

COMPROMISING LIAISONS



MELINDA BARRON



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Melinda Barron
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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.

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

For all the ways we think of them as prim and proper, many Victorians enjoyed reading erotica. They had tales in all different forms, including letters, poems, books and stories. A famous one of those, *The Pearl*, was published around 1880 in periodical form. I first discovered this collection of publications some time ago while looking through the stacks at a local bookstore. Yes, I'm a bookstore hound and can be found in there quite a lot, spending afternoons browsing the shelves to see what is new, or what I have missed in the past.

The Pearl intrigued me, and I bought a copy and took it home. I won't mention the look I got from the clerk whose eyebrows shot up just a little. Okay, I mentioned it. Seeing his reaction was half the fun of buying the book. The writing in these tales is not the cleanest I've ever seen, but the stories intrigued me. Most of them, anyway. Some of them mortified me, if you want the truth. But I read it the whole way through, then put it on my shelf.

Sometime last year I started thinking about it again and wondered how it would figure into a story idea that had popped into my mind, about a prim, Victorian virgin who was about to wed, and didn't know anything about what would happen between

herself and her husband. What would happen, I wondered, if she got her hands on a copy of *The Pearl*. That would certainly open her eyes. And what would happen to the lady who gave her the copy? And then after that, what would happen to the brother who had guarded the prim Lady so carefully, but was now looking for love of his own?

As I always do, I discussed my ideas with my friend Chet. Over Chinese food I related my story idea to Chet. I remember the way his eyebrows shot up, much like the clerk in the bookstore all those years ago. Only Chet was not thinking, "Where did this come from," as I'm sure the clerk was as he examined my purchase. Chet was thinking, and told me in no uncertain terms, "I want to read it when you're done." That was right before he asked to borrow my copy of *The Pearl*.

I hope you enjoy the tales of the three couples in *Compromising Liaisons*. These stories were so much fun to create. Their lives are all changed forever by reading *The Duke's Mistress*, a collection of letters written by Anonymous in the late 1800s. In our time, though, the letters were actually written by yours truly in what I hope is a good parody of Victorian erotica and are included throughout this book. The letters do not speak of a love affair, but more of a sexual journey between two people.

Cheers, and happy reading,

Mel

27 JULY 1880

My dear _____,

It has been too long since our last visit. I hope things are well for you in the north. Here in London I have what can only be considered a new lease on life. I have become mistress to the Duke of _____. In an effort to protect him, should this letter be intercepted, I will only refer to him as His Grace. I am sure you understand my need for discretion.

Despite that need, though, I have a compelling desire to tell my story. And I know that you, dear cousin, will appreciate it in all its glory. Do you remember all those years ago when we discussed what happens between a man and woman? When I married I found we were far from the mark, as I am sure you did, also. My late husband was cold, and only coupled with me when necessary.

I can only thank the God above that no children came from that union, since he left me a widow so soon after our marriage. I cannot fathom how it would be to take care of a child on my own. But I digress, and you do not want to hear me complain about my lot in life. What you want is the details of His Grace, and those I shall give you.

I met him a scant month after my mourning period ended. He is a most handsome man, extremely tall with very broad shoulders. His dark

hair is worn a little bit longer than the fashion, but it suits his rugged looks. He has yet to marry, and when he does I know it will not be to me. I am far below his station, but that has not kept him from making me his.

It was at a boring party for the Duchess of _____ that I first saw him. He was across the room, standing in a group of people. His gaze was focused on me and I felt as if I were on fire. It was almost as if he could see what I looked like in my shift. Perhaps it was my red hair that attracted him, I am not sure. All I know is that after a while it became warm in there. I went outside to the gardens and he was beside me in seconds, his hand on my back, propelling me toward the maze.

I did not speak, nor try to dissuade him. Once we were concealed from prying eyes he stopped me, pushing me back against the hedges. His hands found my breasts immediately, squeezing and exploring.

"Your Grace," I said in shock, even though I did not try to move away. His touch was masterful and sent bolts of desire through my body. My last husband's touch had never sent me on edge like this. The Duke's hands explored me, moving from one mound to another before he stepped back.

"Lift your skirts."

