

TEACHING MISS MAISIE JANE



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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.

CHAPTER 1



ARIZONA TERRITORY, LATE AUGUST 1870

The stagecoach jolted and Maisie Jane grabbed for edge of the open window to keep from sliding off the seat. Her hooped skirt flipped up and she desperately struggled to sit up and push it back down. Thankfully, there were no other passengers in the coach, the last one having gotten off at a stagecoach swing station where the driver had yelled at her to “do what she to get done” because he was leaving in ten minutes.

She had scrambled inside, to find that there was no dinner waiting for the passengers other than a few squares of dry cornbread and several strips of overdone bacon. She’d wrapped them up in a clean handkerchief and put them into her reticule. Then, she’d hurried outside to find the facilities, which had turned out to be a filthy, stinking outhouse. Maisie Jane had been dismayed at the prospect but emptied herself, grateful at least for the small latch lock on the privy door that afforded her some sense of privacy.

She went back inside the station and asked if she could possibly

have something to drink and an old man grunted and poured what looked to be cold tea into a quart jar and screwed a lid on it.

“That’ll be a nickel,” he grunted.

Maisie Jane stretched up to her full height - which at barely five foot wasn’t much - she looked at the man with obvious disdain.

“My ticket entitles me to three full meals a day at the expense of the stage line.”

“You don’t pay, you don’t get it,” the old man grunted.

Maisie Jane bit her lip. She wasn’t very good at demanding what should be rightfully hers. She felt the tears coming but she swallowed them down. She was going to have to get tougher to do what she must do.

“Give ’er the jar, Freemont,” the stagecoach driver snarled and the old man pushed it across the table. “Girl, if’n you want to get to Bisbee, you’d better be getting onboard.”

Maisie Jane nodded, snatched the jar and got onboard. She always had difficulties getting her hoops through the door, but the driver gave her a rough shove and in she went, headfirst.

This was her first trip, the first time she’d ever gone anywhere and she wasn’t enjoying it. In spite of all the beautiful posters hanging on the wall of the original stagecoach line office where she’d purchased her tickets, and all the promises of lovely hotel rooms and fine meals served throughout the trip, those amenities had only lasted until the stage had gone through St. Louis, Missouri. Since then, every stop seemed to be getting worse. Since she’s crossed into the territory of Arizona there were more and more swing stations which only allowed a ten-minute stop to change horses and very little else. The night before they’d stopped at a home station where she’d expected a room and bed, but instead had been shown to a tiny room with a dirt floor and a pile of blankets. She hadn’t dared to fall asleep and had sat on the pile of dirty blankets all night, scared to death of things she could hear scampering around in the dark. She’d kept a candle burning for peace of

mind until it burned out, and then she'd snuck outside the room and sat against the door until morning.

Maisie Jane was so tired; she kept finding herself trying to drift off to sleep only to be jolted awake by the stagecoach hitting a rut or large hole in the road. She peeked out the window beyond the shade and saw nothing but sand and mountains in the distance and sat back only to straighten as she realized the stagecoach was slowing and stopping.

With wide frightened eyes she peered out again, fearing robbers or bandits, but it was only one man flagging down the stagecoach. He was carrying a saddle.

The stagecoach came to a halt and driver yelled down. "Is that you Jake Maddox?"

"It is," the man said shortly. "Got room for pick-up?"

"What happened to your horse?"

"Run into a nest of rattlers. Had to shoot him, he was bit up bad. Damn shame too, it was good horse. You got room inside, or can I hitch a ride on top? I got to be in Bisbee for a trial by three tomorrow."

"Only got one little bitty gal inside. Snippy little thing, traveling all the way from Mary-land. Won't say why, but she's getting off at Bisbee too. Get on board, I guess what the coach line don't know about won't hurt 'um."

The man named Jake Maddox stepped up on the wheel rims and tossed his saddle and horse blanket, to the driver who secured it to top luggage rack.

Jake opened the door and was stopped by a wall of ruffled petticoats.

"Ma'am."

Two small hands pushed the petticoats and hoops down and scooted as close to the opposite door as she could get. "Sorry, sir."

Jake climbed in and set his saddlebags and a satchel on the seat, propped his rifle against the door, re-adjusted his gun holster and settled in the seat opposite of a young girl. He took a long look at

her. Who in their right mind would send a female child across the territories without an escort?

