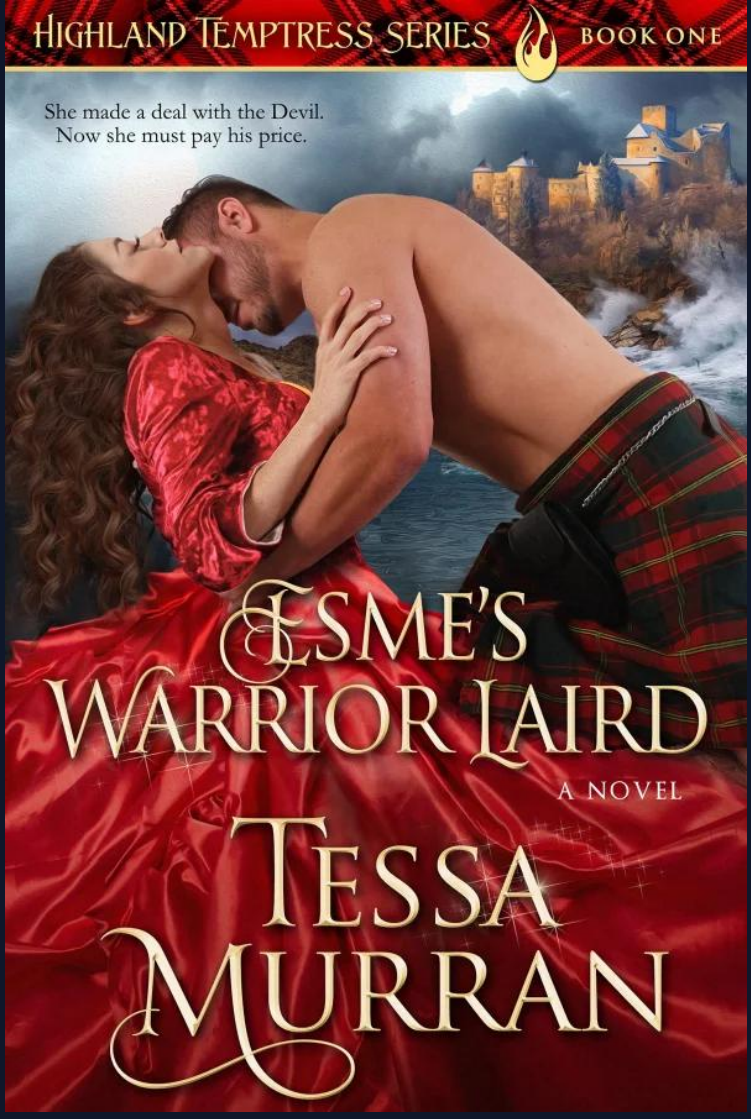
HIGHLAND TEMPTRESS SERIES
BOOK ONE
She made a deal with the Devil.
Now she must pay his price.
ESME'S
WARRIOR LAIRD
A NOVEL
TESSA
MURRAN

# Esme's Warrior Laird

by **Tessa Murran**

**BOOK DESCRIPTION**

She made a deal with the Devil. Now she must pay his price.

Esme Govan is burdened by a wanton temperament and a past folly she is trying to live down. When that folly returns from war, in the shape of her stepbrother Slaine, old passions ignite. With him comes Bastian MacNeil, a sword-for-hire as dark as the Devil. Bastian's mocking smile makes Esme nervous, and she is relieved that he is just passing through.

One winter's night, Slaine's twisted devotion takes a sinister turn, leaving Esme and her sisters Cara and Sorcha cast out and separated. Esme swears to find her family, and there is only one man who can help her - brutishly handsome Bastian MacNeil.

When Bastian demands payment for his services, a shameful bargain is struck. Soon Esme must confront Bastian's secrets, and choose vengeance or love, for her body is not the only thing that she has bargained away. Esme's heart is also in danger of succumbing to Bastian as

they come together with the passion of the truly sinful. But enjoying him won't get her sisters back, will it?

When Bastian MacNeil is hired as bodyguard to Slaine Govan, he expects to earn a fortune in gold. What he does not expect is Slaine's stepsister Esme, the object of an obsession that has not dimmed while Slaine has been in exile. The raven-haired lass may spark Bastian's desire, but he thinks her a vain little fool with a bad character.

But Bastian is about to find out just how determined a lass can be when Esme makes him an offer no red-blooded man could refuse. If Bastian agrees to find her sisters and take vengeance on Slaine, he can have her virtue.

Esme's Warrior Laird is a scorching, enemies-to-lovers, captive Highland romance sweeping the reader from the snow-scoured Highlands to the storm-battered Isle of Mull.

Get set for adventure with a swoon-worthy, rough-at-the-edges hero and a single-minded, lushly beautiful heroine. It may be winter in Scotland, but things are about to get hot!

Esme's Warrior Laird is the first in the Highland Temptress Series but can be enjoyed as a stand-alone novel.

Extract from Esme's Warrior Laird

Bastian tore the other leg off the chicken and handed it to

her. It was hot and scorched her fingers a little, but Esme barely let it cool before gnawing on it. As the meat filled her belly, she felt her strength returning. This man would not best her, and she would find Sorcha and Cara, no matter what she had to do.

Lost in her thoughts, Esme did not realise Bastian was staring at her until he said, ‘You look like a wild animal, tearing into that chicken.’

‘I don’t care. I am starving.’

‘Lass, you don’t know what starving is.’

Esme ignored him and carried on eating, but he would not relent in his teasing.

Bastian nudged his shoulder into hers and grinned. ‘You have feathers in your hair, and your face is dirty. I do declare if I was a cynic, I would suspect you were trying to make yourself as unappealing as possible to repel me.’

‘Good. I hope it works.’

‘Sorry to disappoint you, lass, but I like you better this way.’

Esme tossed the chicken bone into the fire, and it hissed. She wiped her hands on her dress. ‘The way you have treated me so far, I don’t think you like me at all.’

Bastian stared into her eyes. His gaze held pure seduction as he reached out and plucked a feather from her hair.

Esme opened her mouth to speak, but nothing came out as Bastian took her hand and brought it to his mouth. He sucked the fat from one of her fingers, achingly slowly, all the while, holding her gaze with his. His teeth grazed against her knuckle, his tongue hot on her skin.

It was so intimate, so sinful, that Esme’s breath caught in her throat and a horrible weakness overcame her. She froze as Bastian’s other hand snaked about her waist, pulling her in.

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