

THE WARRIOR

EXCERPT

Noting her body's unwilling response, Ranulf smiled tenderly. "You want me, demoiselle, it is obvious. Your heart is beating too rapidly... your breath has quickened.... your skin is flushed...."

"I do not want you!"

"Your body wants me. It is clear you are a maiden languishing for a man."

Ariane shut her eyes, praying for deliverance. She should never have allowed Ranulf to know she resented her virgin state. "I am languishing for no one, most especially you."

"You mean to say you have never wondered what it would be like to have a man between your thighs?"

"No... I mean yes, I never...."

"Permit me to show you," he murmured, his voice going softer, deeper, stroking her senses like dark velvet. "Let us see if we can make your lovely body turn traitor...."

He cradled her against him with a gentleness that belied the dangerous determination in his eyes. Then, to her complete startlement and dismay, he bent and kissed her, his lips warm and incredibly soft. The shock sent a wave of heat streaking through Ariane, a shock so powerful it paralyzed her. She could do nothing to defend herself against the tender caress of his mouth as he coaxed hers open, the feel of his tongue, slow and hot and wet, as he leisurely explored her.

In truth, rather than fight him, she only wanted to cling to Ranulf. It seemed she had waited nearly half her life for this, to know the taste of his kiss. She had dreamed of it, of this man as lover, as husband. She could scarcely believe so powerful a warrior could be so incredibly gentle.

Of their own accord her arms lifted and twined around his neck. With a soft sound of triumph deep in his throat, he tightened his hold, enveloping her in the heat and scent of his body while his mouth ravished hers tenderly. He was a dark fire, slowly igniting her senses.

Long moments later Ranulf drew back, but only to whisper against her lips, "Let me show you pleasure, Ariane. Let me please you as I would have you please me...."

Excerpt from *The Warrior* by Nicole Jordan
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