“Miss, are you traveling alone?” Jake demanded sharply.

The girl - a pretty little thing - had dark brown hair falling in fat sausage curls around her face and bonnet, large green eyes ringed by heavy dark lashes and a child’s skin, smooth and clear of pox marks and blemishes.

She turned her head and looked toward the window.

“Miss?” his voice was low and graveled. He was dry, having almost emptied his canteen several hours earlier and he needed a drink—preferably out of his flask - but he couldn’t do that in front of the young girl.

“Miss, I asked you a question.” Jake repeated.

She turned in his direction, her pert little nose going up in the air. “It was an impertinent question, sir. We have not been introduced.”

Jake offered a grin of lazy amusement. “Well ma’am, there doesn’t seem to be anyone here to introduce us. I’m Deputy Jake Maddox, of the territory of Arizona. And you are, ma’am?”

The young miss bit her lower lip, half of a full and perfect Cupid’s bow. “Miss Maisie Jane Jackson, sir. How do you do?” She offered tiny little, lace-covered hand to him and he shook it.

“I do fine,” Jake said with a nod of his head and tip of his hat. “Now, ma’am would you answer my question?”

Miss Maisie Jane Jackson shook her head, sending her curls bouncing. “I don’t believe that is any of your business, sir.” One eyebrow lifted on the man and he removed his Stetson. His face was strong and deeply tanned, with a squared jaw and deep blue eyes. His hair, a light shade of brown, was wet from sweat and curling at the nape of his neck.

Jake stared at her hard and thought the impudent little bit of sass needed to be put in her place. “Miss, I’m the law in this part of the country and when a man of the law asks a question it deserves an answer.”

"I don't have to answer your questions," Miss Maisie Jane exclaimed with a huff. "I have a right to travel without being accosted."

"Have it your way," Jake said, reaching down into his saddlebags and pulling out a pair of handcuffs. "I'll just slap these handcuffs on you and haul your little fanny into the jail when we reach Bisbee and hold you as a runaway until I can get some answers."

"You can't arrest me!" Maisie Jane exclaimed outraged at the idea. "I haven't done anything wrong!"

"I won't be arresting you, Miss, I'll be holding you," Jake said sternly. "Until I can find out who you belong to, and can get you back to them safely."

Jake watched the girl as she looked away and large fat tears formed on her eyelashes. She swallowed several times, and dashed the tears away with those pretty lace gloves.

"I am not a runaway, Mr. Maddox and I do not belong to anyone now. All my kinfolk either died in the war or have since died. I'm going to Bisbee to claim the body of my brother James Braddock Jackson, put a headstone on his grave, and make sure a proper service is said over his internment. I was traveling with a chaperone, an older woman whom I contracted to accompany me and for which I paid for her passage and a salary. As it turns out, she was not an honorable woman. She had no intention of going any further than St. Louis, Missouri. I had no choice but to continue my journey alone and fulfill my duty. I know I appear younger, but I am twenty-one years old, the age of majority. I am old enough to make decisions for myself."

The lawman looked doubtful at her last declaration. "What year were you born in?" he demanded.

"I was born in 1849, and that sir, is a very impertinent question."

She answered quickly, and Jake did a quick calculation and realized the numbers matched. She didn't look like she was lying and he could usually tell if someone was lying. Either she was telling

the truth or had done the math herself in order to provide a fast answer.

“Impertinent or not, it’s a damn fool thing for you to be doing, Miss. Twenty-one or not, you look about fourteen. This is dangerous country for any woman to be traveling by herself, let alone a half-grown girl of obvious genteel upbringing,” Jake growled.

“I am not a child, Mr. Maddox,” Maisie Jane snapped, bringing her little chin up in defiance. “And, your opinion is of no importance to me, sir. “I am a woman of age, and of the authority to make my own decisions. My journey, sir, is almost complete. When I have completed what I need to do, I will make my future plans accordingly.”

Jake opened his mouth to refute this sassy little... when he heard rifle shots and felt the coach speed up as the driver shouted “HA! HA!” at the team of horses. He pulled his rifle out and swung it out the window and took aim.

Maisie turned to look out the window and found herself shoved down into the floor space of the stagecoach; her skirt hoops not fitting in the small space flipped upward almost over her head.