I did not even think of disobeying him. I gathered the material quickly, baring my pantalets to him. He tugged on them, exposing me to his view. He got down on his haunches, his hands now touching my pussy.

"Your cunt is wet." I inhaled sharply as he touched me. "Do you wish to fuck, Melody?" (That is not my name, of course. His Grace used my real name. But I created Melody, in case this letter is ever found. Do you like it, my dear friend? It is quite fun to be able to name yourself. And I realize you are probably worried about me sending this salacious tale through the post to you. I have opted for a messenger service. And am delivering it to _____ inside another envelope and asking him to pass it on to you. There will be no names on the missive you receive. If you believe the missives have been read, please advise me of it and I will think of another way to deliver my letters to you. I suppose, though, that you want me to get back to the tale, and so I shall.)

"Yes." I felt as if I could barely speak. He stood, his hands still stroking my folds.

"Yes to what?" His smile was predatory, and it made me want him inside me even more.

"I want to fuck, Your Grace."

"Turn and bend over." I obeyed immediately. He lifted my skirts over my hips as I grasped the bushes to keep myself steady. When I felt his prick rub against my backside I almost fled. He is much larger than _____, and I wondered what it would feel like inside me.

I soon found out, for he wasted no time in entering me, his prick sliding into my cunny, spreading me wide. He grasped my hips and fucked me silently, with the sounds of his flesh slapping against mine the only sounds in the night air. Well, that and his grunts. He took me hard, and his climax was much longer in coming than _____'s ever was. It seemed to take forever, and the longer he thrust inside me the more the pressure, and pleasure, built.

"Touch your clit." The order shocked me and when I did not immediately respond he slapped my behind. "Do as I say. Stroke it, make yourself spend."

I was so aroused there was no way I could not obey. The hard nubbin responded to my touch immediately and when I climaxed he slapped my behind again, then left my body, spilling his seed over my backside.

He did not let go of my hips, though, holding me in place for a long moment that grew very uncomfortable. When he finally moved it was to wipe his kerchief across me, cleaning up his leavings. I righted myself on shaky legs and turned to him. His face was flush and the desire in his eyes had not abated.

"I will send herbs to your home, to prevent pregnancy so that I might spill inside you."

His words shocked me almost as much as what had just happened. He meant for us to couple again?

"Take them daily. I will visit you tomorrow." He was tucking his prick back into his breeches. "Wear nothing but your corset and stockings."

When I did not respond he narrowed his gaze at me. "Did you enjoy what we just did?"

"Very much, Your Grace."

“Good, then follow my directions. I will be there around one in the afternoon.” He surprised me by tipping my face up and kissing me gently. Then he left. I righted my clothes, looking around and wondering if anyone had seen us, had watched our quick, hard coupling.

The experience left me frazzled, and back at the party I could barely make small talk with the other guests. I had arrived with _____, and you know how she can be. She immediately noticed my flush and took it to mean something was wrong. That excuse was all she needed to whisk me from the affair and to my home where servants drew me a hot bath. I soaked for a long time, my cunny sore from its hard use tonight, a feeling it has not experienced since _____’s death.

Will I prepare myself for him tomorrow? I can almost see you shouting the question, dear friend. I can only say that yes, I will. And if this letter reaches you as it should, I will write to you of my next experience, if that is what you wish.

Take care, _____. I close this now so I can sleep and get it to the messenger in the morning. Please write to me soon for I miss you so.

*I remain your dear friend and cousin, and can now sign myself,
The Duke’s Lover*

PART I



A Compromised Position

CHAPTER 1



“He did not even try to kiss me.”

Margaret ran the brush through her charge’s hair. She waited for her to continue her laments, and then cleared her throat when the silence ensued. Usually the maid performed this chore, but Vesta had been in such a sullen frame of mind when she had left for her round of parties that evening that Mazie had waited up for her, to see if her mood had lightened, or if she was still feeling blue, which was obviously the case.

“Vesta, he is a Duke, and you will be his Duchess in a few short months. He shows you respect by not kissing you.”

“But I wanted him to kiss me.”

