

Chapter One

December 1881

London

Lord Henry Sutherland's private consultation rooms took up the entirety of the third floor of his Mayfair practice. His office, where patients were first met, looked more like a gentleman's study than the home of the most fashionable doctor in London. It contained a large, mahogany desk with a scarlet leather blotter, a long mantelpiece above a well-tended fire, bookshelves crowded with leather-bound tomes; were it not for the busts of Hippocrates and Galen looking on in judgement from their places of honour above the fire and the requisite Gladstone bag containing a doctor's tools of his trade by the coat-stand next to the door, this could have been any aristocratic male's personal sanctum.

The books were medical texts, however, not account ledgers or land management guides, and there were no framed paintings by Stubbs on the wall. Instead, certificates from his college at Oxford and from his time at Edinburgh were mounted proudly, announcing his status as a medical doctor.

Past the office were other consultation rooms, the ones with the imported machinery that he had travelled to America to buy personally. Patients were not shown into these rooms unless he decided that they merited a more ... *special* attention.

A gentle knock at his office door made Henry look up from that morning's *Times*. The door opened, admitting Nurse Anderson and his next patient.

"Lady Dawson, doctor," Nurse Anderson announced, then closed the door behind her as she headed back to her desk in the waiting area where she kept a careful eye on the comfort of the ladies waiting to be attended on by the famous Doctor Sutherland.

"Ah, Lady Dawson," Henry said, standing to greet the beautiful brunette. "How have you been since our last appointment?"

"Oh, just terrible, Dr Sutherland, terrible!" she exclaimed, moving towards the examination table hidden behind a row of screens quite unbidden, shedding her hat, heavy winter coat and handbag on the way with surprising speed.

“Your nerves again?”

“Doctor, they quite ruin my life!” she told him earnestly. “I can’t eat, I can’t sleep, I can’t focus on any task, no matter how trivial. The only time my nerves are quietened is after one of your ... treatments.”

She licked her Cupid’s-bow lips lasciviously. Henry hastened to the examination table. Lady Dawson was petite and unable to clamber onto the high table unassisted. There was a small set of steps kept underneath the table for such patients, but she weighed very little and it was always a pleasure to get his hands on her trim waist.

“Let’s get you situated, shall we?”

She giggled girlishly as he boosted her up and stepped in towards her. Her legs parted for him automatically, although the full skirts and petticoats ladies of fashion wore blocked his access to her. A patient of some experience, she had left off her caged petticoat for the sake of easier access.

“Now then, Lady Dawson, do you think that you’ll be able to keep yourself still for me today as I complete your treatment?” he asked, sternly. “Or will we need to use the straps?”

She flicked her eyes towards the thick, brown leather straps that were curled neatly in their holding places at the side of the table. She bit her lip and glanced up towards him, fully aware that they both knew that her hesitance was merely an act.

She always wanted to use the straps.

“My nerves have been so bad of late, Dr Sutherland,” she said, sighing artfully. “I think you will need the straps, if the treatment is to be effective.”

“Very well then” he said, nodding briskly. “Lie back.”

She settled herself against the plush leather padding of the examination table, already wriggling in anticipation of what was to occur.

A series of cranks adjusted the height of the bed, which was actually in separate sections. A patient could be laid flat or have her pelvic region elevated, depending on what best suited his needs. More modest patients made use of a small curtain that could be pulled across the table, blocking his view of the face as he completed his treatments.

Lady Dawson had never made use of the modesty curtain.

He tightened the restraining straps around her wrists, and added the thick strap that fastened across her waist for good measure. She inhaled deeply as that was buckled into place,

and he could see her pupils begin to widen as a faint blush blossomed on her creamy skin. She'd be wet already, he knew, although the small tray prepared for this appointment by Nurse Anderson contained a bottle of lubricating liquid that would allow him to penetrate her tight channel if she wasn't.

"Knees up, Lady Dawson," he commanded. "Open your legs, please."

She was spread for him in a heartbeat, and because he knew that she enjoyed the sensation, he applied the ankle straps for good measure. Not many of his patients needed to be forced to keep their legs spread for him, but a good number enjoyed the sensation of pulling against them.

He carefully gathered her dress up around her waist, careful not to wrinkle the fine indigo silk more than could be helped. Her petticoats followed. Lady Dawson could probably be persuaded to disrobe completely, but Henry was careful to keep up appearances. No respectable doctor would ever ask a patient to strip naked for him, after all. The slit in her drawers allowed him access to her pussy easily enough, anyway.

