mother didn't deride him for spoiling her too much and for encouraging her adventurous spirit.

No one knew she had no plans to return. She hated Charles Town. She hated that life. Her days consisted of wearing uncomfortable clothing, answering the boring gentleman callers her mother paraded before her, followed by tense dinners consisting of arguments and pressure for her to behave as an officer's daughter and to marry.

If her mother could see her now, she would probably faint. The steady ripples of the ocean waves washed up on her feet, kissing her ankles. Finn, the escort her father sent with her, sat just inside a patch of sparse greenery, his back to her. Her father gave strict instructions. Finn mustn't take her near the docks and remain as inconspicuous as possible.

Finding this vacant beach adhered to all that, and being alone, she removed all her clothing except her shift. She twirled and skipped along the shoreline. The freedom she experienced in those few moments, made all the lies she told worth it. She cried and prayed for forgiveness each night. Each day it became more and more difficult to meet her father's eyes. It entered her mind to use the opportunity he gave her that day to part ways with him. But she couldn't bring herself to do it. She never wished to cause him any worry and heartache. Perhaps she should write him a letter when the time came. Maybe the thought of leaving him and all she knew behind frightened her and she had yet to admit it.

And, she hated deceiving Gideon, the only suitor who did make her body tingle, in even her most private parts. Agreeing to accept his proposal after she returned was the only way to procure his assistance in getting her on the ship. Rumors of his sexual prowess circulated among the ladies. She had no doubt he would move on. A fanatical flirt, she couldn't imagine him ever being faithful to one woman. And that fact didn't bother her. She never planned to marry him.

Gathering a few more shells, she looked back to Finn. Next

to Finn's slumped forward body, a wild man stood and stared directly at her. She didn't know what to do. Check on Finn? Call for help? Run?

It didn't look like the wild one had a weapon drawn. He did have a huge sword hanging from his side, and a pistol on the other. The breeze blew his long brown hair across his sun-darkened face. Gold and gems glinted from his ears, wrists and hands when they caught the sunlight. Never had she known of a man wearing such adornments. He started towards her. She darted off down the beach.

A few strides in, an arm wrapped around her middle, lifting her off her feet. The air left her lungs; she couldn't draw in a breath to scream.

"Where ya think you running off to, Angel? I saw you. I want you. I'll take you." He tightened his right arm around her, and using the other, fisted her hair, forcing her to look into his golden eyes. They were the lightest brown she ever saw, like the sunset over the open sea. "You like what you see, Miss?" he asked, in a deep, intimidating voice.

As shocking as it was, she did. His shirt lay open baring his chest. She didn't know if it lacked ties, or if he chose to wear it that way. He had a small patch of dark hair just above the waist of his trousers. Improper or not, she didn't avert her gaze. She wondered if it continued lower.

He tossed her over his shoulder and sauntered off away from the beach, toting her like a sack of wheat. Each step he took jarred her into his hard body.

Realizing she regained the ability to speak, she twisted and flailed. "Put me down! Put me down now!"

He squeezed her tighter, until she stopped yelling. "I don't think that will happen. I told you I'm taking you."

"Taking me where? You can't just take someone." Could he? She had a suspicion he may be one of the pirates she

heard stories about and read in the papers. They did take what they wanted. “May I please put my clothing back on? Is Finn dead?”

Slowing inside a patch of thick-leaved vines, he whistled and a horse trotted up. Turning her, he lifted her up on the horse. She never rode without a saddle before. He jumped up behind her giving the horse a quick kick. It bolted off, and fear overcame her. Not just fear of falling to her death, but fear of what he intended to do with her. He jerked her back against his solid chest, holding her there with his left arm. Her fear of falling lessened, but others increased.

“Where are we going? My father is at the harbor,” she said.

Loud, monstrous laughter exploded from him. “One more reason to stay clear of there then.”

They rode fast, far from where she started. “Are you going to hurt me?” Tilting her head, she looked up at his face, but it revealed nothing. He stared ahead.

Following his eyes, he slowed the horse at some dunes. A massive ship sat anchored in the cove. Rowboats littered the beach. Men bustled about, loading items sitting on the beach to the boats, yelling at each other. He dismounted, dragging her with him. Directing the horse to the far left, a man, who looked local, roped it with the others he held.

“Aye, Spoon brought us quite a treasure,” one of the dirty men hollered.

Many of the men ceased their activity, looking her way. Crossing her arms across her chest, she attempted to maintain some shred of modesty. They leered at her. She felt naked.