Despite her age of one and twenty, Vesta sounded like a spoiled child, and Margaret had half a mind to tell her so. Instead she continued to brush the curls that had taken more than an hour to create earlier that evening.

“Do you think he considers me an old maid? Maybe he regrets entering into our engagement.”

“Nonsense. His Grace is quite taken with you. I can see it in his eyes when you walk into a room.”

“All I see is a man who barely touches my elbow, or who takes

my hand only long enough to brush his lips against my glove-covered skin. Is that what I am doomed to endure?"

Margaret placed the brush on the vanity, then knelt down next to the younger woman. "Tell me what is troubling you, and I do not mean just the missed kiss you were expecting. Something is bothering you very deeply."

Vesta's deep sigh made Margaret think the young woman would burst into tears. Instead she straightened her shoulders, then cut her gaze down. "Do you remember my friend Elizabeth?"

"Of course. She is with child, right? Barely a few months along."

"Yes. She's been married to the Duke of Beck for six months now. Earlier this week she relayed to me how horrible it was to lay with a man, how it hurts and is degrading. I wanted the Duke to kiss me so I could see if what she said was the truth."

Margaret tried, and failed, to suppress a laugh. When Vesta glared at her, she put her hand in front of her mouth, clearing her throat and swallowing more laughter.

"I am sorry, little one. You wanted to judge how it is to take a man into your body by being kissed? There is quite a difference, and I can assure you it can be quite pleasurable, both the latter and the former."

Vesta's eyebrows shot up in surprise and Margaret laughed again. "You must take my word on this. Being with a man can bring great pleasure, and I believe the Duke of Waterford will be a masterful lover. Perhaps your friend is trying to frighten you."

"Why would she do that?"

"Maybe because you are marrying a young, virile man, while she is married to a man almost her father's age?"

Vesta giggled and Margaret stood, putting her hands on her hips. "Do you feel better now?"

"Yes, a little." She gazed up, her eyes now full of mischief. "Tell me what it feels like."

Margaret shook her head. "You will find out soon enough."

"Perhaps I should ask the Duke. Do you think it would shock him if I asked to see his manhood?"

This time Margaret's laughter was loud, and she feared she would wake anyone who might be sleeping nearby. Images of her late husband flittered through her mind. He would love this conversation. Jonathan loved everything about sex.

"Yes, I think it would shock him. Although, if he is at all like my Jonathan, he might enjoy it. Jonathan was a passionate man, and he enjoyed playing games where carnal pleasure was concerned."

"What sort of games?" Vesta stood, her eyes now full of wonder. "You must tell me."

"No, it would not be proper. I have said too much as it is. It is time for the future Duchess of Waterford to go to bed."

Vesta narrowed her gaze and pursed her lips. "I demand that you tell me."

In response, Margaret laughed again. "A very good impression of an angry Duchess. But you are still just Lady Vesta Richmond right now, and I am your paid companion who can order you to bed. Now go."

"I'd rather talk about being with a man. What does he look like... down there? Elizabeth said it was like a skinny sausage."

Margaret put her hands in front of her mouth. "You really must stop or my laughter will wake the entire household. Go to bed." To emphasize her command she walked to the bed, tossing back the heavy blankets. "Come along, you."

"You are not that much older than I am, you know. Only eight years."

"What does that have to do with anything?"

"You are ordering me to retire like a child. I want to talk. Please." She put her hands together in a prayer gesture. "My mother is long dead and my father's wife couldn't care less about me, or my brother. Who will tell me what to do on my wedding night if you do not?"

"Your husband will instruct you in the art of lovemaking, just as

mine did for me.” Margaret patted the mattress, smiling as Vesta crossed the room, taking off her robe as she walked. She sat with her back against the headboard.

Margaret placed the covers over Vesta’s lap and sat down next to her. “Do you want to know what my mother told me when I wed Jonathan?”

“Yes.” Vesta nodded vigorously and Margaret smiled.

“She said it was a wife’s duty to let her husband slake his lust on her body. She said it would be unpleasant, but that I would have to lie back and endure. Of course what she did not know was that Jonathan and I had already consummated our love, several times over, and that I enjoyed it very much.”