He made a show of stepping away from her, placing the screens back across the room to create a sense of privacy. He could have locked his door, but he found the folding wooden panels useful in hiding the more obvious medical paraphernalia in his office. He also made a show of removing his coat and cufflinks and rolling up the white sleeves of his shirt to reveal the strong muscles in his forearms, knowing that Lady Dawson's impatience would do half of his work for him. He spent a good deal longer than he had to washing his hands at the small sink at the back of his office, scrubbing his short, clipped nails until they gleamed. A quick glance in the mirror over the sink showed Lady Dawson squirming in anticipation, the combination of his professional aloofness and the thick leather straps affecting her in the usual manner.

"Remain still," he ordered, coming to stand between her legs.

"Yes, doctor," she replied, her breath already coming in heavy pants.

She'd probably make herself come just by rubbing her thighs together, he thought, as he parted her folds and sought out the swollen pink bud. That would be a sight to see; perhaps he would make her do that as part of her next treatment, when her 'nerves' drove her to see him again.

Next Wednesday, if he was any judge!

She moaned as he began his careful manipulation of her. Each of his patients was different. Some only needed the very lightest of touches, while others demanded a firmer application of his hand. Lady Dawson preferred a light touch to start with, but a firm rub of her clitoris was necessary to actually bring her off. She was tight; her marriage to old Dawson had not brought about any children, which wasn't surprising when one considered the man she had married had been in his late sixties while she had been a youthful nineteen. Ten years on, her husband was frail and infirm while his nubile wife was in her prime and completely unsatisfied in her marital bed.

She was soaking wet when he fingered the entrance to her channel, but he applied a liberal amount of lubricant to his fingers anyway. His hands were strong and large, and his fingers thick. She could take two on her own, but if he were to get three of them up inside her he'd need the slickness.

She was gasping and pulling at the straps now, but Henry was careful not to rush the treatment. He would bring her to the edge twice or three times before he allowed her to orgasm – or experience paroxysm, as his smartly bound collection of medical textbooks that lined the walls of his office called it. All the texts recommended bringing forth paroxysm as soon as possible, so that the patient did not confuse this necessary medical treatment with anything as distasteful as feminine sexual pleasure. Henry preferred to draw out the experience and make his patients shudder and beg for his touch because it pleased his dominant nature to have women so completely under his control.

Why more men didn't specialise in female medicine, he had no idea. They clearly had no idea of the fun they were missing out on!

Hysteria was a common female complaint, most obvious in widows and unmarried women. Inabilities to eat, sleep and concentrate were the most obvious symptoms, but many maladies could be attributed to this dire female disease. A poor complexion, weight gain, tearfulness, melancholy – the medical community attributed these and many more to hysteria. It had been such since the time of Hippocrates and Galen, and medical science had not yet found a cure that would banish the disease completely.

Hysterical paroxysm, or the manual manipulation of a female until she reached orgasm, was the only accepted treatment for hysteria, as it would temporarily reduce the patient's

symptom. Their husbands could, of course, treat married women in the marital bed, if their husbands did not deem the task too onerous.

For those members of the *ton*, the titled and wealthy upper class of England, who did not wish to take the time to complete this lengthy task, there was Dr Sutherland.

While other doctors saw the treatment as somewhat distasteful and beneath their dignity to perform, he enjoyed it. So much so, in fact, that after he had qualified, he had opened a discreet practice in the heart of aristocratic London serving the ladies of the *ton* who found themselves suffering from the dreadful illness of hysteria.

News of the handsome doctor and his healing hands had spread like wildfire amongst the titled ladies of London and beyond. He was more than an educated man, a graduate of Oxford and Edinburgh, trained in the traditions of those venerable medical establishments, he was one of them – an aristocrat.

The fourth son of the previous Duke of Cleveland, he had eschewed the usual idea of joining the army or the clergy, which was the usual fate of younger, unneeded male heirs to a title. Most unusually, and to great embarrassment to his lady mother, he had trained to be a doctor instead.

“Quite unsuitable!” she had raged. “No son of mine shall have a *profession!*”

Voices had been raised. Vases had been thrown. At one point, she had banned him from setting foot into their ancestral county of Herefordshire entirely, a threat that every one of her children was quite sure she could enforce, and every single one had been threatened with at some point in life.

Thankfully, cooler heads had prevailed. His eldest brother, the current duke, had been only too happy to see one of his younger siblings safely tucked away from harm in two of Britain’s finest educational establishments. It was better than being sent to some god-forsaken foreign country to die in a colonial war, after all. Nobody, for one minute, thought Henry suitable to join the clergy. Too many escapades with village girls and housemaids in his youth had put paid to that thought!

