



THE LADY OF BOLTON HILL
BY AUTHOR ELIZABETH CAMDEN

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Bonus Content – Deleted Scenes

Chapter Two

When Clara awoke the next morning, their maid, Josephine, awaited her in the parlor.
“Your father wants to see you.”

Clara’s heart skipped a beat. Had he found out about her truancy the night before? If someone had witnessed her breaking into the Conservatory, they would have gone directly to her father. She would survive whatever punishment he meted out, but what on earth would become of Daniel?

“Isn’t he meeting with all those political allies? Senator Bronson?”

“No, they’ve all gone to a meeting with the mill owners downtown. Your father is waiting for you in his study.”

What excuse could she give for breaking into the city’s private property? No one on the planet could possibly understand how essential it was for her to be with Daniel last night, but that would not matter to the city. Was it possible to go to prison for breaking and entering? And did they even have prisons for girls her age?

But as her father nursed a cup of morning tea at his desk, he seemed to know nothing about her excursion. All he wanted to know about was Daniel’s eye.

“I spoke with his mother after the funeral yesterday,” her father said. “She said the doctor was not yet able to make a determination about the state of the boy’s eye until the swelling goes

down. I got the feeling there is no money for treatment, even if there is anything that can be done.”

Clara stared at the oriental carpet beneath her feet. This carpet probably cost more than Daniel’s father would have earned in an entire year. And now Daniel would be responsible for supporting his mother and three little sisters.

“Probably not,” Clara said.

Her father rose to his feet. “I don’t want the boy to go without. It’s shameful that Forsythe Industries won’t pay for the boy’s medical treatment, but I am in a position to do so. Next time you see Daniel, tell him he is to send his medical bills to me, and I will take care of them. If he loses the eye, I will fund a glass one for him. The boy shouldn’t have to live the rest of his life with a patch.”

Clara blanched at the thought. It was stupid, but she assumed that Daniel would bounce back from the injury. He always seemed so capable and confident, and the thought of him being permanently damaged had never occurred to her. “Of course I’ll tell him. Should I go now?”

Her father raised his brows. “School today, Clara. This can wait until the weekend. Although the boy works on Saturdays, so you’ll need to wait until he gets off his shift...or swing by the mill and leave a message for him.”

It was hard to wait for the weekend to tell Daniel the good news about getting treatment for his eye. Even thinking about the pain he must be feeling was awful.

When Saturday came, Clara could not wait until the end of Daniel’s shift to tell him the good news, so she convinced their driver to take her to the steel mill where Daniel worked. The broad, leafy green streets of Bolton Hill soon gave way to the business district lined with government buildings and imposing office buildings and banks. As they traveled further south the landscape grew stark, with industrial mills and iron foundries dominating the landscape. Not a trace of greenery softened this soot-stained, concrete world. Everything seemed louder as the wheels of the carriage bounced against the hard street, the sound echoing off the buildings.

When she arrived at the Forsythe Steel Mill, she was told Daniel no longer worked there. Her jaw dropped in disbelief. “They didn’t fire him, did they?”

The clerk shook his head. “He came in this morning and quit. Didn’t give any reason.”

Clara would not have been more surprised had the man told her the moon had fallen from the sky. Daniel *couldn’t* quit, not with his entire family depending on him. She knew where

Daniel lived and gave the driver instructions on how to get there. It was a tough neighborhood, one she did not particularly like visiting. Clara shifted into the center of the leather bench, curling away from the windows and the sight of rowdy boys playing in the street. The brick tenement houses of the mill workers were built only a few feet back from the street, and Clara held the sleeve of her dress over her nose. It wasn't a horrible smell...just a wet, concrete smell that made her long for home. She always felt like such a sissy every time she came here.

She still had difficulty believing that Daniel would quit his job, but when she arrived at his row house, she learned it was true. Daniel sat at the kitchen table of their rented flat, making sure two-year old Katie swallowed her oatmeal.

"I'm done slaving for Alfred Forsythe," he said. "I've had an offer from Ian Carr to go work on his railroad. He needs someone to keep his signal operations in working order. It's a better job."

"Does it pay better?" Clara asked.

Daniel kept spooning oatmeal into Katie's waiting mouth. He was still wearing the black patch over one eye, but the bruises on his forehead and temple had faded to pale smudges of yellow and brown. "It pays well enough. We won't starve."