It was Vesta’s turn to giggle. “You are a naughty woman. It is a good thing my brother did not know of this when he brought you here.”

“Yes, and if he found out now he would put me on the streets. This information is meant for you and you alone.” Her heart beat just a little faster as she watched Vesta consider her words.

“Of course.” Vesta made an X over her heart to show she would keep the secret forever. “I am thrilled with this new knowledge. You must tell me everything. Please.”

The pleading tone in her voice made Margaret hesitate. She could understand Vesta’s fears of the unknown, but by the same token, she knew she was placing herself in a very precarious position by discussing this issue with her charge. If Lord Melbrook, Vesta’s older brother and Margaret’s employer, found out, he would surely sack her.

Still, she felt a great affinity for the young woman whose mother had died so young and whose father was more interested in his young wife than in his two children. As soon as the engagement had been settled, the Marquess of Brightly had left for the continent, saying he would not be back until the day before his daughter’s wedding. Calvin Richmond, the Earl of Melbrook and the future Marquess of Brightly, was more of a father to his sister than

a brother, taking care of her every need and making sure she fared well before her wedding.

She could only imagine how Vesta felt, with no mother to give her even the untrue words Margaret's mother had whispered to her all those years ago. Losing one's virginity could be frightening, Margaret knew. She had not been frightened, but then she had Jonathan, a man she had loved, and trusted, with her whole heart.

Her body quivered at the thought of him, of his masterful hands stroking her, of his hard cock inside her. It had only been three years since his death, and yet, it felt like an eternity had passed, as if time had slowed to almost a stop without him in her life.

"Margaret." She turned as Vesta called her name. "Will you guide me?"

"I do not know, Vesta. You must give me a little while to think on this. I cannot tell you everything I know about what occurs between a husband and wife without first considering my thoughts."

Vesta's lips turned downward, but Margaret would not allow that to sway her. She needed to think, to reflect on the consequences of imparting information of a sexual nature to Vesta. The talks would be between the two of them, true, but some things had a way of becoming known to others, and if that happened...

"I will give you my decision on your request tomorrow."

Instead of pouting or trying to force the issue, Vesta nodded, something that surprised Margaret very much. She had expected her charge to pout until she got her way. Before she could do just that, Margaret stood and indicated Vesta should lay flat.

The younger woman snuggled under the covers and Margaret tucked her in, smiling as she backed away from the bed. "Sweet dreams, Vesta. And do not fret about your first encounter with the Duke. You are worrying about something that can be quite beautiful, if you approach the situation in the right frame of mind."

Before Vesta could respond, Margaret quickly made her way across the floor, disappearing behind the door that connected her

room to Vesta's. She shut the door softly and leaned against it, her heart beating quickly.

"Jonathan." She put her hand over her heart and closed her eyes. "What should I do? I need you here to advise me."

Soft moonlight filtered through a slot in the curtains and gave her enough light to cross the room. She lay down on her side, not bothering to take off her dress or shoes. The fire had not been banked and the room was chilly, but she didn't want to get under the blankets, instead wrapping her arms around herself and closing her eyes as her thoughts pounded through her mind.

When she had taken the job as companion to the Marquess' daughter, she had never thought to have a conversation such as the one that had just transpired. She was not sure what to tell Vesta. Despite her age, it was obvious no one had told her a thing about what took place between a husband and wife, except her friend Elizabeth, who had fed her a pack of lies.

What should Margaret tell her? Better yet, what right did she have to tell her anything at all? She was a companion, meant to keep the girl company on her outings. Vesta had few friends, and when she wished to go to the museum, or spend an afternoon in the park, Margaret always accompanied her. It was not hard work, and it kept her fed and clothed and out of the cold. If she spoke with Vesta about sexual intercourse and her brother found out... Margaret shivered to think what would happen. At the very least, a position in another household after Vesta was married would be out of the question.

"You will ruin the bedding, putting your shoes up there like that." She opened her eyes to see Jonathan leaning against the bedpost, a smile lighting up his handsome face.

"You are right, of course." She sat up, her fingers working the laces of her boots quickly. She let first one, then the other drop to the floor before placing her head back on the pillow.