Henry knew that, privately, his brother thought that he would leave university once he found out the grim reality of medical practice and find a nice, rich heiress to marry instead. It was a genuine surprise for Henry to be told one night, after his qualification, that his brother was proud of him. So little was expected of spare heirs, and so many of them gambled and drank their

inheritances away. The duke was happy to see that Henry had a path in life, no matter how unusual, so he had generously given him a Cleveland property in fashionable Mayfair to use as his practice.

So here he was, Lord Henry Sutherland, the most exclusive doctor in London. His practice had grown quickly, allowing him to hire two other young men to share the load. Both were newly qualified, both were eager to make their names and both had been hired for their handsome features. This had been a shrewd move that had guaranteed a steady stream of society ladies into the practice.

As senior doctor, he took the lion's share of the pretty, married women who flocked to the small house in Mayfair. They were the women with whom he could enjoy himself a little, the women who came to him because they were lonely and ignored by their husbands and wanted the services he could provide, services that were over and above those provided by his junior partners, who were left with the older, less attractive women.

Henry was discreet; not every woman who came to him was looking for more than the medical treatment he offered. Some had genuine hysterical symptoms that could only be relieved by his hands, or by the machinery he had invested heavily in.

However, there were others – like the panting, squirming Lady Dawson in front of him – who were looking for more than just the orgasm he gave them. They were looking for a lover, someone who enjoyed the same games they did.

Henry did like his games.

He had the Ruttingdon Club, of course; there he could enjoy the more extreme of his pleasures with one of the women known to the club to be trustworthy. However, for the times in between his visits to the villa in Maida Vale, there were the patients who craved the firmness of his touch.

It was a crying shame that he couldn't fuck Lady Dawson, he mused; she would be wild in bed, he was sure. However, during the interview he had undertaken at their first appointment, she had confided that her aged husband had long since stopped coming to her bed. She could not risk a pregnancy – Dawson was old, but not senile.

Henry dallied only with women who regularly allowed their husbands access to their bodies, a wise precaution. He did not spend inside them – at least, not inside a channel that

would allow pregnancy – but one could not be too careful, and he did not like the idea of fathering bastards.

He now had three fingers pumping in and out of Lady Dawson, who was writhing and pulling against the straps in such an enticing way that he was quite hard. She was getting loud now, and although the waiting room was downstairs, it did not do to create too much noise. He rubbed his thumb far more firmly than he had before, angling it in just such a way that he would swear that he could feel her little clitoris swell beneath him.

She screamed as her ‘treatment’ ended; her face flushed as she bucked and pulled against the straps, and he could feel the tight muscles in her pussy clamp down hard on his fingers. He kept the pressure going as long as he could, watching with amusement as her body underwent paroxysm again and again. It was a subject of much fascination to him how women could experience such heights multiple times, when men were lucky to coax their bodies to spend more than twice in a night.

The power he had in controlling this pleasure pleased him; watching women squirm and writhe beneath his touch, begging him to be allowed to receive it made him excited. While he would prefer his women to have a few stripes across their backsides as they begged, this control was enough to make him as hard as granite.

“No more,” Lady Dawson said weakly, falling back against the examination table. “Please, doctor, I beg you – no more!”

“One more,” he said authoritatively.

The patient never had a say in the length of her treatment. That, as in all else, was under his control.

“I cannot – I simply cannot!” she protested, but she always protested, and she always came once more for him, sometimes spraying forth an effusion that soaked his bare forearms as she screamed.

Next time, he thought, I’m going to introduce Lady Dawson to a gag. He rather thought that she’d enjoy the sensation, given that she always wanted him to use the straps. The thought of her lovely lips stretched obscenely across the leather ball of a gag was a stirring one.

He stepped away from her once she had climaxed for the last time, leaving her to pant and moan on the examination table as he returned to the sink and began scrubbing his hands again. Partly it was a matter of hygiene; one of his old lecturers in Edinburgh had been a devil

for hot water and soap, and the old man had been right. Far fewer patients died when the surgeons disinfected themselves as well as their instruments. Partly, though, he cleaned his hands to draw out the tension in Lady Dawson, who was still strapped to the table. Once he had washed and dried his hands, re-buttoned his cufflinks and donned his coat, he was ready for his pleasure, and she knew it.

He unbuckled all the straps and helped her stand and watched as she sank to her knees obediently in front of him. This was the last part of the treatment, offered to a few selected patients. He watched silently as her small, gloved hands undid the buttons of his fly and gripped his rod.

He made them keep their gloves on. There was something about the slide of silk on his cock that he particularly enjoyed.