“Stay down,” Jake shouted and he fired off three shots in rapid succession.

Maisie dragged herself up and attempted to look out the window, only to have that large forceful lawman shove her down again. “Damn, it, I said stay down!” he yelled and fired off two more shots.

The stagecoach was slowing down. Jake Maddox opened the door, leaned out and fired off another shot and then tossed the rifle onto the seat. He looked down into the frightened young woman’s face. “Stay down and don’t come out until I say it’s safe!”

Just as he was about to step out he got his foot caught in Maisie Jane’s whale-boned hoop and he almost fell outward. With a quick reaction he grabbed the rim of the door and gave his foot a jerk and the hoop ripped away. He pulled himself out the door and up and

over the luggage rack, working his way to the driver's seat. The driver was lying sideways across the seat, his chest covered in blood. Jake yanked the reins out of the driver's hands and reined in the horses until they stopped, heaving and lathered from the forced run. He pulled the coach brake and picked up the rifle off the seat beside the driver and aimed it--searching the area for any other potential threats. When he didn't spot any, he set the rifle down and hauled the driver down to the ground and checked to see if he was breathing.

"Is he going to be all right?" Maisie Jane asked stepping down from the coach.

Jake closed the driver's eyes and stood up, suddenly furious. "Did I tell you it was safe to come out?" he demanded.

Maisie Jane stopped and shook her head, fat sausage curls bouncing.

"Damn it, girl," Jake yelled taking three steps to the young woman and gave her a hard shake. "Have you got a death wish? I tell you to stay down, and you get right up again! I tell you to stay put and you don't listen!"

Maisie Jane stepped back in shock and tripped over her broken hoops falling flat on her bottom which caused the wide hoops to flail upward exposing the seven petticoats and a set of white ruffled pantaloons.

"Damn it," Jake growled, as he reached down and pulled the young woman to her feet and in one swift motion turned her around, lifted her multi-layered ruffled dress skirt and gave a yank to the whalebone hoop and ripped them off her in one motion and tossed them aside.

Maisie Jane gasped in shock, as she felt her undergarment being ripped apart from her by a man she'd barely met. "Damn, silliest female contraptions I've ever seen!" he shouted angrily. She backed away from his anger as he turned to her and with fury still in his eyes he reached for her, turned her around, and flipped up her dress and petticoats again. Maisie opened her mouth to protest but

instead yelled when he shouted, "Don't you ever do anything that stupid again!" as he landed four hard swats across the bottom of her pantaloons with his bare hand.

Maisie was released as fast as she was accosted and she stumbled back, her lips quivering in surprise, shock and from the sting from her bottom.

"See if you can find some blankets in the hatch at the back of the coach," Jake Maddox ordered, and walked over to unhitch the horses without a backward glance.

Maisie looked down at the driver of the stagecoach who was obviously dead and stepped back away from the body, feeling a bit faint. She looked over to the man who had actually accosted her. He'd actually struck her with his bare hand on part of her person that was... that was... She saw from his jerky motions as he unhitched the horses that he was still livid. Shaking with fright and indignation, she went to back of stagecoach and opened the back hatch to do as she was told. She found four blankets inside and she pulled them out and then just stood by the coach door holding them because she didn't know what to do.

Jake Maddox was furious. In less than a day's time, his duration as lawman would be over. All he wanted to do was testify at the trial, turn in his badge and collect his money. He was going to the land office in Virginia City to and file for a homestead. He'd have no more truck with outlaws and crooked judges. It was time for him to get on with having a life, find a good woman and start having him some kids. He was done with the law. He was done with the job of killing worthless men before they could kill him.

For the last twelve years, he'd done his duty. It had taken him a long time to figure out that trying to be the law in territories wasn't upholding the law. It was bounty hunting, tracking down fugitives; it was trying to settle Indian hostilities, wasting his time at pretend trials, and dealing with hanging judges. Now, he'd had to kill three more men who'd tried to hold up the stagecoach and he still hadn't stopped them from killing Frank Lamb. Frank Lamb had a family,

and he'd been good man. Now, he was going to have to haul the dead bodies into Bisbee, and he hated dealing with dead bodies.

Jake tied five of the horses, to a scrub bush and climbed onto the back of the sixth without a saddle.

