



ENCOUNTERS

*Finding Captain Rathbone*

*A Steam and Spells Steampunk Encounter*

*Mikala Ash*

Changeling Press

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**My name is Wilhelmina Fotheringham, and ever since Captain Adam Rathbone turned down my shamelessly gauche advances, I have fantasized taking him to my bed. To turn my lust into reality I need the help of my steam-coach driver, Mr. Brady. For his services I will willingly pay any price, and you know what that means ...**

## Finding Captain Rathbone

To Miss Jemima Lipsey,  
Moradabad, Rohilkhand

My dearest friend,

Joy of joys!

I have found him!

At least I have his address, and tomorrow I intend to visit.

Let me tell you all, in detail, and in blushing code!

Your letter arrived two days ago. A six-week delay in this day and age is intolerable! At least I have it now, and for that I must be thankful. Your devastating news of Captain Rathbone's wounding stole my breath away. That he lived was a relief, of course, but that he lingered so long on the edge of death brought hot tears, and on hearing my sobs, Mama came to my door.

She was unsympathetic when I told her. You know how averse to soldiers she is after what happened to poor Christopher. She insists on presenting me with an endless train of young spotty faced men, eldest sons of industrialists, hoping for a match. How could I settle for a callow youth when Captain Rathbone has possessed me heart and soul?

It has been several years, but do you remember that last ball, before father was killed, when Captain Rathbone (honour personified) rebuffed my artless advances? "When you come of age, my dear," he had said so gently, his warm hand clasping mine. "A delicate flower deserves the opportunity to bloom."

Oh Jemima, how many nights have I pleased myself with my left hand while kissing the fingers he so gallantly brushed with his lips. As crushing as they were, he was right to utter those words. I was so obnoxiously gauche, especially when set beside sophisticates like you and Blanche. I am thankful he was cut from different cloth as that cad Captain Dalgliesh.

After Mama left, I rejoiced with the wonderful news that Captain Rathbone had taken an airship to London. Truly, it lifted my heart. That he was bedridden, and carried aboard on a stretcher, broke it again. How I feared for him.

I immediately snuck out of the house to ask Mr. Brady (the steam coach driver I told you about) to find out where the captain had gone to after he'd arrived. You may recall Mr. Brady is something of a conundrum. He is a giant of a man, and resembles a friendly bear from a storybook, but knows so many people around town that in addition to procuring Mama tickets to the opera and advance notice of soirees, he can find out almost anything. How he does it is a mystery.

Mr. Brady exacted his usual downpayment for his service. He pulled out his cock and I dropped to my knees, grateful for his confident assertion that he would soon trace the domicile of the love of my life. I took him deep, and had only been at it for a minute or so when he suddenly linked his hands behind my head and held me captive while he pumped his salty seed into my mouth.

"That was quick," I said wiping my lips.

"Well, you have improved a great deal, Miss Wilhelmina."

I was very pleased with the compliment, I must say, and with his arm on my elbow I regained my feet. "That naughty book you gave me deserves the credit," I told him. "It advised a fellatrix to swirl the tongue, stroke the shaft, and caress the ball sack while keeping a constant pressure with one's lips."

"Ah, that explains it."

He buttoned his pants and promised he'd send me word as soon as he had discovered my sweetheart's residence.

The rest of the day found me in an excited and distracted state, butterflies in my belly, and palpitations in my chest. Mr. Brady was true to his word. Not four hours later he sent a note to the music room where I was practicing my piano. Mama was completing some lace needlework for the baby orphans in which she takes an interest. I contrived a headache, and again sneaked out to the coach house.

Mr. Brady gave me a grin and ushered me up the ladder to his room. His abode

is simple, holding only a writing desk, a wardrobe, and a narrow bed. He lit the gas lamp and the room filled with the soft glow of more romantic times. He took off his coat and put it on a peg by the door.

“Where is he?” I asked breathlessly. “Captain Rathbone.”

He began unbuttoning his shirt. “Not a cannon shot away,” he replied. He questioned my immobility with a raised eyebrow.

