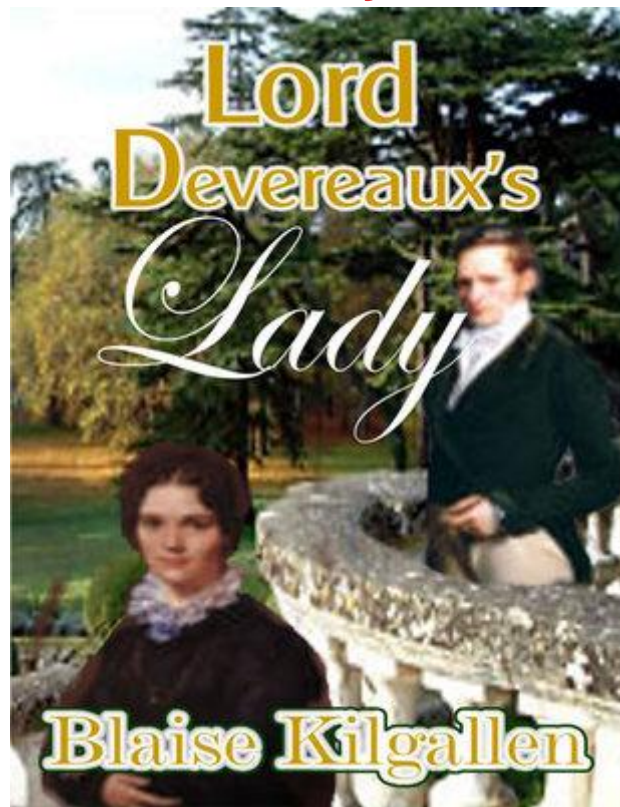


Lord Devereaux's Lady - Blaise Kilgallen



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A penniless orphan, CASSANDRA HARCOURT is sent to London by Agatha Bottomwell, wife of the village's Vicar, to apply as a scullery maid at the mansion of the Countess of Thornton, Agatha's younger sister. Leaving the rickety coach after a long, uncomfortable trip to London, Cassie trips and falls onto the muddy, cobblestoned street outside the coaching inn, soiling herself and her garments with horse manure. Never been to Town, unsure of her destination, and unfamiliar with the hustle and bustle in London's Mayfair, she wanders aimlessly, stopping now and again to gather her wits and stinking of horse manure. She is approached by Prudence Goodbody, who turns out to be a procurer for London's perverts and brothels. Prudence sees the girl's naïveté and confusion and pounces. Being a "good Samaritan," she invites Cassandra back to her rooms for tea, then tries to keep her there until she can find a buyer. Suspicious and uncomfortable with the complete stranger, Cassie escapes Mrs. Goodbody's clutches when Prudence is forced to use the necessary out back. Weary from the journey, her clothes still reeking with horse manure, Cassandra's bruised knees and a blistered heel rubbed raw from ill-fitting, hand-me-down shoes given to her as the Vicar's charity, Cassie finally gives in and spends her dwindling

pennies to hire a hackney cab to take her to 22 Mount Street and Thornton House. DEVEREAUX BALLANGER, EARL OF THORNTON--a golden-haired Adonis as handsome as Lucifer--is young, rich, a bachelor, and a practicing rake. London's Season is just starting, and Dev is already bored with the usual routs, balls, musicales, garden parties, etc., that make up the daily life of London's wealthy and libertine aristocracy. Chatting with a few of his friends at White's, the men propose Dev with a challenge--a silly wager: He must persuade an unknown female with no aristocratic upbringing and turn her into a lady before the sharp eyes of the ton--by May first of London's spring Season. After that, she is to be given a generous recompense, returned to her normal life, and told to stay out of Devereaux's hair. To chase away his doldrums, and never one to turn down a challenge, Dev agrees. Cassie is dropped off at Thornton House by the hackney's driver, but she's soon chased away by the housekeeper, Mrs. Percival. The dowager countess, who normally approves hiring of servants, has not yet arrived for the Season. Only the earl is currently in residence. As coincidence would have it, returning on horseback from his club, Dev runs into Cassie leaving the Thornton House mews. He, of course, believes she has been diddling in the stables with one of his grooms. What if she is a light skirt, she has a country-fresh beauty he can't deny, so Dev invites Cassie inside his mansion, hoping to persuade her to help win his wager. Full of surprises, very soon Dev finds Cassie a quite different person than he expected. He notes immediately that his best friend, CONNOR BLAIR, VISCOUNT CHAPMAN and Cassandra Harcourt hit it off. It's true that Dev is sometimes a bully, used to having his own way when he and Cassandra start to butt heads. When the earl's patience runs out trying to teach her, he begs Connor to take on the job as Cassandra's mentor and turn the "country bumpkin" into a Regency lady. Connor is quickly taken with his pupil in several ways, but like Devereaux, he is in no hurry to marry. Cassandra makes her debut, surrounded by interested, wealthy, aristocratic rakes. However, she leaves Town and Thornton House to return to her village in the country. The few months in London have been a wonderful fairytale, but she knew all along that it couldn't last. How long, she wonders, will it take her to root out that dream fantasy--and Devereaux Ballanger--from her mind and heart?Author: Kilgallen, Blaise Publisher: Awe-Struck E-Books, Inc. Illustration: N Language: ENG Title: Lord Devereaux's Lady Pages: 00000 (Encrypted PDF) On Sale: 2009-02-15 SKU-13/ISBN: 9781587497131 Category: Fiction : Romance - Regency

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