Lady Dawson had been entirely new to this act once, but repeated appointments had brought on her skills nicely. His cock was not overly long, but it was thick and it had taken her some time to cope with the mouthful it gave her. She attacked him prettily, licking and sucking at him delicately. She smirked, knowing what would happen next. He did not enjoy such light touches, and he would not allow her to control the action for very long. Sure enough, within moments he had gripped the back of her head with one hand and pushed firmly, forcing her down onto it and holding her there for a few moments before allowing her to pull off it to catch her breath. Down she went, again and again, as he thrust into her hot, wet mouth.

She was a true screamer, unable to keep quiet even with a cock in her throat. He liked the sensation; her throat seemed to ripple around him as she choked on him, and the noises were delightful. Idly, he wondered about introducing her to the new machine he'd had installed in his second treatment room. She'd scream all right, once he had her hooked up to it. The very latest in steam powered technology from America, it took over his job of manual manipulation and caused vibrations that would bring her off. Every woman he'd introduced to it had screamed uncontrollably, even the quietest ones. Lady Dawson would probably bring a policeman running if she were strapped to it!

More soundproofing was needed before Lady Dawson could be treated with it, he decided, his own breath coming more heavily now as he thrust in and out of her mouth. He'd speak to Tick about it.

All thoughts other than of pleasure left him as his balls began to tighten. He grunted as he thrust a little faster, the sounds of her gagging on his cock helping bring on his own pleasure as he spurted straight down her throat. He held her in place, despite her struggles, as he emptied himself into her, only allowing her to move once he had softened, every drop of his seed now lining her throat or dribbling from her pretty pink lips.

She fell back, gasping for breath as he stepped away from her, re-buttoning himself into his fine wool trousers. A long mirror hung on the back wall of the treatment room, and he inspected himself in it. Not a drop of his seed had stained his clothes, which pleased him. Some women were not so skilled as Lady Dawson, and he was forced to keep a spare change of clothes at hand just in case his became soiled.

He spent more money than a doctor would normally at his tailor and boot maker; appearance was everything. His reputation as a man of quality was essential to his practice. No aristocratic lady would consider being treated by a man who wore an old-fashioned frock coat rather than the modern morning jacket, trimmed in the finest silk. John Lobb himself made his shoes, a distinction he shared with members of the royal family. He bought his hats only from Lock and Company.

He might have been a doctor, but he was also Lord Henry Sutherland, brother of the Duke of Cleveland, and that had to be apparent in the cut of his coat and the drape of his trousers.

Once satisfied that his clothing was undamaged, he helped Lady Dawson to her feet and provided her with a square of linen to wipe her mouth. She repositioned a few strands of hair that had become dislodged during her treatment, and settled her hat back on her head. He helped her on with her coat, passed her handbag to her and wished her a courteous good day.

“Do remember to book another appointment when your symptoms return,” he told her, opening the door. “You need only send your maid with a note.”

“I will make sure to do just that,” she replied, practically purring. She had just stepped through the doorway when she turned suddenly. “My – how forgetful I am. I took tea yesterday with my dear friend, the Countess of Severn and Thames. We came out together, you know, and married in the same year. Lord Severn and Lord Dawson are old friends.”

She stressed the *old*, although she needn't have. Henry knew what she was about.

She sighed, sounding distressed. "Dear Caroline suffers from her nerves as much as I do. She is quite the martyr to them! I told her about how much you've helped me, doctor, and I insisted that she make an appointment. Do be kind to her, won't you? She suffers so dreadfully."

"I am at Lady Severn's disposal," he told her, bowing slightly.

"I'll be sure to let her know," she said, smiling. "Until next time, Dr Sutherland."

He closed the door behind her and went back to his desk, making a brief notation on the scant piece of paper that made up Lady Dawson's medical history before setting it aside for Nurse Jackson to file. He started a new file on the Countess of Severn and Thames and put it with the others for sorting. He wondered about this new prospective patient. Was she as attractive as Lady Dawson? He didn't dally with all of his patients, just the pretty ones. The horse-faced ones he treated once, then palmed off to one of his juniors.

The carriage clock on his desk chimed mid-day. According to the list Nurse Jackson had provided him with at the start of the day he had no more appointments before lunch. Tick would probably be at White's at some point; one could usually find him lounging in the reading room, glass in hand. Henry penned a short note inviting him to eat and had a messenger boy run it around to Tick's lodgings at Albany, the most exclusive bachelor establishment in London, where he also kept a set. He'd pick Tick's brains over a good beefsteak before returning for his afternoon appointments.

Just then there was a knock at the door and Nurse Jackson stumbled in, barged out of the way by a large, florid gentleman. She was angry, he could tell; normally a calm woman, there were two spots of colour high on her cheeks. If she were not wearing the veiled headdress of a nurse, he was sure her hair would be standing on end in rage.