“There’s no reason to play games,” I said, and turned so he could unbutton the back of my dress. “You know I always pay my debt.”

He chuckled. “I know, Miss Wilhelmina. But I’ve been looking forward to seeing what else it is you’ve learned.”

His compliment thrilled me. I hoped I would evoke the same reaction from Captain Rathbone.

I shucked off the rest of my clothes and laid back on the bed, my legs spread wide (he is such a big man and I need to make room for him). Impatiently I watched him slide the Cumberland prophylactic over the stiff log that projected from his belly. The bed sagged as he climbed on top.

“God damn, Miss Wilhelmina, you’re wetter than Regent’s Canal.”

Jemima, my cunny gets that way whenever I think of my dear sweet love.

Mr. Brady’s cock stretched me as he shoved it in. As he looked down at me, I didn’t see my coachman, but Captain Rathbone. I imagined it was he thrusting between my legs, sending the thick length of his cock into my needy quim. Oh Jemima, the sensations that radiated from inside my tight sheath, through the sensitive nub, and then into my belly, set every nerve in my body tingling.

Remembering the captain’s injury, I realised he wouldn’t be in the superior position. Instead, I would be straddling his lap, his cock buried very deep inside me, and it would be I doing all the work.

In my mind I moved my hips backwards and forwards, grinding down on the captain’s cock. Some part of my illusion must have leaked through to my body, for Mr. Brady gasped, let out a little whimper, then threw his head back and roared, not like a

friendly bear, but a wounded lion. His cock pulsed mightily, and I felt the glut of hot seed fill the pouch at the end of the Cumberland.

I had climaxed too, of course. One does not experience such a pounding not to have a satisfying conclusion. After regaining his breath Mr. Brady rolled off me and delved into the pocket of his coat to extract a piece of paper.

I read the address. My heart leapt. The love of my life was only a few streets away. "Thank you, Mr. Brady," I said.

I was so happy I delivered a kiss on Mr. Brady's whiskered cheek.

"Thank you, Miss. Wilhelmina."

"Is there anything you can tell me about his situation?"

"He is in good health, but confined to a wheelchair. He is attended by an Indian servant, and a live-in nurse, the wife of his doctor, who expects him to make a full recovery."

For that last piece of information, I gave him another kiss. He grasped my hand and took it to his crotch.

"Mr. Brady, you astound me." He was hard once more. "In recognition of your astute investigative powers I shall reward you with another gallop."

"Thank you, Miss," he clasped his hands behind his head while I straddled his muscular thighs and lowered myself down on his manhood. He gazed at me with a self-satisfied smile creasing his lips. I couldn't rebuke him for it, for he had delivered a precious gift to me, and he deserved much more than this. I rode him to another conclusion which sent him groaning, and me quivering in a paroxysm of pleasure.

I fell panting by his side. "Tomorrow," I said once I managed a breath. "Instead of driving me to my piano lesson, you will take me to his address."

"Certainly, Miss. Remember that I must have you back home at ten fifteen sharp. I take your mother to her meeting with the Mission for Fallen Women. She will not suffer being late."

"I shall be on time," I replied, my heart beating fast in anticipation as I plotted my reunion with Captain Rathbone.

So, Jemima, I'm off to see my gallant captain. I'll post this missive now, and write again tomorrow after I have been with him.

Pray that all goes as I hope it will. He will see I am a grown woman of two and twenty, intelligent, mature, and ready to be his wife in every way. He rebuffed me before, and rightfully so. I aim to reward him for his honourable consideration.

Oh, Jemima, how my quim tingles in anticipation.

*Yours forever*  
**Wilhelmina Fotheringham**

**Sketching Love (Empire of Hearts 1)**  
**A Steam and Spells Steampunk Adventure**  
**Mikala Ash**

**Authorized Excerpt**  
**Victoria Station, London 1862**

The morning I stepped off the train all the church bells of London were tolling. The strangely muffled, yet powerfully solemn din rose even above the roar and hiss of the steam engines as every bell, from the greatest cathedral to the smallest church, created a mournful symphony of grief that reverberated inside one's chest, and no doubt shook the vault of heaven itself.