"And your dress? Remember when I said I wanted to see you

wearing absolutely nothing in bed? Have things changed so much in the three years I have been gone?"

"You were alive then. Now you are a figment of my overwrought imagination." She looked back at him. "Unless you are a ghost."

He shrugged and winked, and a lump formed in Margaret's throat. The apparition standing before her was the Jonathan she remembered, his dark hair cresting over his shoulders, his eyes alight with amusement. It was so different from the man Jonathan had become during the last few months of his life, when the sickness had taken hold of him.

"Have you come to advise me?"

"Were I able, I would do more than that." He sat on the bed and put his hand on her thigh. She could swear she felt the heat of his body, the warmth of his touch through her thick skirt.

"You think I should talk to her?"

"I think you should follow your heart, which will tell you not to let the young woman be fearful of something that can be so magnificent."

She nodded, inhaling sharply when his hand slid up her leg. She focused on him, frightened that if she closed her eyes to savor his touch he would disappear.

"Do you remember the first time we were together?"

"Oh yes, Jonathan. I remember it quite well." She shifted to her back, her hands cupping her breasts. Her nipples hardened against her shift and she moaned softly, wanting to feel Jonathan's fingers, and lips, on her tight buds. "You were so gentle, yet so masterful and strong. When I think of it and close my eyes, I can still feel you inside me, your hardness bringing us both to climax."

"And I can feel you, Margaret, so soft and sweet and willing. I remember your soft cry of pain when you gifted me with your maidenhead, and I remember the way you held me tight as the feeling passed into pleasure."

“Jonathan.” Hot tears broke free from her eyes and snaked down the sides of her face, wetting her hair.

“Do not cry for our loss, my love. Instead use your knowledge to help your new charge have a chance at the happiness we shared. Teach her to be open and honest with her new husband, as we were with each other. Help her not to be afraid.”

“You are right, of course.” She wiped tears away and sat up. “It is best to talk with each other and to be honest.”

A dark cloud seemed to pass over his face, and she sniffled. “What is wrong?”

“Tell me why you have broken your vow to me.”

Pain seized her at his words. She didn’t have to ask what he meant. “Jonathan, I..”

“You promised me you would not die with me, do you remember? I asked you to take another husband and you agreed. Yet you have closed yourself off from life, doing nothing more than playing nursemaid to young, rich women.”

“I have to have money to live, and my choices are limited.” She didn’t want her words to seem accusing and prayed he didn’t see it that way. The look on his face told her he did not.

“You are right, of course, and I am sorry that I did not provide better for you. That is my shame.”

“No, I do not blame you. You did not want to die.”

“No, I did not. I wanted to stay with you forever.” He caressed her thigh and she sighed again. “But sometimes we do not get everything we want in life. Things will change, though, and you must again give me your word. Allow yourself to love again, Margaret. Promise me.”

She glanced at him and gasped. In the thin strip of moonlight, he looked almost transparent. Was this really Jonathan, her love? Or was it a figment of her imagination, as she feared?

“Promise me. It pains me to see you alone.”

“I promise, Jonathan.” Even as she said the words, she knew there was little chance for her to keep the promise. After Vesta

married, she would have to find another position. She had little time to try and find herself a husband.

"I don't know what to say to her," Margaret said softly. "You knew so much, and I treasured every word."

"You know those same things now, my love."

"Yes, but how do I tell her what to expect? It is different for me to talk to another woman."

"Perhaps you could show her." His gaze drifted toward the trunk in the corner of the room and Margaret followed its path. She knew exactly what he was talking about. It had been years since she had looked at the items in the trunk. When she had packed up their belongings, she had considered throwing them on the rubbish fire. But her hands had stilled before she could toss them into the flames. They represented too many wonderful memories of her time with Jonathan.

She nodded at the trunk. "You are right of course, I..." She turned back to where Jonathan had stood, only to find an empty space.

Tears flooded her eyes again as she lay back down and hugged a pillow, her mind wishing it would magically transform into her husband so he could hold her close the night through. He had provided her with the answer she sought, and she would follow his advice. About everything. She loved Jonathan with all her heart, but he was right. It was time for her to live again. Now all she had to do was find someone to help her keep her promise to him.