“This treasure isn’t for you stinkin’ scoundrels,” her wild man stated. Pointing to the nearest boat, he commanded, “Get in.”

Looking from the small vessel to the huge one out on the water, she panicked. Did he intend to take her there? Was he

kidnapping her? Would she ever see her father again? Taking off in the direction they came, her neck snapped from the force of her hair being yanked from behind. Landing flat on her back in the sand, it took several seconds until she grasped that someone still held her hair. Her scalp ached.

Struggling to focus after the release of her tresses, she looked up the large body into the face of her captor. "Which part are you not understanding, Angel? I took you. You're mine. Get in the boat." The seriousness and anger reflected in his face halted any retort she considered giving. Sand hit her in the face as he walked away.

Rolling over, she pushed herself to her knees. She felt dizzy, pausing in that position. Only when she heard lewd comments from nearby men did her lack of attire, and the position she held, register in her aching, scrambled mind. Her shift caught under her knees, pulled below her breasts, leaving both of them swaying and on full display. Her dismay hadn't taken complete hold of her senses before two rough hands gripped under her arms. Slammed chest to chest with the wild one, she gazed into his mesmerizing eyes.

The narrowing of his eyelids, and the forming of a crease outside of each one, expressed his enjoyment of the situation well before she heard his boisterous laughter. "Maybe you, Li'l Angel, appreciate the attention of a bunch of drunken mates, but not while you're mine." Stomping to the boat, he dropped her inside. "Be aware of the state of your undress from here on."

"I requested you allow me to retrieve my dress... before you rode off with me," she countered.

Pinching her chin with his fingers, he captured and held her gaze. "You are not to disrespect me in front of the crew." He spoke quietly, for her ears only. "I'm not opposed to baring that creamy white ass for all to see. Pinkening it up would be highly satisfying."

Twisting free of his calloused, rough hold, she slid to the other side of the vessel. Stretching towards her, he gripped her arm, dragging her back to where he stood. "You don't listen very well." Hauling her to the side, he pushed her down, her stomach against it. Reaching down her legs, he yanked up her thin garment, baring her naked flesh for any to view. Appalled by his action, she tried to break free from him, bucking and twisting, but he pinned her head downwards with his man paw on the back of her neck.

The first crack of his palm against her bottom produced a howl from her that she didn't recognize as her own. Additional smacks rained down upon her poor backside. She shrieked, but he didn't relent. Only when he tugged her hair, directing her back on the bench did she realize it ended. Her vision blurred from tears, and she winced with each attempt she made to find a comfortable sitting position. Howls of laughter sounded in every direction. She had never been so humiliated.

"Let's go," he shouted. Men gathered at each boat, pushing them into the surf. Once cleared of the breakers, the wild one hoisted himself on the bench beside her. She watched as they left her only possible chance of escape, rowing closer and closer to the immense ship ahead.

Chants in song, lewd in nature, carried over the water from the neighboring vessels. The men maneuvering her boat remained silent. Sneaking a peek at her captor, she understood. He fixated ahead to their destination, his jaw firm, his posture threatening. It looked to her if any soul committed an act or sound not to his liking, it would be their last.

Crude climbing ropes hung over the side of the ship. The men making it there first vaulted from their boats onto these. They swung, kicked and fought with each other. In jest, she surmised, as they laughed and taunted each other. She toyed with the idea he didn't have any plan to take her aboard. She

wore no shoes, and in her current state of undress, she couldn't climb.

Rowing beside the ship, he jerked her to her feet. Eyeing up the height, she stepped back, on top of his foot and into him. It looked so high from the water. It terrified her that he may expect her to climb the rudimentary contraption.

Shoving her forward, she fell to her knees, and he roared, "Go. It's time we sail."

She twisted her head wanting to admit her hesitancy to attempt such an endeavor, but his scowl frightened her more. Getting to her feet, she stepped to the side reaching for the rope. The little boat rocked away from her target, she missed the rope, falling into the sea.

Yanked up and out of the water, she came face to face with him. He dangled her in front of him like a doll. His warm breath hissed in her face. "You're wasting time." Slings her on his back, he took hold of the rope, ascending the pair up the ship. "You may wish to hold tight if you don't want to find yourself back in the sea."

Tightening her arms around his neck, her legs around his middle, she closed her eyes, afraid to look either up, or down. His back muscles flexed against her chest each time he stretched and pulled them higher. Not expecting him to climb that distance so quickly, his booming voice startled her. "Let go now."