The bells pealed not for me, of course, though my wounded pride and profound disillusionment would have received some solace had I been the subject of the city's collective anguish.

Such sombre clamour would not be raised for the likes of me, a debased finishing schoolteacher, dismissed without a character. The crime? Flagrant promiscuity. A false charge I continue to maintain, and will do so most vehemently till the day I die. I did not wantonly seduce the father of a recalcitrant and pernicious pupil, as the apoplectic headmistress, Madame Gobere, insisted. Rather it was a mutual attraction that transcended the time, place, and purpose of our meeting. That we, the handsome and charming Lord Cressy and myself, were surprised in a state of dishabille in the study of the aforementioned headmistress was unfortunate in the extreme, and of course, had I been thinking rationally it would not have happened. My humble defence being I had been consumed by feelings of desire I'd never experienced before, volatile emotions that overwhelmed all sense of propriety and good breeding.

So, I accept half the blame for what happened, for it seemed to me that his lordship had been similarly overpowered. The banal purpose of our discussion had been his daughter Felicity's indifferent progress in the romance languages and sketching, from which we strayed to a more wide-ranging and pleasant conversation

about music, the arts, and what constitutes beauty. This took us from classical painting to current fashions comparing dress at home to continental styles. My inadvertent blushing when he complimented the manner in which my dress displayed to advantage the narrowness of my waist, and the plumpness of my bosom, encouraged him to take the initiative, and most precipitously grasp my hands in his. I cannot blame him for mistaking my innocent cheeks flushed red for a wanton's permission to draw me in for a kiss, which I gladly returned, and then caress the swell of my breasts with his manicured fingertips. Raising my skirts seemed a natural progression, which after asking permission and having it granted, he proceeded to commence. I was not a passive recipient of his attentions. I fervently encouraged him, and in a sudden frenzy of lust was fully employed in undoing the buttons of his trousers. Alas I did not ask his permission as my mouth was engaged with his, and with exposing his rampant cock -- when we were discovered by Madame Gobere.

It all happened so quickly. The headmistress's gasp of surprise to see the rich and important English lord being kissed and handled by one of her supposedly respectable teachers swiftly turned into a deluge of angry denunciations. I was a "schamlose" or "shameless harlot," a "succubus aus der Hölle," a "succubus from hell," and a "verderber der Seelena," a "corrupter of souls." In the confusion it took me a few moments to realise she meant me. I was the harlot! The furious woman descended on us like a banshee, wrenching me away from his lordship's arms. Lord Cressy's struggles to rearrange his clothes were barely completed before she ushered him out of the room, despite his trousers having fallen to his ankles, smothering his stumbling protests with profuse apologies. Madame Gobere returned a few minutes later, and insensitive to my protestations, dismissed me from her service, and demanded my immediate removal from the premises.

That summary dismissal meant that Lord Cressy had failed to preserve my honour and admit his fault disappointed me sorely. I had truly expected him to return and rise to my defence, or at least take on half the blame. When it became clear he was going to do nothing of the sort, I admit to becoming angry at what I then determined

was his base dishonour. That is what distressed me most grievously about the incident, though upon reflection, after several days had passed, I found it hard to blame him exclusively. Our mutual passion had taken us both out of the normal bounds of propriety. No doubt his failure at the moment of crisis to defend me, and save my reputation, not to mention my employment, was due to his total and complete shock at what he had allowed to happen. It had, I supposed, robbed him not only of the wit to efficiently recover his trousers from where they lay around his feet, but also the power of speech.

Be that as it may, here I was, four days later virtually penniless and completely alone in London...

\* \* \*

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## **Mikala Ash**

Aussie Mikala Ash used to be a mild-mannered training & development consultant by day, and a wild sci-fi and paranormal adventure writer by night. Now she is a brazen full-time writer and nature photographer who is concentrating on having among other things, "... bags, and bags of fun!"

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