

The Kidnapped Bride by Heather Hiestand

Excerpt

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“Ye are going to do as you are told,” Dougal said. “You have lived one misadventure after another since running away, and that is at an end. I’m taking you back tae your brothers so they can decide what to do with you.”

“My life is none of your business.”

He took her upper arm. “I’ve been paid very well to make it my business, Lady Elizabeth. And home is where you’re going.”

She attempted to wrench her arm away, but his grip was too strong. “Let go of me, you beast.”

He gripped her tighter in response. “My lady hoyden, you will obey. There is no other alternative.”

She swayed in closer to him, unable to resist his grip, then fixed her gaze on him. Something in his eyes softened. Just as he must have thought she’d given into him, she stomped on his foot, hard.

“Ow,” she cried, as the pain from stomping on hard leather reverberated up her unprotected foot.

He glanced down. “It’s no use attempting tae hurt a man wearing shoes when you haven’t any yourself.”

She was still too much of a lady to swear, but she opened her mouth to give him the

tongue-lashing he deserved.

Instead of letting her speak, he grinned at her, then kissed her full on the mouth.

His fingers slid up her arm to her shoulder as his mouth pressed against hers. Distracted by his fingers caressing her cheek, she didn't close her lips fast enough, and his tongue swooped in to stroke hers in a firefly dance.

Her attempt to scream did nothing but open her mouth more, and bend her head back so he could plunder more thoroughly. She grabbed his fingers and wrenched them away from her jaw. His breath caressed hers as his tongue broke contact.

"How dare you!" she yelled when he pulled back. She could feel puffiness where his lips had suckled on hers. The kiss had lasted but a second, yet he'd taken her mouth thoroughly, even giving her a taste of the maple syrup on his tongue.

He hadn't lost his grin. She wondered if she should kick him in the knee, but Freddie had told her that to be effective, you had to kick someone in the back of the knee, and she stood in front of him. How few tricks she knew to avoid a man.

"I take it you've been kissed before, Lady Elizabeth."

"Why do you say that?" She dropped his hand.

"Ye don't seem nearly shocked enough." He winked at her.