Opening her eyes, she found herself aboard the ship. Walking away from her, he yelled orders in every direction. The men did his bidding without question. Sprinting up a set of stairs, he joined another man overlooking the crew. They appeared engaged in a serious conversation. Unaffected by all the activity and noise, focused on whatever they spoke about, wild man had a definitive argumentative air about him. Both men were large in stature, and the whole scene sent her imagi-

nation into overdrive. These were two men who would make the most skilled officer cower.

The large sails inflated. The ship lurched, knocking her down and the ship sailed out of the cove. Song broke out among the men across the deck.

“What have we here?” Bony fingers gripped her elbow lifting her to her feet. The older man smiled his nasty teeth at her. “Look here, mates. Time for a li'l dancin’.”

Men circled her, clapping their hands. They licked their sun split lips, staring at her wet undergarment, clinging to her body like a second skin. A palm slapped her backside. “Come on li'l lady, get to it,” someone from behind demanded.

Other hands came at her, tugging on her, at her delicate frock. More clapping commenced, the crowd encircling her grew. “Dance... dance, dance,” they screamed.

Crossing her hands over her chest, she stumbled in between them as they pinched, snatched, and shoved her. Before her terror engulfed her, she saw several men knocked to the floor. A huge fist made contact with jaws, faces. He stood beside her, sword drawn, the point angled under one chin near her. “Not this one, my friends. Not this one.” Sheathing his sword, he instructed her, “Follow me, if you think you can without getting yourself in further strife.”

Staying close on his heels, she followed him across the deck to a set of stairs leading below. The men continued to watch her, but no further remarks sounded. Opening a door, he waited for her to enter. A large desk filled the center, papers strewn atop. Stepping as far inside as she could, she turned to find him leering at her. His warm, gold eyes heated her in an unsettling way. She burned from the inside out, a feeling she never experienced before.

Marching in front of her, he put his hand in her hair behind her neck, tilting her face to his. His lips came down on

hers fast, and hard. His breath became hers. Molding his lips to hers, his tongue pushed past her lips, caressing hers. The forceful, demanding kiss transformed into a gentle, sensual exchange. He licked behind her lips, over and around her teeth. She returned his attention, savoring the warmth and intimate exploration he initiated. An ache she didn't understand formed.

She shared a few kisses in her life, but nothing compared to this. His left arm encircled her waist, lifting her from her feet, without interrupting their mouth explorations. Carrying her across the room, he broke the kiss, staring at her with a heat in his eyes matching the fiery sensations she felt. Lowering them to a bunk, he held the stare, a shared understanding, an appeal for consent.

She knew this was wrong. She did. She just didn't care. The entire situation was wrong. The barbaric, alluring man took her, spanked her, forced her on a ship, and her only thoughts were of having his lips back on hers and easing the discomfort he created within her body. It scared her. It intrigued her. But she had no one to criticize or condemn her in that moment. She could do as she wanted.

Moving his head to her neck, he nuzzled it before he kissed it, progressing to deep, borderline painful lavishness. Though he sucked at her neck, she experienced a similar awareness in her core.

Sliding the drenched, ripped material off her shoulders, revealing her breasts, he immersed them in the same intense affection. He kissed, sucked, nipped, until she thrashed about yearning for more.

"Mm, what is your name, Angel?" he asked in the most masculine voice she ever heard. Even his voice affected her in a primal way.

"Pri... Priscilla," she panted.

Running his tongue under each breast, then circling each

nipple, she arched towards his mouth. "Priscilla. Was this Finn your husband? Such a lucky man."

She receded into the bunk, his words bringing her back to reality. "No. I am unmarried. Did you kill him? He was my escort."

His lips curled in a cunning smile. "No, Angel. I didn't kill him. Yet he may wish for it when he wakes up. He will have one hell of a pounding in his head." Stroking the side of her head, he ran his tongue along her jawline. "You are a virgin?"

Any attempt she made to remain unaffected by his lascivious tongue failed. He trailed it down her neck and along her shoulder interspersing kisses and nips. Closing her eyes, she disregarded any negative conceptions threatening to invade her mind and concentrated on the glorious madness his lips ignited throughout her entire body. If he thought her a virgin, would he stop? He couldn't. She needed him to soothe her suffering. A delightful misery she didn't understand. She heard pirates had no honor. But she wouldn't take a chance. She needed him to fulfill whatever he incited in her. "No."