"The ... gentleman does not have an appointment, doctor, and he will not return at another time!"

How the man had got that far past Nurse Jackson's desk downstairs was anybody's guess. His nurse, hired more for the sake of propriety than for any surgical purpose, was as fierce as Cerberus and had almost as many teeth. The man had taken his life into his hands by pushing this far into the building.

On occasion a lady was accompanied by her husband to an appointment; indeed, there was a member of the Ruttingdon Club who enjoyed seeing his mistress get fucked by other men,

and they had a standing monthly arrangement to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. However, he had never had a man appear alone in his office before.

The man was fat, red-faced and looked as angry as the nurse. Clearly, she had made her feelings known to him about what she thought of unaccompanied men demanding the doctor's time.

"The Earl of Martinbury, doctor," Nurse Jackson said frostily.

Or so he claims was unsaid but heavily implied. Henry got the distinct feeling that Nurse Jackson did not approve of men in general, and only tolerated him because she got to see so many pretty women pass by her every day. She shut the door behind her with a slam that told Henry that she would be in a bad mood for the rest of this day.

"My lord," Henry said, gesturing to the empty chair in front of the desk. "How may I help you?"

The earl sat down heavily in the delicate chair, more suited to a smaller feminine backside than the one currently squashed into it.

"You're Cleveland's son," he said brusquely. "Cleveland that was, I mean."

"That's right," Henry said, sitting back down himself. "My brother is the current duke."

The other man frowned, but nodded. "I knew him," he said abruptly. "Sound fellow."

This seemed to be all the older man needed to assure himself that he had chosen the right doctor.

"Talk about the club is that you see to women's problems," the man said. "Their nerves, and so forth."

"That's right," Henry said calmly, while his mind worked a mile a minute.

Martinbury, Martinbury ... he had never had a Countess of Martinbury as a patient. This couldn't be an angry husband out for revenge against the man that had been fucking his wife.

"I specialise in nervous hysteria in females," Henry went on. "The condition is quite common amongst women of refinement and breeding."

The fat man sniffed. A waft of strong spirits emanated from him, surprising Henry. It was far too early in the day to have drunk so heavily.

"M' daughter," he said. "Definitely a hysteric."

Henry relaxed a little. This was more familiar territory.

“Hysteria can affect women of all ages,” he said slowly. “Unmarried women – I take it your daughter is unmarried?”

A grunt confirmed this.

“Unmarried women often suffer from nervous hysteria,” Henry said sympathetically. “Often the cure for such young ladies is marriage. When a young lady has a husband to distract her from her symptoms, she often makes a full recovery. My patients tend to be older ladies. Widows, you know.”

Or women soon to be widows, anyway, like the delectable Lady Dawson.

“Marriage is the damned problem,” the earl all but growled. “I’ve got the match all set up, but she’s taken to her bed and refuses to get out. Off her feed. Weeps like she’s been thrashed if I make her go into the drawing room.”

“They do sound like common symptoms of nervous hysteria,” Henry said, nodding.

“I’m not stupid, boy,” the earl said sharply. “Done my research. Read some the same books you’ve got there.”

Henry blinked, the sudden burst of temper from the earl surprising him.

“If you’ve researched the condition, then you will understand the treatment that is offered by myself and any other doctor specialising in hysteria is ... unsuitable, for an unmarried young lady,” he said carefully.

“I’ve tried every other bloody thing,” the earl said sharply. “Nothing works. The marriage is arranged, the contracts signed, but she’s refusing to even be in the same room as the man I want as my son-in-law. He’s getting cold feet. I have to make her see sense. She has to get married!”

He pounded his fat fist into the palm of his other hand, turning so red in the face that Henry feared that he would turn apoplectic and die right there in the chair. His fury was real. This marriage was important – no, this marriage was crucial for the earl. It was obvious to anybody with a brain.

The earl rose, fumbling in his breast pocket before flinging a calling card down onto Henry’s desk.

“Tonight, six o’clock,” he said. “Address is on the back. Do whatever you have to do, Sutherland, but get my daughter down the aisle. The wedding is in two weeks. You can name your price.”

Henry rose, picking up the card and flipping it over to note the fashionable address scrawled on the back of it.

“Seven o’clock,” he replied, for no other reason than he disliked the man in front of him on sight.

“Seven then, damn it,” the earl said, and left the room without bidding him farewell, slamming the door behind him.

Henry pocketed the calling card and decided to head to White’s a little earlier than he had intended. He kept no drinking alcohol in his work place, and after his last two appointments he found himself in dire need of a good, stiff drink.