Clara's gaze flew to Mrs. Tremain for confirmation, but the woman looked too sick with anxiety to respond. She was trembling as she shook her head and drifted back to the stove. Daniel saw the look his mother shot Clara, and his jaw tightened.

"It's a good job," he said. "A responsible job. Someone needs to keep the signal boxes synced up with the telegraphs so the trains don't collide. I'll be good at that."

But Mrs. Tremain looked heartsick. "They offered Daniel a raise to stay on at Forsythe, and he said no. Our heads are barely above water, and he still said no." Mrs. Tremain never looked up from the pot she was stirring, even though there was no flame beneath the pot, but it didn't seem as if Mrs. Tremain was even aware. Clara's gaze traveled over the peeling wallpaper and threadbare clothes hanging on Mrs. Tremain's narrow frame. Even the smock little Katie wore looked thin to the point of falling to pieces.

"Daniel, what's going on?" Clara asked softly.

He dropped Katie's spoon with a clatter and rose to his feet. "Come on, I've got laundry on the line to collect outside." He snatched a basket and strode from the room without looking back, leaving Clara to scurry after him. He bounded down the stairs of the three-story tenement

without looking back at her. At the bottom of the stairs he shoved a heavy door open and headed out to the laundry lines stretched across the alley.

“Don’t talk about this stuff in front of my mother, okay?” Daniel said as soon as she caught up with him. “She has enough to worry about as it is.”

“She’s heartsick that you are leaving a safe job for one you don’t know anything about. And who is this Ian Carr person? I’ve never heard of him.”

Daniel grabbed at the baby clothes dangling from the line and flung them into the basket. “He’s from Scotland and has a railroad. A small one, just from the Baltimore docks to the north end of the city. About twelve miles. But there’s a lot of traffic on it and it has prospects.”

Clara bit at her thumbnail, a nervous habit she needed to break, but not now. Daniel was on the verge of plunging into an economic disaster and she couldn’t back down. “My father says all these small railroad men are on the verge of bankruptcy. That it costs a fortune to build a railroad and they’re all up to their eyeballs in debt.”

“True.”

“And this Ian Carr...is he in debt, too?”

“Probably. I don’t really know.” The sheet he pulled from the line was so thin Clara could see through parts of it. Daniel wadded it up and tossed it on top of the baby clothes.

“But you had a safe job with Forsythe Industries. You can’t just walk away—”

Daniel threw the basket down. “For the love of God, would you just drop it? I can’t work for Alfred Forsythe. I’ll never work for that man again. *He killed my father.*”

Clara flinched at the violence in Daniel’s voice. Never had he spoken to her so fiercely, and it frightened her. She gathered her resolve and tried to speak as gently as she could. “Daniel, it was an accident.”

“No, it wasn’t. The safety valves on those boilers were defective. The foreman told me that the other day. Forsythe has known about it ever since he bought them, but he was too cheap to get them replaced. It was only a matter of time before one of them blew, and it was my father who was tending the boilers when it happened. Alfred Forsythe might as well have pulled the trigger.”

“Oh.” The word sounded so tiny, but what else could she say? It wasn’t a tragic accident that caused Mr. Tremain’s death, it was one man’s greed.

“I’d just as soon kill him as look at him,” Daniel bit out. “And the worst part is there is *nothing* I can do about it. Nothing I can say that will punish him, because he’ll deny everything and the evidence blew up in the accident. I swear on my father’s grave, if it’s the last thing I do in my life, I will think of some way to grind Alfred Forsythe into the dust. I hate him, Clara,” Daniel said in a voice that made her blanch at its ferocity. “It fills my throat and it floods my brain until I can’t think of anything else except how I can bring Forsythe down and crush him to bits like he crushed my father.”

Once Daniel set his mind on something, trying to dissuade him would be as useless as trying to stop the incoming tide. That clever brain would toil away until he had accomplished whatever he set out to do. He was the most intelligent and fiercely competent person she had ever met, and coming from the Endicott family, that was saying a lot.

Something had caught Daniel’s attention as he stared down the street. The glower on his face drifted away and he straightened his shoulders as he used one hand to brush the hair from his brow. The look of anger dropped from his face, replaced by an odd sort of bedazzlement.

“Nellie Wilkerson,” he called out, his voice bouncing off the concrete ally. “Please tell me you’ve got blueberry tarts in that basket.”