His body shook with laughter. His rough, whiskered face rubbed against hers. "Do not lie to me, Angel."

How could the arrogant, lawless man be kind and caring with her? His concern for her virtue, the exact opposite of his menacing image, sent her desire soaring. She wanted the forbidden, the discovery, the adventure, she wanted the experience. "I do not lie," she hesitated, "Spoon?" He had a name. He had a past. Just as she.

Should she not have spoken his name? He withdrew. He eliminated all contact with her. Positioning himself on the other side of the small space exterminating any insane idea she imagined of being taken. In the truest sense, she wished to be taken. By him.

The smoldering lust he directed at her seconds prior vacated his eyes. All heat vanished and a chill engulfed her

sending a shiver up her spine. "Did I grant you the right to call me by any name?" he cautioned. His face hardened, and his eyes bored into hers. "I think not."

"How would you like to be addresse—" she started. Flipping her onto her stomach, he ripped what remained of her undergarment.

Clamping her eyes shut, she gritted her teeth, awaiting the spanking she expected to receive. It didn't come. The bunk bounced indicating his departure. Listening, she heard his movement, but remained as she lay, eyes shut.

A slam of a trunk against the floorboard jolted her. "Get up. Your bottom displays plenty of attention as it is. So, I shall spare you this time," he stated.

Shifting upright, she sat at the edge of the bunk. A large trunk lay open in front of the desk. It contained many women's dresses.

Waving his hand over it, she looked from the chest to him, then back again. This angered him, as he hollered at her, "Get up, I said!" She stood, naked from the waist down. Gravity seized the remnants of material transporting it to her feet. He gritted out, "You are not to leave this cabin. But I won't leave you down here as you are—without me." Stretching out his right arm, he gripped her forearm, forcing her to her knees in front of the chest. "Damn it! Cover yourself, Angel."

He confused her. He seemed void of any tact. Gentle and kind, or impatient and brutish. And he spoke well, educated even. Which man did he wish to be? Running her hand along the gowns laid out on top, she realized they were expensive. Why did he have these? These were garments worn by wealthy women. What happened to the women?

"You're testing me, and my impatience grows. Any longer and I shall retract my decision to spare you additional discipline," he grumbled above her.

“I don’t see any shifts. Stays? Stockings? Petticoats?” She lifted a few pieces, digging deeper inside.

Stomping his foot, he demanded her attention, which she gave. She held his amber eyes but averted hers at each validation he emphasized. “You *did not*... *don* those when I found you. And I *doubt* you wore them sailing around the hot seas. Trust me, you *won’t need or want* those where we are going and neither do the women we sell them to.”

Dropping the garments, she stood. “Without a shift, or a petticoat, I will still be left quite exposed. My bosom shall be... uncovered. More than I wish.” Years of hearing her mother’s claims that a gentleman would never take her as a wife unless she behaved docile and practiced modesty echoed in her ears. She doubted her mother would approve of him regardless.

‘Spoon’ threw his head back and laughed like a mad man. She contemplated joining him in jest but reconsidered. Insolent and sarcastic behavior wouldn’t persuade him to provide those. And more importantly, it wouldn’t dissuade him from delivering ‘additional discipline’. His laughter subsided. She discovered she liked how his eyes brightened and lifted when he smiled. “You, Angel, do have an ample bosom. I must agree.”

She took a turn and stomped her feet. “Stop focusing on my breasts. Do you want me to get dressed or not? And what about all these clothes? You have been with all these women? Stolen them and brought them here as you have me?” Imagining him with other women infuriated her. Not one to usually get jealous, she recognized it. A ridiculous reaction under scandalous circumstances. But she assumed he completed the sexual liaisons he started with them. And he did not with her.

Seeing his eyes darken, and his jaw tighten, she stepped back. “You would do best to keep your thoughts in your head, not your mouth while here. I am attempting to treat you more as a guest, but you are trying me,” he urged.

“A guest? Well, this guest wishes to depart this ship and return to her own!”

The amber in his eyes became burning embers, scorching her skin. Clamping his fingers around her neck, he led her to the door, then stalled. Grabbing the dress on top, he thrust it into her chest, without releasing her neck. “Put it on!”