He found Miss Jackson standing by the door of the coach holding blankets and looking very pale. "Do you know how to fire a gun?" he demanded.

She shook her head furiously making those fat curls bounce, as he slid off the horse. She backed away from him.

"Get back into the coach, get down on the floor and stay there until I get back," Jake ordered. He pulled his Walker Colt, 6-shot out of his holster and handed it to her as he reached inside and retrieved his rifle, and saddlebags. He unbuckled one of his saddlebags and pulled out a box of cartridges and began to reload the rifle. "If anyone besides me comes to the coach, point this gun at them and tell them to stay outside. If they try to enter, point this at them and pull this trigger. Do you understand my instructions this time?"

Miss Maisie Jane nodded and got into the coach without a single word of sass.

It took an hour to backtrack and locate the bandits he'd shot. Jake brought back three dead men, wrapped in their bedrolls and trussed up with their lassos. He also brought back two of their horses, the third he'd found foundering, it having been shot, and he'd had to put down a good horse for the second time that day. That really pissed him off. He wrapped Frank Lamb in a blanket and used his rope to tie up the bundle. Jake was bone tired and weary by the time he had taken care of the dead men. He finally remembered the woman still in the coach and he told her she could come out. She refused to look in the direction of the dead men, rolled up and lined up like logs. He loaded all four bodies into the coach as Miss Maisie Jane Jackson watched without saying a word.

Jake re-hitched the horses, and tied them to the back of the coach, before helping Miss Maisie Jane up into the driver's seat of

the stagecoach. Neither of them spoke as he got the horses moving and they continued on their journey.

The sun was beginning to set when Jake realized that there was no way they were going to make it to Bisbee that day. That little gal, sitting beside him all prim and proper was a pale as a ghost. Several times he'd had to grab her to keep her from being bounced off the seat and she'd looked at him with that don't-you-dare-touch-me look. He pulled the stagecoach over to small stand of juniper trees and began the process of unhitching the horses.

"Is there a home station nearby?" Maisie Jane asked.

"No, the last station was the one you stopped at," Jake said. "We're going to have to spend the night here, and leave out at first light."

"We can't stay here together, alone," Maisie Jane exclaimed. "It's not proper!"

Jake gave a heavy sigh. "I can't help that. Look, Miss, I've had a real bad day today. I had to shoot my horse, and another, walk near ten miles to catch the stagecoach and then deal with that attempted robbery. I'm tired, the horses are tired and I can't drive the coach in the dark because there ain't no moon out tonight. We're going to spread some blankets, and go to sleep. You can sleep on that side of that little tree and I'll sleep on the other. It might not be proper but it's the best I can do under the circumstances."

"Could we have a fire, Mr. Maddox?" Maisie Jane asked.

"No," Jake said firmly. "This is Indian country and they've been stirred up lately. We don't need to be letting anyone know we're here." Dark was settling in fast, so Jake unrolled his bedroll and handed the young woman a blanket. He spread out his bedroll and lay down.

Maisie Jane wrapped the blanket around her body and curled up on the opposite side of the tree. She lay quiet for a while, then "Mr. Maddox?"

"Yeah."

"Those men today..."

“Best not to think about it, Miss,” Jake interrupted.

“Have you killed men before, Mr. Maddox?” Maisie Jane asked.

“Yes, when I had to, never because I wanted to,” Jake answered

There was a long quiet spell and Jake thought the girl had fallen asleep.

“Mr. Maddox?”

“Best you try to get some sleep, ma’am,” Jake said gently.

“Some men need to die, don’t they?” Maisie Jane asked quietly.

“When they done awful bad things, and hurt people. They deserve to die, don’t they?”

Jake rolled over. “That’s not for us to decide, that’s for a court of law to decide. If a man shoots at you, you have a right to shoot back. You have a right to protect yourself. But, if a man is caught and taken to trial, then it’s up to the legal system to decide what needs to be done.”

“Mr. Maddox?”

Jake gave a sigh. “Yes, Miss Maisie Jane?”

“If my brother was alive, he would have shot you for manhandling my person today.”

Jake snorted and grinned. “Not likely, Miss. He’d have probably shaken my hand and said it was a job well done because you deserved it. Now go to sleep.”