Clara swiveled around to see what had snapped Daniel out of his dark mood. Nellie looked at least seventeen years old and had a large bosom too big for her tight dress. But she had a nice smile, and she was beaming it directly at Daniel as she held out a basket brimming with fresh tarts. “You know I do,” she said.

“Great.” Daniel practically swallowed one whole, and helped himself to another. “You got any in there for my friend Clara? She needs fattening up.”

Nellie held the basket out to Clara, but she refused. If blueberry tarts would make her grow a chest like Nellie’s, she’d be swallowing them morning, noon, and night. But somehow accepting a gift from this girl whom Daniel was devouring with his eyes didn’t feel right. No one noticed that Clara wasn’t eating as Nellie took a seat beside Daniel on the stoop. Gone was the talk about jobs or the future or Mr. Tremain’s death. Nellie was saying something about a shipment of strawberries that had just arrived at the market on the corner, and Daniel was hanging on her every word like it was the gospel being handed down to mankind.

It was ridiculous. How could someone normally so smart turn into this tongue-tied idiot? This wasn’t the real Daniel and she didn’t like it. Nellie started yammering on about how

Daniel's patch made him look like a pirate. Instead of switching the topic like he did with her, Daniel hammed it up. He sprung off the stoop and wrapped his arm around Nellie's waist, threatening to carry her off to a *fate worse than death*.

Mention of his eye patch made Clara remember why she had come in the first place. "Daniel, about your eye..."

Daniel released Nellie's waist and looked back at her. "What about it, Clara-bell?"

"My father said he will pay for you to get it fixed. He said to get whatever treatment you need and have all the doctor's bills sent to our house. He'll take care of everything."

There was a tightening around Daniel's mouth and the humor drained from his face as he stared at her. Clara didn't know what she had said wrong, but she could tell by the way he was glaring at her from his one good eye that he was annoyed. He should be happy, shouldn't he?

"Did you hear that, Daniel?" Nellie asked. "You can get your eye fixed for free...I think that's just terrific."

"Yeah. Terrific." Daniel shoved his hands in his pockets and looked ready to spit nails. "Tell your father I don't need any help from him. I can pay my own way."

Clara knew that was a lie, but she didn't dare contradict him. He looked angry enough as it was, and it only stood to reason that he must be worried sick about money troubles. The very least she could do was set his mind at rest about that.

"Maybe you don't need my father's money for your eye, but he could probably help out with a new job," she said cautiously. She was on thin ice—so thin she could hear it crackling in her ears—but Daniel was about to take the most reckless gamble of his life, and she couldn't sit back and watch him implode without trying to help. "There are a lot of companies that are probably safer than working for a new person like Ian Carr, and my father could help out with that. He knows everyone and could make sure you get settled into a safe job."

Daniel's glare did not soften. "Nellie and I are about to fold this pile of laundry, and it is a two-person job, Clara. You can run on home now."

Her mouth hung open in shock, but Daniel just kept looking at her with that hard stare. She didn't know what to say, and Nellie looked so perfectly adorable sitting there with her pretty smile and full bust and blueberry tarts that Daniel had devoured. Clara was just an annoying mouse who was spoiling their fun. She wanted to say something to make Daniel not so mad at her, but the lump in her throat was too big for her to talk through.

She gave up like a coward and ran away.

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Clara wanted to escape directly into the sanctuary of her room, but as luck would have it, her father was coming out of his study as she was bounding up the stairs.

“Where are you off to in such a hurry? No kind words for your father?”

She should have said something polite and smart, but instead the truth came gushing forth. “Daniel says he doesn’t want our money and he has a pretty girlfriend and no time for me and he told me to go scam.” She made it to her bedroom and managed to slam the door before her father could command her back downstairs. She flung herself onto the fluffy pink coverlet and buried her face in its folds.

But her luck did not hold. There was a gentle knock on her door, which she ignored, but her father entered anyway. And worse, he was not even outraged on her behalf. Even after her *best friend* had spoken to her like that her own father wouldn’t take her side? Instead of righteous indignation, her father was looking at her with those “poor little Clara” eyes that implied *she* was the one who was acting foolishly, not Daniel Tremain.

He sat on the edge of her bed and patted her ankle. “Clara, a boy like Daniel has a lot of pride. It can be hard to accept money from others when all you want to do is be a man and capable of supporting yourself.”