Unable to bend down and step into the garment with his hand still around her throat, she stepped in with her right leg first, holding that side up. She repeated the same struggle with her left leg. His grip only tightened if she swayed. Whoever wore the dress matched her endowments in the chest area, but unlike her, they carried the same generous portions in the waist and hips and were much shorter in height. Lacing the front, she yanked it as tight as she could to close the opening, concealing her legs as best she could. Without a petticoat or stockings, they remained bare and fairly visible.

Directing her out of the cabin, he guided her down the corridor, down two small sets of steps, into a kitchen. The still, hot air made it hard to draw in a breath. Pots hung in every direction. “Bird. I’m putting a special guest back here for the time being. Not anyone, not a single soul is to enter,” he yelled out.

She scanned the area, not finding another person, nor a ‘bird’. Had he lost his mind? Could she push someone to that extreme? Her mother thought so.

“Yes, sir. I will not.” An older man hobbled out from beside some stacked barrels.

Pressing her forward, her alluring abductor opened a small door in the corner. Forcing her inside, he took her to the back wall. A set of shackles hung halfway down. Forcing her to the floor, he caught her right wrist, lifting it up and into the contraption. “No. You can’t be serious. You can’t do this,” she pleaded. His intentions clear, she panicked. Tears threatened

to flow, but she refused. How dare he? Swinging her left arm, she slapped him before he caught it. "Stop it! This is wrong."

Both hands chained, he crouched in front of her rocking back on his heels. Almost as if he took great satisfaction in his restraint of her. Holding her chin, he held her to look at him, she closed her eyes. His lips crashed onto hers, moving them over hers. He smashed them into hers roughly. After the initial surprise of him mistaking her closing her eyes for an invitation to assault her lips faded, the same warm, uncomfortable feeling surfaced. The feeling made her want to succumb to his attentions, trusting somehow that he held the secret to alleviate her unfamiliar, but heavenly discomfort.

Resting her head against the wood, she allowed him access to her mouth. The more she submitted, the more she found she liked it. He reduced his aggression, licking and sucking her top, then her lower lip. Lifting her right leg, she bent it, rubbing against him. Feeling something hard, bulging from between his legs, she opened her eyes. It stretched the material and lay up against his lower abdomen. She realized what it must be. Shoving her leg back down, she turned her face away from him. She knew about the anatomy of men but hearing and experiencing were two different things. The reality of how close she came to engaging in sex with a stranger, a pirate, distressed her.

"What's wrong, Angel? Did you think you were the only one enjoying our interaction?" he asked.

Keeping her face turned, she didn't have a response. She stumbled way out of her comfort zone in his presence. Her mother and the women she kept company with detested their marital obligation, what if she did too? Here she thought she wanted this, believing so anyway, but what if she hated it?

"I'm thinking you may think twice before lying to me in the future. If I was nothing but a dishonorable man, I would take it from you, not caring if you received any enjoyment.

Priscilla.” Hearing him address her by name, not Angel, she turned her head back, looking at him. “When you give me the gift of your virginity, I will take it not only with my pleasure a priority, but yours as well. As I plan on repeating it.” Rising to his feet, he left her, left her to reflect on all that occurred since she left the protection of her father for a peaceful stroll on the beach that morning.

One would think he indulged in a day of rum and ale with his mates, but he couldn't blame either on his irrational decision. He got lucky Archer didn't call him out when he took notice of a woman on deck and the sails lifted. To make it worse, he had to go and rescue her from the crew under the watchful eye of their captain.

He needed to figure out how he planned to handle this without losing his dignity, and the respect of Archer and the men. He couldn't blame the crew for noticing her and wishing to enjoy the sight of her. Hell, that's what got him in this predicament to begin with.

Passing the beach, her hair caught his eye. The mass of radiant gold hung to her waist, and it sparkled in the sun. Dismounting, he snuck up in the thicket admiring her. The sea rushed her ankles and witnessing a woman of such beauty appreciating the sea, of something he loved as he did, fascinated him. Retaining it, her, dominated him. A woman never intrigued him as the sea did—until her.

Once she turned her head and he got a glimpse of the curiosity and enjoyment on her face, he wanted to be the source and reap the rewards of such gratification. He thought he appealed to her too. With her trapped in his arm at the beach, she looked into his eyes. She didn't shrink away from him in fear. And after their encounter in the cabin, then below,

she proved it. Her reception to his physical attentions fueled his desire, but he feared he stole a lady, not a local of the island, and he planned to treat her as such. To a degree. When he ridded himself of her, he hoped she held some fond memories. He knew he would.

If he couldn't control her and her mouth, his intentions may fail. It was her choice.