Clara didn’t know what it felt like to ask someone for money, but knew that if she needed medical treatment, she would not be so rude as to throw it back in someone’s face. She told her father as much. “And it wouldn’t have been so bad if that awful Nellie weren’t there. He treated her better than he treated me, and I was only trying to be nice.”

“Well...” The way her father dragged out that word made it sound like he was thinking terribly important thoughts. But he didn’t say anything for the longest time. At last he met her eyes.

“Clara, I have great hopes for you as a pianist, and I think that someday you may become a very important person in the world of music. I’ve always liked Daniel because he’s such a bright lad and was someone you could share your music with, but I don’t think that he will be with you as you continue to go further in music. The two of you will walk very different paths in this life, and perhaps today was your first taste of that.”

Old people like her father could not possibly realize how vital music was to her and Daniel's very existence. Everything else in her world paled in comparison with those fleeting hours spent inside that rambling old Conservatory with Daniel at her side. "Daniel will always love music," she said. "He's the only person who really understands me, and our music will always hold us together. We've even started writing duets together and they are as good as anything Chopin wrote when he was our age."

The patting increased. "I've no doubt of that," he said with a gentle smile. "But Daniel probably isn't the best sort of person for you to start hanging all your hopes on. Perhaps it would be better if he didn't come around so much anymore."

Clara shot up in bed. Her father could not have said anything more hurtful than if he asked her to leave the house. "We *can't* ask him to stay away. Daniel needs us. He needs his music now more than ever."

"Clara, he also needs to earn a living to support his family. I'm sorry the weight of that responsibility has landed on him at such a young age, but it can't be helped. And not to put too fine a point on it, but Daniel seems to need the attention of young ladies who are more his own age."

Her father simply didn't understand. No one understood the bond she and Daniel shared. "I won't tell him he can't come. I'll never turn my back on Daniel, no matter how mean and rotten he is to me."

They hadn't even finished *The Count of Monte Cristo*. They had musical scores that were only partially completed. Daniel was her best friend and this afternoon was just a horrible fluke brought on by the pain of the last few days. Someone her father's age couldn't understand that, but Clara knew it down to the marrow of her bones that Daniel would always be the most important person in her entire life.

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"I'm sorry sir, Miss Clara and Reverend Endicott went to the Botanical Gardens today. They always go after services on Sunday." The Endicott's maid looked pained as she stared at Daniel's eye patch, scrutinizing the mottled skin that still surrounded most of the right side of his face. He was used to people staring at the patch, but hated the pity he always saw in their faces. It made him feel like a weakling.

“Not to worry, I’ll catch up with them.” Although that would mean shelling out for another trolley ticket to take him to the opposite side of town. It was worth it though. He’d handled the situation yesterday badly, and he’d rather part with a few coins for a trolley ride than part with his best friend. He hadn’t been able to stop thinking about the hurt in Clara’s cornflower blue eyes. The way he felt about Clara...he didn’t have words for it yet, but his feelings were real and pure and deep. Maybe someday he would be able to find the right words for what she meant to him, but the best he could do for now was fall back on Chopin. The magic of those sonatas and the delicacy of Chopin’s phrasing sort of came close to the way he thought about Clara.

The horse-drawn trolley brought him to the other side of Baltimore, which was like stepping into another world. Where Daniel lived there was nothing green. The streets were paved all the way to the walls of the crumbling old tenement houses, and there were no trees or even grass. Not like in Clara’s neighborhood where homes were set back almost an acre from the street, and trees sheltered the homes in a leafy green cocoon. Even so, Reverend Endicott took his family to the Botanical Gardens each week during the summers. Apparently, Reverend Endicott believed nature improved the mind and added vigor to the creative impulse, and this was supposed to motivate Clara toward even greater musical genius. Beethoven had been inspired by the forests of Germany, and Clara was supposed to learn something from being thrust into these gardens each week.

No wonder Clara felt inferior. Her father was a nationally famous preacher, and now her Aunt Helen had gained international acclaim while traveling the world to promote her literary creations. Clyde was well on his way to greatness in the medical field, and that left Clara trapped into meeting her family’s expectations to carve out a path of comparable brilliance. She tried so hard to be worthy of her father, but always came up feeling short. “I just can’t keep all that biblical history straight,” she had once confessed to him. “Is it the Philistines who battled the Israelites? Or the Philippians? I’m not really sure of the difference!”

Privately, Daniel thought Clara’s father was a bully, always pushing Clara and making her feel inadequate like that. Of course he would never say that to Clara, who thought Lloyd Endicott was a gift to the world straight from the Lord’s very own hands.

The horse-drawn trolley left him off directly outside the Botanical Gardens, which featured an immense, glass-encased garden filled with tropical plants and wildly spectacular

flowers. He inhaled the warm, damp smells of the earth as he strode across the lawn toward the greenhouse when he saw Clara wandering amidst a rose garden. Her jaw dropped when she spotted him, as surely this was the last place she ever expected to see him. Before he met Clara, Daniel hadn't even known places like this existed. His face split into a grin as she scampered across the lawn to meet him, hauling her skirts up almost to her knees in her race toward him.

"The maid at your house told me you'd be here," he said.

"We come every Sunday," Clara said. "Father thinks exposing me to nature might make me the next Beethoven."

"If nature is going to make you brilliant, I suppose he ought to ship you to the Amazon with Clyde when he goes down next year."

Clara stifled a giggle. "Don't give him any ideas, or I could be packed off in the next shipping crate."

He started walking toward the greenhouse and Clara fell into step beside him. "I wanted to tell you that I'm sorry about snapping at you yesterday."

Clara waved her hand. "Oh, that's all forgotten." But he remembered the look on her face when he told her to go home. Her little face had crumpled up like a daisy crushed beneath the heel of his boot. It made him feel like dirt and the memory had been plaguing him all day.

He grabbed her hand. "It's not forgotten. I haven't forgotten it, and I doubt that you have either."

A sheen of tears pooled at the bottom of Clara's impossibly blue eyes and he hated, *hated* knowing that he had hurt her feelings. He pulled her to the bench alongside the herb garden and sat beside her. Before she sat, Clara retrieved a little piece of folded cloth from her bag and spread it on the bench. So typically Clara. . . always the epitome of dainty refinement, and he had gone smashing her feelings like a wrecking ball. "You've got to understand about Nellie," Daniel said. "She's been hankering after me forever and I kind of like her, too. But it is nothing like with you. This time next year I won't even remember what Nellie looks like, but you'll always be my Clara-bell."

Clara's cheeks flushed and the blue of her eyes deepened. She always had a hard time taking compliments, but he could tell by the way she dipped her head and one corner of her mouth curled into an embarrassed smile that his words were welcome. Someday when she grew

up a little more, Clara was going to be a real stunner. With her piles of golden hair and that heart-stopping smile, she would put girls like Nellie to shame.

“Am I forgiven, then?”

Clara elbowed him in the side. “Of course you’re forgiven. You don’t even have to ask.”

He squeezed her hand harder. “Yes, I did. You matter more to me than anyone else in the world. And I hate seeing those shadows under your eyes. You shouldn’t have wasted a moment of sleep over me.”

Clara merely shrugged. “That wasn’t your fault,” she said. “Last night Clyde put a turtle in my bed and it took me forever to get back to sleep.”

Daniel choked a little gasp. “Why did he do that?”

“Because he knows I’m afraid of turtles,” Clara admitted. “Well, afraid of anything that is slimy and alive. Or dead, for that matter.”

He couldn’t help smile as he watched Clara, the embodiment of such utter feminine perfection without a trace of guile. No doubt she had sweat bullets over getting that turtle out of her bed without squealing, but he was certain she had done it. Clara used to live in daily misery from Clyde until Daniel taught her how to pretend the pranks did not faze her. She was getting much better at facing up to her older brother, but she was still subject to his occasional harassment.

There was a long pause as she watched a ladybug crawl up the stem of a sage bush. “So are you ever going to tell me if poor Andrea survives being buried alive?” he asked. “I don’t think I can live another day without hearing the end of *The Count of Monte Cristo*.”

At Clara’s delighted nod Daniel sprang off the bush and landed on the grass at her feet. “Then I must know at once. Tell me everything.” He leaned against a tree so he could face her while she filled him in on the latest exploits of the mysterious Count. Clara’s face glowed from within, the way it always did when she was deeply engrossed in one of their adventure stories.

When he turned he could see Clara’s father, standing but a few yards away inside the greenhouse, watching them. The tilted windows near the top of the structure were levered up, meaning Revered Endicott had most likely heard everything that had been said between him and Clara. Did that account for the frown etched onto the man’s face? But their conversation had been completely harmless and surely he was just imagining things.

He smiled as he turned back to Clara. Truly, there was very little on this earth as delightful as whiling a few hours with her.

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